

Date: August 9, 2021

From: Deputy to the Deputy Under Secretary for Health  
Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Health

Subj: COVID-19: Stakeholder Guidance for Visiting Veterans Health Administration Facilities

To: Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors (10N1 – 23)  
VISN Chief Medical Officers  
VISN Chief Nurse Officers

1. This memorandum provides updated guidance to Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) and VA Medical Center (VAMC) leadership regarding visits conducted by stakeholders including members of Congress and their staff, oversight agencies and contractors, and contractors required to be onsite for mission critical activities (e.g., Electronic Health Record - EHRM). This guidance is effective upon signature.
2. All such visitors are recommended to complete COVID-19 vaccination prior to entering a VHA facility. VHA is following the Presidential Action Plan and requiring facemasks on all persons entering VHA facilities (health care and administrative) based on local COVID-19 disease burden in the community or based on State or local requirements. All such visitors should review the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for transmission rates in communities. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>
3. Such visitors must contact the VHA facility prior to their visit to ensure the safety and timing of their trip. We understand the importance of unannounced and for cause visits. In these instances, visitors are to report to the facility leadership immediately upon arrival.
4. All such visitors will be asked about COVID-19 symptoms, COVID-19 vaccination status, and asked to wear a snugly fitting approved mask. Local facilities may have additional requirements based on community disease and state and community requirements.
5. VHA leadership may restrict such visitors' access to areas affected by a local COVID-19 outbreak (e.g., Community Living Center, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorder unit, or acute patient care area) or request no visitation by such visitors based upon community rates of infection. Any business-driven visit that requires physical access to those units will be converted to a virtual visit or postponed until the unit meets VHA reopening criteria.



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