

**St. Louis County Department of Public Health
2019 Novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”)
Residential Living Facilities Order**

I. Background

The St. Louis County Department of Public Health (“DPH”) has been closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by COVID-19. Infections with COVID-19 have been reported around the world. The first confirmed instance of person-to-person spread of the virus in the United States was reported on January 30, 2020. The first confirmed instance of COVID-19 in St. Louis County was reported on March 7, 2020. A state of emergency was declared in St. Louis County on March 13, 2020, and several executive orders have been issued since authorizing the director of DPH to issue orders, policies, and other rules to implement those executive orders.

COVID-19 is considered an infectious, contagious, communicable, and dangerous disease for purposes of §§ 192.020-1, 192.139, & 193.300, RSMo., 19 CSR 20-20.020, and other state and local laws. The DPH’s director is the “local health authority” under 19 CSR 20-20.050(1) pursuant to 19 CSR 20-20.010(24), Section 4.130 of the Charter, and Section 600.010 SLCRO, and has been delegated the authority to act on St. Louis County’s behalf for the public health purposes described in § 193.300, RSMo.

Given the congregate nature and the residents served, Residential Living Facilities are at very high risk for disease transmission and adverse outcomes of individual residents from COVID-19. The virus that causes COVID-19 places certain populations at high risk for suffering the most serious complications from infection, including death. As of March 27, 2020, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) designated Missouri as a state with community transmission of COVID-19 which necessitates aggressive mitigation strategies to protect populations who are most vulnerable. CDC, DPH and multiple national and regional entities provide comprehensive and detailed guidance for Residential Living Facilities.

Violating a public health order designed to “prevent the entrance of infectious, contagious, communicable or dangerous diseases” into St. Louis County is punishable as a misdemeanor pursuant to § 192.300, RSMo. Further, “[a]ny person . . . who shall leave any . . . quarantined house or place without the consent of the health officer having jurisdiction, or who evades or breaks quarantine or knowingly conceals a case of contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, or who removes, destroys, obstructs from view, or tears down any quarantine card, cloth or notice by the attending physician or by the health officer, or by direction of the proper health officer, shall be deemed guilty of a class A misdemeanor” pursuant to § 192.320, RSMo.

II. Purpose

This order intends to ensure that facilities housing or treating the elderly and other medically vulnerable individuals adopt aggressive mitigation strategies to combat the spread of COVID-19.

III. Policy

1. Residential Living Facilities shall exclude the entry of Visitors and Non-Essential Personnel on their Premises. Residential Living Facilities shall make reasonable efforts to facilitate alternate means of contact between Visitors and residents, including through telephone or videoconferencing. Exceptions to the visitation restriction may be authorized by Residential Living Facilities for Necessary Visitation, but Social Distancing Requirements shall be maintained during such visits to the extent possible.
2. Residential Living Facilities shall require daily screenings for all staff and visitors authorized to enter the facility which must include assessment of the individual's temperature.
3. All Residential Living Facilities shall limit Non-Essential Resident Movement and shall employ Social Distancing Requirements within Residential Living Facilities.
4. This order does not restrict first responders to access a Residential Living Facility during an emergency.
5. All deliveries to Residential Living Facilities may be made on the Premises but shall be made outside of facility buildings.

IV. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, these terms, regardless of whether capitalized, are defined as follows:

- A. "Non-Essential Resident Movement" means travel off or onto the Residential Living Facility by a resident other than for healthcare treatment, and includes group activities (on or off the premises), communal dining, and any other type of resident movement that requires groups to congregate or for residents to leave the facility in a group;
- B. "Necessary Visitation" means health care providers that provide health care services to residents and compassionate care situations, such as end of life;
- C. "Premises" means the buildings, grounds, facilities, driveways, parking areas and public spaces within the legal boundaries of each Residential Living Facility;
- D. "Residential Living Facility" means facilities housing the elderly and other medically vulnerable individuals, including but not limited to, long-term care facilities, nursing homes, independent living facilities, retirement communities;
- E. "Social Distancing Requirements" means maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer with more than sixty percent alcohol, covering coughs or sneezes with something other than hands, regularly cleaning high-touch services, and not shaking hands, or as otherwise defined by order.
- F. "Visitors and Non-Essential Personnel" means employees, contractors, or members of the public who do not perform treatment, maintenance, support or administrative tasks deemed essential to the healthcare mission of the Residential Living Facility.

Visitors and Non-Essential Personnel includes family members, friends, and authorized decision makers of residents as well as barbers, beauticians, pastoral personnel and volunteers providing programming.

V. Effective Date

This order shall become effective immediately upon my signature and will continue to be in effect until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing.

VI. Authorization

This Order is authorized pursuant to sections 192.006, 192.200 and 192.300 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, 19 CSR 20-20.050 of the Rules of the Department of Health and Senior Services and by certain Executive Orders, as may be further amended. The purpose of this order is to enhance the public health and prevent the entrance of infections, contagious, communicable or dangerous diseases into St. Louis County.

So Ordered this 2nd day of April 2020

By:



Dr. Emily Doucette
Acting Director
Chief Medical Officer
St. Louis County Department of Public Health