

June 7, 2021

Dear Residents and Families,

I have attached a copy of a letter that I sent to our staff today related to changes based on vaccination status. I wanted to share the letter with you so that you understand why the changes are necessary. Additionally, if you have a private duty staff member that assists you, you will need to uphold the guidelines within the letter as the private duty's employer.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me.

Sincerely,



Laura Lamb
President & CEO

June 7, 2021

Dear Marjorie Lee, Deupree House, and Cottages Staff,

I often reflect on our mission statement and core values when faced with a difficult situation or decision. As you know, our mission is to “enrich the lives of older adults in a person-centered, innovative, and spiritual-based way.” This sentence has been a guidepost for me as I share some difficult information with you.

We have been made aware of new standards related to residents living in our retirement communities. Both CMS and the Governor’s orders in Ohio require that we interact with our residents based on vaccination status. A few of the critical guidelines are as follows:

- If staff members in the dining room are unvaccinated, all residents must wear masks and social distance.
- If unvaccinated staff members attend or conduct an activity, all residents must wear masks and social distance.
- If an unvaccinated staff member provides care to a resident, the resident must wear a mask.
- If an unvaccinated staff member provides service in a resident’s room or apartment, the resident must leave the area or socially distance and wear a mask.

During our All Staff meeting on May 26th, I shared that we are moving towards mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for all staff in September 2021. We announced this so that staff have a notice period to make personal decisions about what that means for their continued service within ERS. Given that we have the new standards above and given that we have nearly 100% of our residents are vaccinated, it is clear that staffs’ choices will impact our residents. With these orders, the impact is significant as it diminishes the quality of life for our residents. Consistent with our mission statement, we must make changes so that our residents are not negatively impacted.

Effective June 14, 2021, the following guidelines will be in place:

- Only vaccinated staff may serve residents in the dining room, as well as attend and/or lead activities in order to minimize the significant impact to our residents.
- Staff who are unvaccinated are not permitted to be in the area of an event (i.e. event center, club room, household common area hosting a group activity, etc.) or dining room during programs and services.
- Unvaccinated staff providing care must ask the resident to put on their mask when entering their room / apartment prior to providing care.
- Unvaccinated staff providing assistance such as housekeeping, maintenance, or other in-room services, must ask the resident to wear a mask and socially distance or leave the apartment / room during service.

As mandated by the State of Ohio, I must also reiterate that until all staff are fully vaccinated, all staff – regardless of vaccination status – must wear masks. The only exception to this rule is when you are in a private office alone or with a group of staff and/or residents in an enclosed room with others that are fully vaccinated. **However, due to physical proximity when providing care, direct care workers, including private duty staff, must wear a mask at all times with residents regardless of vaccination status. Additionally, unvaccinated private duties may not stay with their resident in the dining room or in an event as this would negatively impact the entire group of residents by having to wear masks and social distance.**

I know these changes are significant and will impact what our unvaccinated staff are permitted to do and the roles they can serve in. A member of the leadership team will be reaching out to each unvaccinated staff to discuss a change in assignment. Examples of reassignments include an unvaccinated hostess or server in dining being reassigned to the dish room, or an unvaccinated life enrichment staff member being reassigned to do the paperwork for the department instead of leading activities. I respect each individual's right to decide if they want to take the vaccine. I also value the service that all staff provide to our elders. Serving the most vulnerable in our society during a global pandemic is very important and challenging work.

For ERS, it comes down to upholding our mission first and foremost. As we often say – we work in our residents' homes. Our residents do not live in our work area. As much as this message may be difficult to hear that we have to modify assignments based on vaccination status, please know that it's because of our responsibility to put the needs and quality of life of our residents before our own.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me.

Sincerely,



Laura Lamb
President & CEO