

## Facebook Covid-19 Update #4

### June 5, 2020

BallouLife Communities continues to remain Covid-19 free, four (4) weeks total. We baseline tested the entire facility on May 26, 2020; at that time all residents tested negative, as did all the staff with the exception of five that could not make it in that day.

They have all since tested negative with one test pending. We have also hired a new nurse, for second shift and her test is pending. Once we get the result of the test and it is negative, she will start working.

Infection prevention remains paramount and I, as the Infection Preventionist, along with administration and staff are doing our utmost to keep us safe and healthy. Covid-19 has proven to be a very insidious infection but as we learn more about it, we up the ante on our precautions and follow the mandates from CDC/CMS and RIDOH.

We had our Infection Control Survey this week on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. RIDOH is mandated by CMS to do these infection control surveys at every facility in the State of Rhode Island. This is not the annual survey but an additional survey to ensure infection control is effective and appropriate. All other states are following the same mandation. When the results are available to us, we will update you in a future posting and they become part of our survey results that are available at the facility. We have also been reporting our Covid-19 information to NHSN which is a CDC/CMS entity. These results are at <https://data.cms.gov/stories/s/COVID-19-Nursing-Home-Data/bkwz-xpvg>. BallouLife Communities has been reporting this information for the past five weeks.

We have received some guidelines from the State of Rhode Island for reopening for visitation, which will be in Phase 3.

In Phase 3, we will be addressing the following elements:

1. Screening procedures

Everyone must be screened at the entrance to the facility for symptoms or risk factors of Covid-19. Entrance is only through the main door at the front of the building. This screening process is the same as previously done in March prior to shutting down visitation altogether. A daily log of visitors will be kept.

2. Physical space, distancing, and occupancy limits

Plans must address the location of visits, physical distancing (at least six feet), and number of visitors. Facilities should prioritize outdoor locations and (if indoor visitation is allowed) locations that limit travel through the facility.

### 3. Scheduling and duration of visits

Facility visitation plans should address duration and frequency of visitation. Visits must be scheduled in advance. Unannounced visits are unacceptable.

### 4. Cleaning and disinfecting procedures

After each visit, the area used is cleaned before another visit may take place.

### 5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

Both the resident and the visitors must wear cloth Face Masks. Visitors should provide their own mask; the facility will provide one for the resident.

### 6. Hand Hygiene

It is expected that all visitors shall perform hand hygiene upon entry and prior to exiting the facility. Staff must document this; hand sanitizer will be available for this.

### 7. Communication/Education

As the facility establishes our policies & procedures, these will be posted at the entrance, to our website, and Facebook. We will also mail a hard copy to everyone so there will be no confusion.

### 8. Other Considerations

Plans must ensure enough staffing to meet resident care needs, facilitate, and monitor the visitation process. A staff member must monitor the visit. If a facility identifies a new-onset Covid-19 case in the home, the facility shall go back to the highest level of vigilance and mitigation with respect to visitations and repeat all phases prior to visitation resuming.

The facility must formulate these plans and submit them to RIDOH for approval prior to opening. We are in the process of putting together this information. Please bear in mind our goal is to reunite you with your loved ones but safely. The State of Rhode Island is in week one of Phase Two. Time is necessary to adjust to this phase before Phase Three becomes effective and even then, we must err on the side of caution to ensure we can open safely. The above criteria is necessary to protect everyone involved.

Your family members are happy and healthy; we are doing our utmost to keep them in touch with you. When we slowly reopen for visits, sadly, not everyone can come at once. We will continue to keep you in touch, as we have been with Face Time and phone calls. Please continue to send cards, letters and care packages. A “thinking of you” makes their day!

Respectfully submitted,

**Ruth A. Daly, RN, Infection Preventionist**