

**Temporary Visitation Protocol (within the home and outside, visits to a family or friends home/community outings) to reflect Governor Wolf's Process to Reopen Pennsylvania and ODP Updated Announcement 20-066 (Revised 4/17/2021 to reflect current conditions).**

\*This protocol may be modified based on future changes to visitation guidance by the Pennsylvania Department of Health or Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs and as COVID-19 positive cases increase.

Supportive Concepts for Families, Inc. (SCFF) strongly encourages family engagement and involvement both within SCFF programs and offsite at home and community visits. With COVID-19 we have temporarily updated our visitation policy to reflect Governor Wolf's Process to Reopen Pennsylvania being mindful of continued community transmission and have revised this protocol as cases continue to increase. Weekly we will assess safety protocols and make decisions on whether CLAs may have visitation inside the CLA or whether individuals can go home for visits or out into the community. **Every visit whether onsite or offsite, community outings, and/or day program, employment participation will be reviewed based on current conditions. A visit that may have been approved in the past, might not be approved based on current conditions. We make decisions based on the safety of the individual, their housemates and our staff.**

As a provider of quality services and supports for your loved one we know that the most important part of a program participant's life is family involvement and nothing can ever take the place of family. Our Community Living Programs must also balance the rights of other individuals in each program and manage the time in and out of program for health and safety purposes and to continue to provide high quality services and supports for all program participants. We ask for your cooperation and partnership in ensuring we can manage both in and out of program visits but also to ensure we mitigate exposure to COVID-19.

**Vaccines / Positive COVID-19**

Some of our consumers and staff have had COVID-19. Pennsylvania also began vaccinating priority groups starting in December 2020. Many of our individuals and staff have received vaccines. Having COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. COVID-19 vaccination could help protect individuals by creating an antibody response without having to experience sickness. Both natural immunity and immunity produced by a vaccine are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about. The COVID-19 vaccine will not be the "cure" for the virus, it is simply another mitigation tool, like PPE and we must continue to practice other mitigation efforts, like hand washing, social distancing, wearing a mask and limiting large gatherings. **None of our current protocols change because someone has had COVID-19 or has been vaccinated, we still assess the risk for visitation and vaccination is considered one element we review.**

**Visitation - Community Living Arrangements (CLA) and Life Sharing Homes**

**COVID-19 specific procedures:**

As outlined in [ODP Announcement 20-066 Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\): Guidance for Visitation in Residential Settings](#):

- No visitors will be allowed to enter any home where individuals who are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 reside as defined by CDC Guidance except for Compassionate Care Visits approved by the care plan support team. **Higher risk can mean serious medical conditions and unvaccinated individuals, substantial community level transmission, or if a CLA is on quarantine or isolation status.** For Life Sharing homes, this includes host families and any other individuals who reside in the home. We must ensure that all individuals who reside in the home are safe. Outside visits to high risk homes may be approved following our protocols and based on current conditions.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>
- For pre-approved visits that must occur outside the CLA, if there is severe weather, we may move the visit offsite to another home, or allow for a visit in a garage, tent, canopy, depending on the particular layout of the home.
- **Visitation inside and outside the CLA, community, employment or visit to a home not operated by SCFF is allowed when the location of the CLA, Life Sharing Home or offsite is in a county with low Community Level Transmission for 14 days as long as the CLA is not on quarantine or isolation status.**
- **Visitation outside is encouraged for any counties in moderate or substantial as long as the CLA is not on quarantine or isolation status. If consumers in the CLA are “fully vaccinated” inside visitation may be approved if it can be done safely.**
- To balance the needs of all program participants, all approved visits to CLAs or Life Sharing Homes need to be scheduled **at least 3 days in advance**, this way we can assess whether it is safe to visit inside the CLA or schedule an outside visit. No unscheduled visits will be allowed. This will allow us to stagger visitation times and limit the amount of people within the home. Every visit is reviewed based on current conditions and our assessment of whether the visit will be safe. If the visit is approved, please call your SCFF contact the night before the visit to confirm as conditions can change (exposure to COVID-19, confirmed positive cases, etc.)
- SCFF has scheduled visitation hours for Community Living Arrangements (CLA) and Life Sharing homes with pre approvals. All approved visits must occur between 9am and 9pm, SCFF may restrict these hours based on the safety and health needs of other consumers.
- No more than 2 individuals can visit and for no more than 2 hours at any time.
- Social distancing and universal precautions will be followed at all times, **regardless of vaccinations status**, including but not limited to:
  - On arrival visitors will have their temperature checked and screened for signs/symptoms of COVID- 19 prior to entering the home. Anyone with an elevated temperature or signs/symptoms will not be allowed to enter the home. **SCFF prohibits any visits from people who are: Currently diagnosed with COVID-19; have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to the visit travel to any state that is on the PA Travel Advisory and / or are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 or any other illness.**
  - All visitors must wear a mask prior to entering the home and throughout the entire visit, individual homes may have additional protection requirements that must also be followed. If visiting outside the CLA, social distancing and mask requirements will also be required - no exceptions.

