

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: Creative Benefits, Inc.

President Biden Eases Nursing Home COVID-19 Restrictions

On Wednesday, March 10, 2021, President Joe Biden's administration [released updated guidelines](#) for nursing home visits amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The revised guidance now allows visitors to see nursing home residents regardless of whether either party has been vaccinated. Federal recommendations have not been updated since September 2020, when all visitation was discouraged.

This new nonbinding guidance comes with suggested "responsible indoor visitation" parameters, such as limiting visits if parties have COVID-19 or are in quarantine. Visitation is also discouraged in counties where COVID-19 positivity rates remain high.

The guidelines were released by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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"CMS recognizes the psychological, emotional and physical toll that prolonged isolation and separation from family have taken on nursing home residents, and their families."

- Dr. Lee Fleisher, chief CMS medical officer

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The agencies cited the millions of administered nursing home vaccinations and a decline of infections among residents and staff as the rationale for releasing updated visitation guidance. However, the

health experts still say outdoor visits are preferable and less risky for everyone involved.

What's next?

As more vaccines are administered, it may finally seem like the COVID-19 pandemic is easing. But that doesn't mean it's gone away completely. Anyone planning a nursing home visit should still practice safety measures, such as social distancing and mask-wearing.

Furthermore, since this guidance is nonbinding, individuals should contact the nursing home prior to visiting to learn about its visitation rules. In other words, visits may differ depending on the facility or where it's located.

