



May 9, 2021

Re: Updated Visitor Protocols

Dear Residents,

Thank you for your feedback on the survey that was sent out last week. It was so helpful to hear from so many of our Residents to better understand everyone's level of comfort with visitor protocols.

As I mentioned last week, Alberta Health Services (AHS) provided a new Order providing eased visitor restrictions for senior facilities. As you are aware, in the meantime, the province also implemented more restrictions in response to the increase in cases. However, restrictions for congregate living facilities are different from those for the rest of Albertans and the Order from AHS is what we are obligated to follow.

I know this can be a bit confusing. On the surface it doesn't seem to make a lot of sense for us to increase visitor access when the public is facing more restrictions.

But although the cases are increasing, these new cases are not coming from senior residences. The vaccinations seem to be doing their job! The Order from AHS is in response to the protection seniors now have with the vaccinations and recognizes the sacrifice seniors have made this past year, as well as the emotional and mental toll this has been on so many. It is time to ease up.

Some of the comments we received from Residents is that we have stayed COVID-free so far so let's not change anything now. And I appreciate this perspective. All of you have worked so hard to make good choices and have made so many sacrifices. And we want to continue to be COVID-free. But we all need family and friends and community to thrive, so I am grateful that this new Order now allows us to do this a bit more. And I believe we can do so safely.

As a congregate living facility, some of the allowances in the new Order we are obligated to allow, and some of the allowances are optional based on the preferences of our Residents, which is why the survey had been sent out.

Updated Safe Visiting Policy

After reviewing the feedback we received from our Residents, effective **Monday, May 10** Shalem's Safe Visitor Protocols are attached.

Know that we are working hard to put in good processes to ensure that masking and sanitizing protocols are followed. As well, we will monitor the traffic flow through our buildings and if necessary, implement a visitor schedule system. To help us with this, please refrain from remaining in the Haven entrance unless you need to be there for things such as singing out, waiting for a ride, or picking up a parcel.

I recognize that not everyone is comfortable with this easing of restrictions. If you are not comfortable with having more designated people or visitors, you are not obligated to but for those that wish, it is now available to you.

Even with the ability to now have more visitors, we still ask all Residents to continue to make good choices when inviting people onto your homes – our home – recognizing our responsibility of safety to ourselves and the safety of the entire Shalem community.

Thank you for your diligence in keeping Shalem safe as we support the new visitor allowances. I trust you will be encouraged and blessed by the opportunity to interact face-to-face once again with family and friends.

Blessings,



Dorothy de Vuyst
Executive Director