

[PRESS RELEASE](#)

## **GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES EASING OF RESTRICTIONS FOR OLDER AND VULNERABLE VERMONTERS**

**17 JUNE 2020**

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced several measures to gradually ease restrictions on Vermonters in long-term care facilities, hospitals and those over the age of 65.

In collaboration with the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) and the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), Vermont will begin a phased reopening of Long-Term Care Facilities. Starting June 19, Long-Term Care Residential facilities can allow for up to two (2) visitors per resident, per day. The visits must be conducted outside only and adhere to guidance issued by DAIL around social distancing temperature checks, and record keeping of all visitors.

The Administration also announced an updated visitation policy for hospitals that provides clearer guidance to health professionals, patients, and their families. The changes announced in the guidance will serve as a baseline requirement for all hospitals. Individual hospitals will develop visitation policies specific to the needs of their facilities and availability of supplies. Hospitals can choose to have in place more restrictive visitation policies.

“Vermonters in hospitals and long-term care residential facilities and their loved ones have experienced some of the toughest aspects of this pandemic due to the necessary restrictions we put in place to slow the spread of the virus and protect the vulnerable,” said Governor Scott. “But with our data continuing to show limited spread of the virus in Vermont, we can allow for much-needed social and family connections, which we know is also important for the health and well-being of our seniors.”

“While we are easing restrictions for our older Vermonters, we encourage this group and all Vermonters to ‘be smart and stay safe,’” continued Governor Scott.

Vermonters over the age of 65 are no longer required to stay home, however, there is a continued need to take special precautions when going out, including:

- Continue to follow all CDC and VDH guidance, including keeping six feet apart, frequently washing hands with soap and water, avoiding others when sick, and more.
- Avoid high risk areas (positive rate, trend in case rates, outbreaks).
- Whenever possible, choose outdoor activities and keep indoor contact brief.
- Minimize face to face contact while talking or while doing activities that require exertion.
- Watch the size of the room and the number of people in the room

### **Long-Term Care Visitation**

Beginning June 19, 2020, outdoor visitation can resume at long-term care residential facilities. Providers must demonstrate they are adhering to physical distancing and relevant CDC guidelines regarding infection control and prevention to maintain a safe environment for patients and staff. The initial step allows for up to two (2) visitors per resident, per day, which must be conducted outside. This policy still restricts non-essential workers from entering the facilities.

Long-Term Care Visitation

Guidance: [https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Outdoor\\_Visitation ...](https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files//documents/Outdoor_Visitation...)

### **Hospital Visitation**

This updated guidance also allows health care providers to ease visitation restrictions if the guidelines for hospital visitation are implemented. Please note in the guidance, the VDH recommends different levels of precautions for outpatient clinics and inpatient, acute care, emergency department and urgent care.

#### Hospital Visitation

Guidance: [https://humanservices.vermont.gov/sites/ahsnew/files/doc\\_library/Updated...](https://humanservices.vermont.gov/sites/ahsnew/files/doc_library/Updated...)

### **Restarting Senior Centers – Technical Assistance**

Senior Centers may also begin reopening, while following the technical assistance provided by the VDH and DAIL. This announcement does not mean Adult Day programs can resume. Senior Centers serve Vermonters over the age of 50 who are independent and can physically distance and follow infection control guidance.

The technical assistance was developed by DAIL, in partnership with the VDH and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD).

#### Senior Center Restart Technical

Assistance: [https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files/documents/Senior\\_Center\\_Re-Op...](https://dail.vermont.gov/sites/dail/files/documents/Senior_Center_Re-Op...)

For more information on:

- COVID-19 health information, guidance and case data, visit [www.healthvermont.gov/covid19](http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19).
- The Governor's actions, visit [governor.vermont.gov/covid19response](http://governor.vermont.gov/covid19response).
- The state's modeling, visit <https://dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling>.