

Staff talking points for move to Tier 3 inpatient visitation (Updated 01/12/21)

*The following scripts and talking points are designed to assist DUHS staff in communicating our visitation guidelines as we transition from **Tier 2 (Limited Access)** to **Tier 3 (Restricted Access)**. We appreciate the support of all team members in our efforts to keep our campuses safe as we continue to navigate our COVID-19 response.*

Overview of main changes to inpatient visitation

- Visitation hours 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
- Generally, visitors must be ages 18 or older (unless a parent or caregiver of a pediatric patient or another exception applies)
- Non-Covid patients are allowed up to two (2) designated visitors at a time; generally, switching is not allowed (there are limited exceptions – see guidelines below for specifics)
- Inpatients are required to identify designated visitors.
- Nursing staff will enter designated visitors' names into Maestro.
- End-of-Life/Non-COVID patients may have four (4) visitors at one time; switching is allowed (refer to guidelines below for specifics).
- A patient's care team may determine that a patient qualifies to receive visitors based on compassionate care situations.¹
- Note: Screening will continue at visitor entrances.

Visitor badges

- Inpatient visitors must continue to check in and check out at hospital information desks.
- Duke Health visitor badges are still required for entry to inpatient units.
- Visitor badges are valid only for the day they are issued. They expire at midnight.
- Overnight visitors should be sent to the information desk in the morning to renew their badge.
- The date, visitor's photo, and the unit they are visiting are displayed on the badge.
- **It is everyone's responsibility to ensure visitors are wearing valid badges. If they are not, please kindly direct them to return to the information desk to check in.**

Sample scripting for situation on inpatient unit:

If you see a person –

- without a Duke Health visitor badge
- with a Duke Health visitor badge that does not display the current date
- with a Duke Health visitor badge that shows access to a different patient care unit

Response:

Introduce yourself:

¹ Compassionate care situations that require visits include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) end-of-life situations; (2) a patient who was living with his or her family before recently being admitted to the facility is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support; (3) a patient who is grieving after a friend or family member recently passed away; (4) a patient who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by family or caregivers, is experiencing weight loss or dehydration; or (5) a patient, who used to talk and interact with others, is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently when the patient had rarely cried in the past.

- “Hi, my name is _____, and I’m an (employee/nurse/nurse manager/leader, etc.) on the unit.

Briefly state the issue:

- “I noticed that you don’t have a visitor badge. To keep everyone safe, visitor badges are required on our inpatient units. Can you please return to the information desk to check in and get a visitor badge? I’m sorry for the inconvenience.”
- “I noticed that your visitor badge has expired. The badges are only valid for 24 hours. Can you please return to the information desk to check in and get a new visitor badge? I apologize for the inconvenience.”
- “I noticed that your visitor badge has been issued for a different patient care unit. Let me help direct you to the correct unit so that you can find the patient you’re here to visit.”

**Note: It is not necessary to immediately escalate non-compliant visitors to our Security team. However, if the visitor remains challenging, you can call Security to escort them to the information desk.*

Points to remember for information desk staff:

Visitor arrival:

- Inpatient visitors must check in and receive a badge displaying current date, visitor photo and destination.
- Only two designated visitors will be allowed to check in to visit a Non-COVID positive inpatient at one time. No switching allowed (except in limited circumstances—refer to guidelines below for specifics).
- Patients are required to identify designated visitors.
- The exemption field should be used for end-of-life and other special circumstances (including compassionate care visits).

Visitor checkout:

- Upon departure from the patient room, visitors must check out and turn in their visitor badge. They may use the checkout kiosk or check out with information desk staff.

Answers to frequently asked questions

Why are only two designated inpatient visitors allowed for Non-Covid positive patients?

- The safety and well-being of our patients, visitors and staff are our highest priority. Our visitation guidelines are based on recommendations from the CDC and our infectious disease experts. We continuously monitor the spread of infection in our community and across the region.

Why do I need to wear a mask?

- Masking has been proven to help prevent the spread of infection. Along with other safe practices such as physical distancing and not eating near others outside of your household, masking is a crucial part of our efforts to keep everyone safe. Additionally, the CDC continues to recommend masking for everyone in a healthcare facility.

Can compassionate care visitors visit both Non-COVID and COVID patients?

- Yes. Compassionate care visitors can visit both Non-COVID patients and COVID patients. Nevertheless, visitation limitations (e.g. visiting hours, number of visits, etc.) that apply to visits to Non-COVID patients and allowed visits to COVID patients may also be consistently imposed upon compassionate care visitors, as long as the restrictions are based in infection control or clinical reasons.

Who determines whether a patient is eligible for compassionate care visits?

- The patient’s care team.