1. **Title**

*COVID-19: Prohibition of Visitors*

1. **Purpose**

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has adopted emergency rule [25 TAC **§133.51**](https://www.sos.texas.gov/texreg/archive/April172020/Emergency%20Rules/25.HEALTH%20SERVICES.html)in response to the state of disaster declared in Texas and the United States of America relating to COVID-19. General hospitals are now instructed to implement and enforce written policies and procedures related to visitation and the entry of the hospital’s workforce to protect the health and safety of patients, employees, and the public.

The emergency rule **prohibits all visitors** except persons providing critical assistance and providers of essential services from entering a hospital and provides criteria hospitals must follow prior to allowing entry. The emergency rule also defines providers of essential services, persons with legal authority to enter, and persons providing critical assistance. The emergency rule further states that a hospital must not prohibit government personnel performing their official duty from entering, unless the person meets screening criteria.

1. **Policy**

Cogdell Memorial Hospital and Family Clinic willprohibit visitors except persons providing critical assistance and providers of essential services from entering the facility. As a provider of essential services, **each patient is allowed a single, designated adult caregiver per hospital stay or clinic visit.** The exception is the COVID-19 unit (CVU) where NO VISITORS are allowed. The designated caregiver must remain the same throughout the hospitalization.

**All visitors MUST meet the screening criteria and wear a mask while in the facility.**

The hospital does not prohibit government personnel performing their official duty from entering the hospital. Any allowed visitor **must** meet current screening criteria. The screening required by this section does not apply to emergency services personnel entering the hospital in an emergency situation, but it is agreed that local emergency services personnel will be conducting their own employee screening prior to the start of a shift, using the same criteria and process as Cogdell Memorial Hospital. Otherwise, the emergency services personnel must be screened at the front entrance in the same manner as all visitors, patients and employees.

(1) Providers of essential services include, but are not limited to, contract doctors, contract nurses, hospice workers, other contract healthcare providers, persons providing a survivor of sexual assault with services required by Health and Safety Code Chapter 323, and a **single designated caregiver acting on the patient’s behalf.**

(2) Persons with legal authority to enter include, but are not limited to, government personnel performing their official duties and an attorney or other legally authorized representative of a patient.

(3) Persons providing critical assistance include providers of essential services, persons with legal authority to enter, a clergy member authorized by the hospital, one parent of a minor who is a patient, and family members and friends of a patient at the end of life or presenting at the emergency department, subject to the hospital’s policies and procedures.

**No minor visitors** will be allowed.

Patients near the **end-of-life** may be allowed two visitors at a time, and may be rotated out with others on a limited basis. The House Supervisor or AOC may adjust this on a case-by-case basis.

**Surgical** patients may have one designated caregiver with them while at the hospital for a surgical procedure. While waiting for the patient who is in surgery, the visitor may not leave the designated area.

**Outpatient lab, radiology and respiratory therapy patients** will NOT be allowed to have a visitor to enter the building with them unless the patient is a minor and requires accompaniment.

**Specialty Clinic** patients are allowed to have one person accompany them to their appointment. The visitor may not be a minor and must pass the screening criteria. The visitor must wear a visitor’s badge and is only allowed in the Specialty Clinic which is accessed via the South Entrance only. They are not allowed in any other part of the hospital. If the patient needs to go for outpatient testing in the main part of the hospital, the visitor may not accompany them unless the patient is a minor and requires accompaniment.

**All visitors must meet screening criteria.**

**Screening Criteria:**

Prohibited from entering the facility is any visitor who has **any** of the following:

* Fever (≥ 100.0°) or subjective fever
* Cough
* Shortness of breath
* Chills
* Repeated shaking with chills
* Muscle pain
* Headache
* Sore throat
* Loss of taste or smell
* Diarrhea
* In the last 14 days, has had known close contact with person with lab confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, someone who is under investigation for COVID-19, or someone who is ill with a respiratory illness or
* International travel within the last 14 days to countries with ongoing community transmission. For updated information on affected countries visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html>.

***NOTE:*** *Cogdell is committed to equal access to care for all patients. Though visitation is restricted at this time in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the safety of patients, staff and visitors in accordance with 25 TAC §133.51, patients with disabilities will not be denied reasonable access to needed support persons irrespective of location of care within Cogdell. If a situation arises where the restricted visitation policy appears to conflict with this directive, the Administrator-on-Call should be contacted immediately to provide an exception to this policy or to arrange for an alternate means of meeting this need.*

1. **Procedure**

* Visitors will only be allowed entrance to the facility through one point of entry (main lobby)
* If visitor is allowed based on criteria above and passes the screening, a badge will be given indicating they are authorized to visit that one designated area
* Visitors must return the badge when exiting the building
* A visitor log will maintained by screening staff
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1. **Relevant Federal and State Statutes or Guidelines:**

* Texas Health and Human Services: Health Facility Compliance Guidance Letter GL 20-2015: Emergency Rule for Hospital Response to COVID-19 (Issued April 6, 2020)

[*https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/facilities-regulation/memos/gl-20-2015.pdf*](https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/facilities-regulation/memos/gl-20-2015.pdf)

* Texas Administrative Code Emergency Rule §133.51

[*https://www.sos.texas.gov/texreg/archive/April172020/Emergency%20Rules/25.HEALTH%20SERVICES.html*](https://www.sos.texas.gov/texreg/archive/April172020/Emergency%20Rules/25.HEALTH%20SERVICES.html)

* Governor Greg Abbott’s Disaster Proclamation:

[*https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/facilities-*](https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/facilities-regulation/memos/gl-20-2007-a2.pdf)

* CDC Guidance for Healthcare Facilities:

[*https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/guidance-hcf.html*](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/guidance-hcf.html)

1. **Organizational Justification of Level 5 Document**

*Level 5 document issued and implemented in accordance with:*

*1.ORG.QM.0750 Documented Information* ***and***

*2.ORG.QM.0750 Control of Documented Information (Procedure)* ***for*** *State of Disaster/Emergency related to:*

*COVID-19 (State and Federal Declarations 03-13-2020, Local Declaration 03-16-2020)*

*Applies to:*

*COVID-19-Related Documents - Retroactive to 03-01-2020*

1. **Dates Amended/Approved**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Originated/Updated*** | ***Informal Review/Approval*** | ***Formal Review/Approval*** |
| ***03/17/2020*** | ***03/17/2020*** | ***03/25/2020*** |
| *03/30/2020* | *03/30/2020* |  |
| *04/01/2020* | *04/01/2020* |  |
| *04/15/2020* | *04/15/2020* |  |
| *05/07/2020* | *05/07/2020* |  |
| *06/10/2020* | *06/10/2020* |  |
| *06/16/2020* | *06/16/2020* | ***06/24/2020 Pending*** |

1. **Contact Information**

Infection Control (325) 574-7292 / (325) 574-7141

Risk Management (325) 574-7284