



Episcopal Retirement Services

February 24, 2023

Dear Residential Care Residents and Family Members,

As we shared yesterday, we have several positive cases throughout ERS communities. At the same time, the transmission rates in our counties are going up and down each week. This is frustrating to all, but especially for our residents in residential care, given that guidelines can vary from week to week. With this in mind, the Risk Management Team reviewed our guidelines for our independent living residents and have made some changes that we would like to share.

Next month marks three, long years that we will have been dealing with COVID-19. We are all fatigued, but we need to celebrate how far we have come:

- We have a vaccine and boosters! We didn't have this line of defense in 2020.
 - We have a staff team who is committed and required to be fully vaccinated including applicable boosters.
 - Our residents have embraced the vaccine and boosters, and therefore you are more protected than we were in 2020.
- With the great vaccination acceptance rates, cases of COVID-19 have been milder than early in the pandemic for healthy individuals and seniors.
- We know how the virus is transmitted. Remember when we thought we needed to sanitize our mail? We've come a long way! We now understand that being in one another's air space while in large groups, dining, and drinking creates greater risk. We understand that it is social interactions that can be problematic. For this reason, when the county's transmission rate is high, we will require masks in common areas.
- We also know that COVID-19 will likely not be eradicated, but instead, we must continue to adapt while living with it. Many of us will welcome the time when we receive a booster each fall for COVID-19 like the annual flu shot.

Each of us have our own risk tolerance. We know if we have underlying conditions that make us more susceptible to infection and/or have greater concerns if we were to become ill. Therefore, to begin living with COVID-19, we are asking you to make an informed decision as to what you participate in within our communities as well as assuming the responsibility of your decisions. For example, you might decide that eating in the dining room with five neighbors fits in with your risk tolerance, but attending a cocktail party with a large group does not. We will continue to offer programs and events as the transmission rate fluctuate inside and outside our communities, but you will need to determine what you

feel is appropriate, given your health and risk factors, to attend. Attendance is always optional, therefore if you attend events or dine with others, you are accepting the risk of doing so.

Learning to live with COVID has proven to be difficult, however, it is something we are committed to doing together. Please let me know if you have suggestions or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura R Lamb".

Laura Lamb,
President & CEO