



December 8, 2020

Dear Smith Crossing Family,

On behalf of your entire Smith Crossing team, I thank our residents and their families for your most generous holiday gifts to all staff members. Your contributions to this year's Holiday Cheer Fund exceeded even more than last year. Your support and encouragement means so much to us and our families.

Today, I also included some topics which are top-of-mind among residents and their families. But first, I'll update information about testing and current information from the Illinois and Will County Departments of Health.

Testing reports, plan for this week

This morning, we conducted drive-by rapid tests for two staff members, who began to experience symptoms. Both have tested positive for COVID-19.

- One member of our Environmental Services, whose family was exposed to the virus, last worked throughout our campus on Monday, November 30, with minimal resident contact.
- A CNA, who also noted the onset of symptoms, last worked in Greenleaf Rehab on Sunday, December 6.

Both employees are at home recuperating from COVID-19 and only will return to work in accordance with CDC standards. Please respect their privacy by observing all HIPAA guidelines.

We already have reported outcomes for all tests prior to Friday, December 4, which were taken by residents and staff members. Early this afternoon, our lab sent results for 40 percent of the tests conducted here last Friday, December 4, when 107 residents, 159 employees and six others were tested. So far, all outcomes are negative. If and when we learn of any positive results, we will inform you in a timely manner.

This week, we again are testing all employees between 1pm and 4pm today and on Friday, December 11, in a section of the Bistro. On these same days, all assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care residents are tested in their apartments.

Even though they are not required to do so, independent living residents—especially those who left our campus for Thanksgiving festivities or may be experiencing symptoms—should call Amie Kamba at extension 2329 to schedule a test. 

Concerns about a second wave surge

Today, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported 7,910 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19, down from 8,691 reported yesterday. It is too soon for these recent tests to identify cases contracted during Thanksgiving weekend. Governor JB Pritzker addressed how the spike in people hospitalized for the virus is straining an already stressed healthcare system and worries about how hospitals will meet the anticipated surge of new COVID-19 patients and care for those with other healthcare needs.

Also today, Region 7, including Will County, posted a positivity rate of 15.4 percent, down from 15.7 percent on Monday, but nowhere near meeting the three-day positivity rate of 12 percent to begin to consider lifting any restrictions to Illinois' Tier 3 guidelines.

Plans for Christmas celebrations

We look forward to sharing news about a variety of uplifting ways to brighten this year's Christmas season—which certainly is like no other any of us has experienced. By next Tuesday, we will publish a complete list of programs and activities designed to imbue our daily lives with holiday cheer.

We encourage families to start scheduling now their plans for virtual visits during the weeks leading into and following Christmas Day. Please contact Mary DePaola at extension 2305 or MDePaola@SmithSeniorLiving.org.

For this year's holiday season, however, Tier 3 guidelines remain in effect so we continue with our current practices

For assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing care residents

- All outdoor and indoor visits in our licensed areas are suspended even on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- Still allowed are visits by essential caregivers and families spending compassionate care time here
- We are delivering breakfast, lunch and dinner to residents
- We cancelled all small group activities and closed the Salon
- Our staff is more frequently visiting with residents in their apartments
- We increased the variety of programs, including informative and entertaining broadcasts, now available on Channel 3
- We introduced activities in hallways so residents can enjoy ways of being together while observing social distancing



For independent living residents

- We continue to offer a limited number of 45-minute lobby visits when scheduled with the Receptionist
- Family compassionate care visits must be approved by Amie Kamba at extension 2329
- While the Dining Room is closed
 - Grab-and-go meals are available at the Bistro and the Dining Room
 - Dinner is delivered upon request by calling extension 2317
- Both The Oak Room and the Salon are closed
- Emilie's Store remains closed to shoppers but now offer deliveries for essential items
- We have suspended all in-person programs except live broadcasts on Channel 36

Status reports for priority topics

- **Payments for COVID-19 tests** / At this time, Medicare and third-party insurance providers are covering the costs for residents' tests
- **Vaccinations** / Walgreens, our pharmacy partner for administering inoculations for residents and employees, will contact us as soon as it has a date for our community
- **Deliveries** / Continue to deliver all groceries and packages to our main entrance between 11am and 2pm, Monday through Friday
- **Emilie's Store** / Your orders placed using the Store's form, available at the Reception Desk, are delivered between 12 and 2pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Continue to exercise precautions

All residents must

- Wear a face mask—covering both nose and mouth—when leaving their home and when any employee enters their apartment for any reason
- Observe six-foot social distancing in hallways and during any small gatherings
- Wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer provided at stations throughout our building
- Self-quarantine if they have visited any hot spot designated on Tuesdays by the City of Chicago

All visitors are expected to comply with all these practices and to arrive wearing a mask before they are allowed to enter Smith Crossing. 

Find comfort in taking the best precautions

Please follow all Smith Crossing's precautions to abate the spread of COVID-19 within our community. They are guided by directives issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Chicago and Illinois Departments of Public Health.

Please be mindful of any symptoms of COVID-19 you might experience

- Fever of 100° or higher or a fever above your typical baseline
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste and/or smell
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

If you think you are experiencing one or more symptoms of COVID-19

- Limit your interactions with others
- Residents should contact Amie Kamba at extension 2329 so she can expedite testing for you here
- Visitors, please stay home

Communication is key

Please mark your calendar for a family meeting via Zoom at 6pm on Wednesday, December 23. Next Tuesday, we will send a link so you can join this virtual gathering and follow-up with a separate reminder next Wednesday.

We share your disappointment that Smith Crossing must remain closed to most visitors. So if you have suggestions or questions about any circumstance, please send them to COVID19SmithCrossing@SmithSeniorLiving.org. A senior staff member, who monitors your messages, will ask the appropriate Smith Crossing employee to respond directly to you.

Thank you for finding new ways to celebrate the spirit of this Christmas season.

Best wishes,

Amanda Mauceri

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Executive Director