

TO: Families, Friends and Clients of Vinfen Group Living Environments
FROM: Jeanne Russo, Senior Vice President
DATE: November 18, 2020
RE: Client Holiday Visitation Guidelines – Group Living Environments (GLE)

We understand how difficult it has been for family members and friends to stay connected to loved ones during this pandemic of COVID 19. In particular the inability or limitations presented in visiting loved ones that reside in GLEs has been very difficult for both the individual living in the GLE and the family member or friend. These precautions continue to be necessary however, in order to ensure that the spread of the COVID 19 virus is contained and not spread among a very vulnerable population. As we begin the holiday season, we must be even more vigilant in protecting those who reside in our GLE programs. We highly encourage staying safe during the season and celebrating using low risk methods. We are providing you with a copy of a letter that the Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders wrote that recommends methods and options for low-medium risk celebrations; and defines medium-high and very high-risk methods of celebration. We hope that you choose a low-medium risk method of celebrating your holiday season.

We do however want you to understand the actions that will be required on your part and the actions that our staff will take if you decide to move forward with celebrating the holidays outside the program location.

Family and Visitors Coming into Vinfen GLEs: On the day of the holiday visits may be allowed following the visitation guidelines for that program location. Some Vinfen GLEs do not have the space to accommodate inside visitation. At no time is food shared or a meal shared by a GLE resident and a visitor. Food may be brought for an individual and stored for later consumption by that person. Visitation may be prohibited on the holiday given the attention required by staff to prepare the holiday meal. Please refer to our October 2020 Visitation Policy.

Client Visits Outside the GLE for the Holiday(s): We highly encourage in the interest of the health and safety of all GLE residents that visits outside the program do not occur this year. We will arrange for Zoom, Facetime, Skype, WhatsApp or GoogleDuo call between residents and loved ones as requested. It is in the interest of all residents that we all commit to ensure that exposure to other people is limited by the community members and thereby keep everyone healthy and safe. If a resident decides to leave the program and visit a relative or friend for one of the holidays this year; we will implement the following steps for each of the category of visits identified.

- Low-medium risk – A virtual visit or short visit with a family or friend who has been isolating and following good infection control practices - (masks, social distancing, good ventilation). If this type of visit occurs the resident will come back to the GLE and will be monitored closely for symptoms by staff.
- Medium-high risk – Staying overnight or longer with immediate family/friends or others who isolate and follow good infection control practices – (masks, social distancing, good ventilation). Clients returning to the GLE will be required to quarantine/isolate for 72 hours minimum upon returning to the program. This includes remaining in their room, eating meals alone, and using their own bathroom. The program will be placed on enhanced monitoring status and visitors will not be allowed.
- Very high risk – The resident attends a large family gathering where people from several households are present; and/or visitors from out of state; and/or the resident travels out of state. The client is required to test for COVID 19 prior to returning to the program; and will be required to quarantine/isolate upon returning. This includes remaining in their room, eating meals alone, and using their own bathroom. In addition, the client will be required to re-test for COVID 19 after 72 hours.

For the safety of all your family member/loved one or yourself and the members of the community of people that live in the GLE; we ask that you take the time to make the best decision possible for everyone involved. Please contact the Program Director at the GLE for additional support and with any questions you may have regarding these guidelines.

Thank you everyone and I wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season.