

Recovery and Reentry Resources

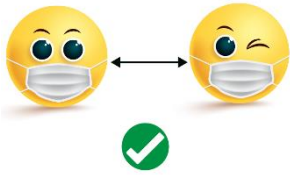
For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



Tips for Communication While Wearing a Mask

<p>When Wearing a Mask</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Consider wearing a laminated large photo of yourself with your title and program information so that residents can better see your face or identify you.▪ Make resident feel safe, be friendly, set the scene.▪ Show resident what you are going to do before you start.▪ Write things down for residents▪ Imagine yourself as an actor. Use dramatic gestures and expressions.▪ Be conscious of your body language.▪ Practice kindness and empathy.▪ Follow-up to make sure the resident understands you.
<p>Show that You are Listening</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Nod to show you are listening and understanding.▪ Maintain good eye contact.▪ Let your eyebrows tell the story.▪ Face the resident and try not to turn away when speaking.
<p>Show How You are Feeling</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Happiness: smile, raise eyebrows▪ Concern: eyebrows pinched together and eyes drooping▪ Remember: eyebrows in a “V” can mean “angry”
<p>Be Aware of How You are Speaking</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Be calm: speak clearly and use short, simple sentences.▪ Try not to speak too loudly, too softly, or too fast or slow.▪ Consider use of a portable voice amplifier.▪ Say one thing at a time.▪ Pause after asking questions.

Suggestions for Maintaining Physical Distance



- Prior to your visit identify how the facility is accommodating visits. Is the visitation to take place outside, in a quiet specified room inside, or resident's room?
- Ensure that you and the resident are separate by at least 6 feet.
- Tell the resident that you wish you could shake their hand or give them a hug (if you know them well), but that because of the virus we need to maintain distance, be careful, and look out for each other.
- If the resident has dementia or behavioral health needs, focusing their attention on something may help you maintain physical distance, such as:
 - If their diet allows, ask staff for a snack or drink for the resident.
 - If the visit is outside and the resident smokes, visit while the resident smokes (if their smoke does not bother you).
 - Ask the activities director if the resident has a favorite hobby and if some of those items can be available during your visit.
 - Ask staff for how they ensure physical distance between the resident and visitors.
- If visiting outside, it may be helpful to walk and talk, as appropriate.

REMINDERS! Follow public health guidance regarding infection control and protection. Follow federal ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [acl.gov](https://www.acl.gov)) and state guidance ([state link](#)) regarding visits to facilities.

Follow guidance for handwashing, self-care, and physical distancing. **DO NOT** conduct facility visits if you have any sickness (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) or been exposed to someone with infectious disease symptoms in the last 14 days. Reschedule visits or if necessary, arrange for another representative to visit. Seek further guidance from the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

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