



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hospitals Update Visitor Restrictions, Screening, and Mask Policy as Region Lives with COVID-19

Visitors will be asked to wear masks in area hospital facilities

(DAYTON, OH) – Nearly two months after the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) implemented visitor restrictions to maintain patient safety during COVID-19, member hospitals in GDAHA’s 11-county service area have updated visitation restrictions, screening, and masking policy to consistently protect patients and hospital personnel during the ongoing management of COVID-19.

GDAHA member hospitals will implement the updated visitor restriction, screening, and mask policy on May 19, 2020.

“As our region continues to gain a stronger understanding of COVID-19 and how we can best prevent spread in our community, GDAHA’s member hospitals remain committed to protecting and safeguarding our patients,” said Sarah Hackenbracht, President & CEO of the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association. “Updating our visitor restrictions, screening, and mask policy will help our hospitals provide the highest quality patient-centered care during this unique time,” Hackenbracht added.

In the region’s outpatient, ambulatory, emergency department, and hospital facilities, patients will be permitted one (1) support person in the building per day provided that adequate social distancing policies can be met. Visitors will not be permitted for outpatient testing, such as non-invasive radiology testing, routine x-rays, and lab studies. Anyone under the age of 18 will also not be permitted to visit unless they are the parent or legal guardian of a pediatric patient.

The following exceptions may apply:

- “End of Life” situations;
- For maternity patients, one (1) additional support person, such as a doula, will be permitted.
- For minor maternity patients, a parent or guardian will also be permitted.
- Minor patients (under 18 years of age) may have two (2) visitors in the emergency department and inpatient setting, but this is limited to only parents or guardians;
- NICU patients will be allowed two (2) visitors for the duration of the patient’s stay with one visitor allowed at a time.
- Patients who require assistance due to mobility, reorienting/confusion (patient safety), interpretation, court-ordered, or healthcare decision making may have one (1) additional assistance person;

Visitors will not be permitted for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients in the hospital unless the patient meets one of the above exceptions.

In addition to the updating the visitor restrictions, screening and mask guidelines have also been agreed upon by the region’s hospitals to protect everyone connected to our region’s hospital facilities. The updated screening and mask guidelines are as follows:

- All employees, staff, patients, and visitors will be screened for symptoms or exposure history.
- Visitors will be asked to leave the facility if they have had symptoms in the past 24 hours or exposures in the last 14 days.
- Employees, staff, patients, and visitors must wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before and after leaving rooms and hospital buildings.
- Visitors should wear a mask when in the common areas of the hospital facility, such as hallways, public restrooms, gift shops, and dining areas.
- Visitors will be asked to wear their mask when a caregiver is present in a patient room.
- Patients and visitors may provide and wear their own mask or will be required to accept and wear the mask provided by the hospital facility.
- Masks or facial coverings must fully cover the nose and mouth.
- If a visitor refuses to wear a mask, the visitor may be asked to leave the facility.

Exceptions may be made on an individual basis for those individuals who are unable to wear a mask due to health or disability issues.

“We ask for the public’s patience and cooperation as we learn to live with COVID-19 in our region,” Hackenbracht continued. “These measures will help our hospitals continue to provide the safe and secure environment our patients need to recover.”

The Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) is a member-service organization representing 29 hospitals and health systems in the Dayton region. GDAHA collaborates with its members to improve the delivery of healthcare services in Auglaize, Butler, Darke, Champaign, Clark, Greene, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, and Warren Counties in West Central Ohio.

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