

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update – May 2, 2020

**To: Residents and Their Family Members - Wisconsin**

As you may know, the White House Administration recently proposed guidelines under which U.S. state governors could act to revive the U.S. economy from its coronavirus shutdown in a staggered, three-stage process. While it is generally understood that a prolonged shutdown could be deeply harmful to the U.S. economy and society, the guidance given also stated that opening up needs to be done one careful step at a time. Here's one compelling reason why:

Statistically, with over 6,800 COVID cases now reported in Wisconsin, it is recorded that more than 8 % of COVID cases involve congregate settings and another 15% are related to health care worker exposure. The source of a whopping 46% of COVID cases are UNKNOWN, underscoring the risk one takes when freely coming and going, in and out of unknown environments where exposure may occur.

*With this in mind, below, are answers to **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** surrounding the phased re-opening and what this means for your ability to see or visit your loved one at The Waters Senior Living.*

**Q: Who determines when and how a State can re-open?**

It is up to each state's Governor to communicate a path forward, based on the federal guidelines. Every state needs to meet specific requirements in order to begin the three-phase process of re-opening. These include:

- The primary indicator is a downward trajectory of documented cases or positive tests as a percent of total tests, within a 14-day period.
- Hospitals are treating patients without crisis care and have a robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing.
- States should have the ability to set up screening and testing sites for people with symptoms, as well as contact tracing capabilities, and healthcare facilities should be able to supply personal protective gear independently and handle surges if COVID-19 cases increase again.

**Q: What are the three phases of re-opening?**

**The first phase -**

- **All vulnerable individuals should continue to Shelter in Place.** Vulnerable individuals are defined as the following, which includes but is not limited to elderly individuals, individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic lung disease, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised, such as by chemotherapy, cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.
- **Visits to senior living facilities and hospitals should be prohibited.**
- The guidelines say groups of more than 10 people should be avoided if [appropriate distancing measures](#) are not practical.
- Non-essential travel should be minimized, telework should be encouraged, and common areas in offices closed.
- Schools remain closed in phase 1, but large venues such as movies theaters, restaurants, stadiums, and places of worship can open with "[strict physical distancing protocols](#)."
- Hospitals, which have been hit hard by the health crisis, may resume elective surgeries, which are critical to their income, and gyms can re-open with new protocols. Bars should remain closed.
  
- **The second phase –**
  - **All vulnerable individuals should continue to Shelter in Place.**
  - **Visits to senior living facilities and hospitals should be prohibited.**
  - All individuals, when in public (e.g. parks, outdoor recreation areas, shopping areas) should socially distance from others.
  - The guidelines recommend groups of more than 50 be avoided where social distancing is not practical (applicable to states and regions with "no evidence of a rebound" in cases).
  - Non-essential travel can resume, while schools and youth camps can reconvene and bars with "diminished standing-room occupancy" may re-open.
  
- **The third phase –**
  - **All vulnerable individuals can resume public interaction** but should practice physical social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.
  - **Scheduled visits to senior care facilities and hospitals can resume with diligent hygiene practices.**
  - Employers resume unrestricted staffing of workplaces.
  - Large venues (EX: Sit down dining, places of spiritual worship, movie theatres, and sporting venues) can operate under limited physical distancing protocols.

- Gyms can remain open if they adhere to standard hygiene protocols.
- Bars may operate with increased standing room occupancy where applicable.

**Q: So, what phase does the Waters Senior Living fit into?**

Given that the Waters Senior Living serves some of the most vulnerable individuals, our business type will be one of the last to “re-open”; that is, the conditions need to be such that elderly individuals, individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic lung disease, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised, such as by chemotherapy, cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy, are no longer at risk. *Please know that The Waters will be evaluating each phase and identifying areas where we may be able to gradually and safely lift restrictions.*

**Q: So, when might I be able to begin visiting my loved one on a regular basis?**

We anticipate that, it will be several months from now. It will depend upon the State of Wisconsin’s ability to first meet the established requirements for re-opening, including 14-day downward trajectory of cases, increased testing ability, and adequate supply of personal protective gear. Until this milestone is reached, the phases do not yet begin. Therefore, “Safer at Home” will continue over these next couple of months.

**Q: Now with warmer, spring weather coming, does my loved one still need to be “Safer at Home” in WI?**

Yes. Please know that we continue with the “**Safer at Home**” and precautions **based upon guidance from the CDC and WI Department of Health (WI DOH)**. It is essential that we have the support and cooperation of each resident with all the precautionary measures we have implemented in all of our Communities. The WI DOH strongly advises these critical prevention measures to minimize any spread of COVID-19. *Please know that The Waters will be evaluating creative ways to safely lift restrictions.*

**Q: What are the critical guidelines for “Safer at Home?”**

- Encouraging Tele-health
- No communal dining
- No gathering/socializing in common spaces
- Strongly recommend residents wear a cloth mask when out of their apartment
- Highly discourage outings to the grocery store or running errands
- No resident-to-resident apartment visits

- Discouraging visits to see family members.

*Please remember, every time you venture out into public settings, you are placing yourself at risk by exposing yourself to the virus and, in turn, bringing that risk of exposure back to the other residents and staff in the building.*

**Q: When will the Health and Wellbeing Studio be available for use again?**

Although Phase One states that gyms will re-open with sanitation and social distancing protocols, The Waters is evaluating where we may be able to gradually and safely lift restrictions.

**Q: How does the Waters continue to protect everyone who lives in or works at the Communities affected?**

We continue aggressive, proactive infection control measures and screening procedures. In addition, we have followed all recommended guidance from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the WI DOH to protect our residents and staff from this virus and will continue to take every action possible to prevent it from spreading in our setting. This includes continuing to only allow “medically essential” personnel, who are screened upon arrival.

**Q: What can any resident or team member do to protect himself or herself?**

Continue to follow CDC guidelines for standard hygiene practices to help mitigate Coronavirus risk. These are:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with other people.
- Stay in your apartment home as much as possible to help prevent the spread. *(Residents)*
- Stay home if you are sick. *(Residents and The Waters Team Members)*
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away, and wash hands again.
- Frequently clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces. Contact your supervisor or nurse on duty if you are unable to locate disinfectant products and supplies.

**Q: Will The Waters Corporate Emergency Preparedness Leadership Team continue to monitor this public health concern daily?**

YES! Please know that The Waters Corporate Emergency Preparedness Leadership Team continues to monitor this public health concern daily. Our commitment is to promote the safety, health and wellbeing of everyone

who lives in or works at The Waters Senior Living. As valued residents and family members, we will continue to keep you informed and to be transparent about any new developments.

**Q: How can I continue to stay informed?**

**PLEASE REFER TO THE WATERS DEDICATED COVID-19 WEB SITE FOR ANSWERS TO COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS** – Your cooperation in referencing our web site for answers to commonly asked questions will help minimize the disruption among Team Members who are trying to care for our residents.

In addition, you are always welcome to contact the Executive Director of the Community that your family member is living in.

<https://www.thewatersseniorliving.com/>