

Please see below for a communication that was shared with all Duke Health team members on June 23, 2020.

While we recognize the continued spread of COVID-19 infection in our community is troubling, we also need to continue to provide care for our patients, and we understand the important role loved ones provide as a part of the care team.

Over the last few weeks, we have weighed the risks and benefits of modifying our visitor restrictions, considered available resources, consulted our infectious disease experts, collaborated with health systems in our area and engaged our patient and family advisory councils. We are committed to keeping our team and patients safe.

Following this careful and measured deliberation, Duke Health will modify our inpatient visitation guidelines effective Wednesday, June 24th. Please see below for a full outline of our updated visitation restrictions in place and available resources, including a letter to use in patient communication, signage and a tip sheet from the Maestro Care team.

Visitation Guidelines for Duke Health Hospital Locations

Adult inpatients may **designate one support person** age 18 or older for the entire length of stay in the hospital.

- When entering the building, the designated visitor will be required to show a form of photo identification. For Direct Admission and Emergency Department patients, the patient (if able) will identify their designated visitor. The Financial Care Counselor will enter that visitor's name in Maestro Care's visitor flag and provide a visitation guide to the patient and the visitor.
- Patients who need to identify their visitor on an inpatient unit (i.e., transferred directly to unit or unable to do so upon admission) will work with the Unit's Clinical Team Lead or Nurse Manager to identify their one visitor. This person will put the visitor's name in Maestro Care's visitor flag. A team member on the unit will provide a visitation guide to the patient and the visitor.
- **Visitation hours are from 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily.** Limited exceptions can be made by the Operations Administrator or Nurse Manager for late OR cases and visitors that work during visitation hours.

All visitors will be screened daily and required to wear a mask while in the hospital.

No visitors are allowed to wait in the lobby or waiting rooms. Visitors should remain in patient room and are discouraged from leaving and re-entering the facility during visitor hours.

Two parent/guardian visitors may stay with a patient in a pediatric area in the hospital.

- Pediatric surgical patients will be allowed two parent/guardian visitors. Only one parent/guardian visitor will be allowed in the surgical patient care area during pre-operative and post-operative care.

There will be no visitors for COVID-19 patients or patients under investigation for COVID-19, with an exception made for end-of-life care.

Emergency Department patients may **designate one support person** age 18 or older. Visiting hours do not apply to visitors in the Emergency Department.

Laboring mothers may **designate two support people**, which could include a doula. After birth, patients may **designate one support person** for the entire length of stay in the hospital. Visiting hours do not apply to these visitors.

Patients receiving surgery who are same-day admissions may **designate one support person** to join him/her after his/her procedure and placed in his/her inpatient room.

Visitors who are over 65, pregnant or immunocompromised are discouraged from visiting.

Established processes by which the Operations Administrator or Incident Commander manages visitation exceptions remain in place.

Visitation Guidelines for Outpatient Surgery

Outpatient surgical patients will be allowed **one visitor** to accompany a patient to facilitate care for a procedure or same-day surgery.

Pediatric surgical patients will be allowed **two parent/guardian visitors**. Only one parent/guardian visitor will be allowed in the surgical patient care area during pre-operative and post-operative care.

Visitors will be screened alongside patients prior to entering the clinic.

The visitor will be required to remain in a designated waiting room during the procedure or surgery.

Visitation Guidelines for Outpatient Clinics

One visitor is allowed to accompany each patient to an appointment unless an additional aide or assistant is required.

Visitors will be screened alongside patients prior to entering the clinic.

Additional Restrictions

All visitors will wear masks in addition to our team members and patients who can tolerate them. Visitors may bring their own mask, or one will be provided.

All visitors will be required to pass our health screenings at one of our designated entry points. These screenings require everyone to sanitize their hands, have their temperature checked, put on a mask and answer questions about symptoms of illness and exposure risks prior to entering the hospital. Based on the results of this screening, visitors will be welcomed into the facility or asked to return to their car with instructions to follow up with their healthcare provider.

Check out these available resources for more information about our revised guidelines.

- [Patient letter – English](#)
- [Visitor restrictions sign – 8.5”x11”](#)
- [Visitor restrictions sign – 11”x17”](#)
- [Maestro Care tip sheet](#)

We will provide additional resources regarding this update in the DUHS clinical and operations update tomorrow morning.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding while we work together to rapidly respond to the rise of COVID-19. We're grateful for our team's commitment to caring for our entire community during these unprecedented times.