



December 15, 2020

Dear Smith Crossing Family,

Today's the day! Your Smith Crossing staff members receive their portion of the residents' Holiday Cheer Fund. Again, everyone who has the privilege of serving you appreciates your exceptionally thoughtful generosity. Thank you so much.

Our staff members look forward to sharing their Christmas spirit with a variety of treats they've prepared for residents including

- On Thursday, December 17, starting at 2pm you can tune in Channel 36 to enjoy our employees' annual holiday show broadcast this year
- On every Wednesday starting at 2pm, Smith Crossing's Holiday Cheer carts travel through the halls of our entire community to serve cocktails, appetizers and desserts to all residents
- Your culinary team has lined up some great ways to savor the holidays
 - As part of our *25 Days of Holiday Cookies*, residents can pick-up at The Oak Room the cookie-of-day, inspired each day by a resident's favorite family recipe and baked by our kitchen staff
 - Holiday appetizers—from a charcuterie board to sliders along with a glass of wine—for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve can be ordered for one or two people no later than Friday, December 18, using a form in the Bistro
 - December bake sale items—cheesecake, cranberry lemon loaf, Christmas cookie platters and fudge *plus* cookie decorating kits and take-and-bake cinnamon rolls with cream cheese frosting—are available at the Bistro
 - Our Christmas Day Menu to be ordered on that morning by calling extension 2317 to arrange pick-ups between 12 and 3pm and deliveries on the hour until 3pm

Plus there's still time to enter the raffle for 10 beautiful holiday baskets donated by residents, staff and vendors to benefit Emilie's Fund. Be sure to stop by The Oak Room to enter to win and checkout Facebook to see photos of them.

Testing plan through end of 2020, report on new cases

This week, Smith Crossing continues to conduct COVID-19 tests—biweekly for employees in the Bistro and weekly tests for residents in apartments in healthcare settings—according to our regular schedule between 1pm and 4pm today and on Friday, December 18.

Independent living residents, who are not required to be tested, can schedule one by calling Amie Kamba at extension 2329.

For two weeks starting on Monday, December 21, we may be altering the testing schedule for both employees and residents required to take tests.

Late on Monday afternoon, we were notified about two positive outcomes for COVID-19 for colleagues who were tested here on Friday, December 11, including



- A nurse, who last cared for residents in our assisted living and memory care settings on Sunday, December 13. This person is at home and recovering from mild symptoms associated with the virus.
- A third-party caregiver, who has no symptoms and helped two assisted living clients on Monday. We have notified family members for both residents. This healthcare provider now is self-quarantined at home.

Both only will return to work in accordance with CDC standards. Please respect their privacy by observing all HIPAA guidelines.

Because there were two caregivers, who care for assisted living residents tested positive yesterday, we decided to complete rapid tests for all residents in this area. I am happy to report all tested negative this morning. And we will test them again on Friday according to protocols for this process.

Planning has begun for vaccinations here

As you know from my recent letters and the story that is dominating the news this week, residents and employees at senior living communities are among the first in line to receive the vaccine produced by Pfizer and BioNTech. According to the Illinois Department of Public Health this afternoon, it is most likely that communities like ours and others with long-term care will begin to receive the vaccines during the week of December 28, 2020.

At this time, we are awaiting more specific directions and a date certain for the first date to be on our campus from Walgreens, our partner in administering the inoculations. Until then, there are a few ways we can expedite our process to ensure we have all the required information for every resident who wants to be vaccinated.

During this week, Smith Crossing staff members will

- Call the designated family member or POA for skilled nursing care residents to secure verbal consent and confirm that all contact information is current and accurate in a resident's file
- Gauge interest of independent and assisted living residents by asking them to confirm if they might like to be included—if vaccine is available to them—by signing up on sheets at both Reception Desks, which will help us estimate the number of shots to request

We will contact memory care residents' family members when we have more specific information from Walgreens.

Experts tell us that 80 percent participation is the optimum for those who agree to be vaccinated because it increases protection for everyone. As a community, let's take advantage of our priority treatment. If you have questions about adverse reactions, please check with your personal physician just like you would before taking a flu shot.

And if you decide to forgo this opportunity—when Walgreens will visit Smith Crossing three times to complete both dosages for residents and staff members—please know that your next opportunity to be vaccinated is likely to be no sooner than May 2021 as part of the general population in Illinois.



Illinois' uptick in cases, reason to stay the course

Today, media announced our country's national death toll of 301,438 people due to COVID-19, surpassing all records and placing the United States as the country with the most fatalities. Also, today the Illinois Department of Public Health reported 7,359 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19, up slightly from 7,214 reported yesterday. Also today, Region 7, which includes Will County, posted a positivity rate of 12.6 percent, a slight drop from 12.8 percent on Monday, December 14.

For this year's holiday season, Smith Crossing continues to adhere to all Tier 3 guidelines, which remain in effect. Starting this week, we are encouraging assisted living residents to leave their apartments for exercise and trips to the mailroom as safe ways to socialize.

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 offers deliveries for essential items on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon
- We have suspended all in-person programs except live broadcasts on Channel 36

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.

Christmastime connections

We know that forgoing time together with family and friends this holiday season is very disappointing. This week, the CDC confirmed that small family gatherings are the most likely places for spreading the virus.

So we hope residents and their families will take advantage of numerous ways to plan virtual meetings. If you would like some assistance, please contact Mary DePaola at MDePaola@SmithSeniorLiving.org or 708-326-2305.

And while it's still a busy time of year, we encourage families to reserve 6pm on Wednesday, December 23, for a meeting with Bill Jansma, Mary DePaola and me via Zoom. Separately, we'll distribute the link to this meeting on the day before and day of our virtual family meeting next Wednesday.

Please send to COVID19SmithCrossing@SmithSeniorLiving.org your questions and suggestions so the appropriate Smith Crossing employee can respond directly to you.

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

Here's to getting into the Christmas Spirit!

Amanda Mauceri

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Executive Director