



## Ascension Living

April 22, 2020

Dear Ascension Living Residents and Family Members,

As you are aware, all Ascension Living communities have implemented comprehensive COVID-19 response plans based on guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), state and local health departments, as well as our clinical and operational leadership. The health and safety of our residents and associates continues to be our first priority. Every action and measure we put in place reflects that commitment. Our infection control specialists are working closely with the CDC and local public health authorities to detect, protect and respond in accordance with current guidelines, using recommended infection control precautions and protocols.

We will continue to implement new protocols as advised by CDC, CMS, public health officials and our infection control specialists in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our response plan addresses the safety of our residents and associates, in addition to ensuring that we continue to deliver the compassionate care you have come to expect at our communities. Our priority is to reduce transmission risk among associates and residents, protecting people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications.

Our skilled nursing facilities have also created separate admission units for residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, and this separation begins as soon as new residents arrive or a change occurs in a current resident's normal health status. Residents with positive tests are treated in isolation in accordance with guidance from the CDC. Residents who are confirmed to have the virus but are asymptomatic automatically benefit from additional infection prevention precautions before symptoms begin. This early identification of positive COVID-19 residents allows the well-trained healthcare staff to respond appropriately to the ongoing battle with COVID-19. Residents who do not have symptoms related to COVID-19 or have tested negative for COVID-19 reside in a separate part of the building and are cared for by a different team than those who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive.

**In order to ensure ongoing transparency, once a positive confirmation is received within a community, all staff, clinical partners, residents and each resident's responsible party are notified of the result and informed of the actions that have been taken.** If your family's responsible party has not been called by a member of our team or received a letter, we have not been notified of a positive case within the community.

In municipalities that are considered “hot zones,” Ascension Living is working with local public health officials and medical advisors to determine the need for additional testing. Out of an abundance of caution to ensure the safety of associates and residents, where there is an identified need to control potential spread and COVID-19 tests are available, Ascension Living will proactively conduct testing. This may lead to higher case counts, but it will also allow our teams to identify asymptomatic residents and staff members and work to prevent negative outcomes.

In the midst of all of the clinical precautions we have implemented to reduce transmission risk among associates and residents, to protect people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications, our focus remains on ensuring that our residents and their families continue to feel safe and connected during this time. We welcome feedback and continually evaluate how to best communicate with our families.

In order to help families stay connected, you can now call toll-free 833-980-2297 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. (CT and ET) to get quick answers to your questions. In addition, if you would like to sign up for email updates specific to your loved one's community and from Ascension Living, please visit <https://bit.ly/3cCxiz4> to register. This will allow community teams to provide you updates faster.

Thank you for your continued understanding and prayers for your loved ones and for our team members dedicated to caring for them. We appreciate the notes and gestures of gratitude for the care we are privileged to provide. Just as a reminder, our communities must abide by food safety requirements; therefore, our teams can only accept food donations to share with staff and residents from restaurants and bakeries or that are prepackaged.

Our ministry has always answered the call to care throughout our history as we need to overcome obstacles to care for people in need. Our teams will continue to connect with you as necessary and I will continue to send regular updates. Thank you for your prayers, support and trust in our care and dedication. May God continue to bless you, your families, our residents and staff.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danny Stricker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danny Stricker  
President, Ascension Living