- Program participants will be encouraged to wear a mask during the visit as tolerated
- Visitors will be asked to wash their hands immediately upon entering the home
- Visitors must remain at least 6 feet away from individuals at all times
- Depending on the home, SCFF may restrict visitation to certain areas of the home to reduce contact with other individuals (i.e. the individual's bedroom, or outside)

**If visitors cannot follow our protocols the visit will be terminated. A team meeting will be set up discuss following our protocols. Future visits will not be approved unless our protocols are followed. SCFF will ensure that remote visits can occur, should it not be safe for an in person visit.**

Please work with your SCFF contact to schedule an in person visit but understand the visit may not be approved and could be cancelled based on current conditions.

**Other Visitation Procedures:**

- Visitors are defined as all non-employees present in leased or owned premises of SCFF.
- All visitors must complete the SCFF Visitor Log for each visit to the home including the date of the visit, name of visitor, purpose of the visit, time in, time out, and affiliation. The SCFF Visitor Log will be located in a convenient, accessible area in the home.
- Supportive Concepts for Families, Inc., wants to remind all visitors that first and foremost the home belongs to the individuals' residing there; their comfort, safety and emotional well-being is paramount to SCFF.
- All visitors must be courteous of other individuals residing in the home.
- Visitors are not permitted access to the home during times when the program participant and/ or staff are not present in the home.
- Visitors must respect the personal privacy of program participants.
- Visitors who are not family members or legal advocates are prohibited from occupying the personal bedroom spaces of the home and looking through closets, drawers and/or personal belongings.
- Visitors who are abusive or threatening, or who are intentionally or unintentionally causing emotional distress to program participants or staff will be asked to leave the premises; refusal to leave the premises may result in SCFF contacting local law enforcement for assistance. SCFF may also contact law enforcement if visitors appear intoxicated.

**Visitors Responsibilities:**

- Respect the rights, choices and property of all persons in the home, including staff and program participants
- Respect the privacy of others, remember this is your family member's home but also the home of the other program participants
- Be aware and follow the "house rules" for the benefit of all program participants and staff

**Visits that occur offsite at community settings or when a consumer is out of program (visits to friends or families' homes, holiday or travel plans)**

Not all visits will occur inside the home; some visitors may wish to take individuals on community outings that will not include visitors' physical presence in the home. For visits outside the home, SCFF has to assess whether there are any exposure concerns for both the individual and the other individuals that reside in the home and **all requests must be pre-approved at least 3 days in advance.**

- Offsite visits, community outings will only be allowed when the location of the outing is deemed safe, meaning community COVID-19 transmission rates are not substantial, visitors who plan to take the individual offsite will be taking the individual to a place that is not high risk for COVID-19 exposure and we can ensure our protocols for mitigating exposure will be followed. *If other individuals residing in the home are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 and/or are not fully vaccinated, SCFF may prohibit offsite outings or community visits, or require more precautions to ensure the safety of everyone in the home.*
- Individuals who participate in employment or day programs will not be allowed to go if the county where the program is located is considered "substantial" in terms of community transmission rates, the location is considered high risk for COVID-19 exposure and/or their home either has been exposed to a COVID-19 or someone has tested positive for the virus.
- **To balance the needs of all program participants, all visits offsite need to be scheduled at least 3 days in advance and pre-approved.** No unscheduled visits will be allowed.
- For approved offsite visits/outings/travel it is recommended that small groups of people are present, no more than 5 and for visits to last no longer than 2 hours.
- Large gatherings, travel to unsafe places or refusal to follow our mitigate exposure protocols (i.e. social distancing, universal mask wearing or other unsafe conditions) will not be approved. SCFF may require the supports team to review transition and community support assessments/guidance to assess the safety for all individuals in the home prior to allowing offsite visits or community outings.
- Even if a visit is approved, situations may occur where the visit will need to be cancelled.
- Once a visit our outing is approved, all family members, friends or individuals who will have contact with the consumer will be screened prior to the visit using the same protocols described above for onsite CLA visits.
- Social distancing and universal precautions will be followed at all times, including but not limited to:
  - On arrival visitors will have their temperature checked and screened for signs/symptoms of COVID- 19 prior to taking the individual out. Anyone with an elevated temperature or signs/symptoms will not be allowed to enter the home. **SCFF prohibits any visits from people who are: Currently diagnosed with COVID-19; have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the 14 days prior to the visit, demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 or any other illness, and/or other screening recommendations from DHS, DOH, CDC or other public health agency.**
  - Wear a mask when in public and as required by the Department of Health
  - Handwashing and social distancing – maintaining 6 feet space distance
  - Select outdoor activities that will minimize exposure to others, such as a visit to the park, or open areas

- For any approved overnight visit, SCFF will conduct remote screening the night before an individual plans to return and then they will be screened once they arrive back to our programs. Should there be any exposure concerns, individuals will not be allowed to return to the CLA.

All individuals returning to the home must follow all safety protocols, including screening, temperature checks, immediate handwashing, changing clothes, quarantine, testing and any other requirements to ensure the safety of other individuals within the home. Depending on the type of visit, quarantine and or testing procedures/timeframes may differ.

The COVID-19 virus is a novel (new) virus. Guidance changes and we are constantly learning more about how to respond. We ask your patience as we continue to ensure the safety of the individuals we serve and our staff. As we update this policy based on any new or revised guidance, we will post this to our website at the following link <https://www.supportiveconcepts.org/covid-info/>