



State of New Jersey

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November 23, 2020

TO: Administrators:
Domestic Violence Shelters
Transitional Living Programs

FROM: Christine Norbut Beyer, MSW
Commissioner

SUBJECT: Holiday Visitation Guidance

THIS GUIDANCE REGARDING HOLIDAY VISITATION IS MEANT TO BE ADVISORY ONLY AND USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) AND THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SERVICE (CDS), AND CURRENT DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES GUIDANCE AND DIRECTIVES.

The virus that causes Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) is easily transmitted, especially in group settings. The State of New Jersey is currently experiencing a rise in COVID-19 cases and community spread. As the upcoming holiday season will include family visitation, it is imperative for the residents of congregate living settings that their families/friends and facility staff take precautions in order to provide a safe environment for everyone.

Because of the risk of the rapid spread of the virus, and the need to protect all members of the community, especially residents of congregate living settings, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is providing the following guidance regarding home passes and visitation during the upcoming holiday season.

1. The DCF strongly recommends against residents leaving their current living facility for holiday celebration events or gatherings. The CDC has indicated that a significant driver of the recent case increases is small family gatherings and has issued recommendations for gatherings that include limiting participants to household members: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>.

www.nj.gov/DCF

2. The CDC and the New Jersey Department of Health recommend that individuals living in congregate living settings avoid in-person gatherings with individuals with whom they do not live.

DCF is supporting this recommendation.

3. Instead of visits outside of the facility, for facilities that allow visitors, the DCF recommends visitation outdoors, or possibly indoors in facilities that meet the requirements for indoor visitation. Where possible, increased virtual communications in lieu of visitation should be used by facilities.
4. Facilities should encourage residents that are planning to attend gatherings outside of the facility to follow CDC guidance for celebrating the holidays:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>.
Facilities should remind residents to follow all recommended infection prevention and control measures when gathering during the holidays, including social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing a cloth face covering or face mask.
5. Residents that decide to leave the facility to attend gatherings with family/ friends with whom they don't reside should be told that the CDC and NJ DOH recommend a 14-day quarantine upon returning to the facility. Each facility should determine with the resident their joint plan for quarantine and the two parties should come to an agreement on the plan prior to the resident participating in the gathering.