

Justus CORONAVIRUS UPDATE



Dear Justus Residents, Family and Friends,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, our Justus communities remain vigilant with infection control protocols, screening and social distancing and serving the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of our residents. At the same time, we've worked to encourage and reward our staff for their continued commitment during this challenging time.

While the state is sponsoring and requiring testing of Skilled Nursing Facility staff, the assistance and focus has not been on Assisted Living Communities. However, over the past two weeks, Justus Senior Living communities contracted with a private laboratory to initiate universal staff testing. Testing priority was placed first on direct care staff and this week, the remainder of the staff were tested. We are grateful that we have received no positive results to date.

As state and local governments begin to reopen in a phased approach and the public and businesses are trying to return to life and work, the increased risk for seniors remains. This makes it mentally and emotionally challenging for seniors. Our teams have worked diligently to provide creative social engagement and entertainment opportunities through various technology platforms, window concerts, to the door activity delivery and more while following state guidelines.

Our leadership continues to be thorough, intentional and thoughtful with monitoring changes in guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health and the CDC Guidelines, developing new policy and procedures and implementing changes as quickly as possible. Most recent guidelines have tried to lessen the challenges of social isolation. Reopening looks differently in senior living communities, but since we currently have no positive cases among residents and staff in any of our communities, we have been able to cautiously lift selected restrictions with a phased approach.

Phase 1 - Fitness Center

The first restriction lifted was the use of our fitness centers. While our fitness coordinators had been hard at work leading virtual fitness classes, hallway fitness classes, and one on one sessions with our residents, this wasn't the same as utilizing the equipment in our state-of-the-art fitness centers. The Indiana State Department of Health released guidelines allowing residents to use the fitness centers due to the benefits to physical and mental health and wellbeing and we immediately responded. Our Fitness Centers have been open for one on one visits with infection control protocols and supervision. Scheduled visits of one resident at a time have been taking place in our fitness centers and have been appreciated by residents and families. To schedule a time, contact the concierge.

Phase 2 – Essential therapy

Balancing the critical need for therapy when residents are recovering from an injury or illness with the risk of bringing therapists into the building is necessary as we strive for patient-centered care. Guidelines allow us to bring in Home Health Therapy on a case by case basis. This has proven beneficial. Our preferred Home Health company agreed to wear full PPE in lieu of a mask only and to have nurses and therapists test negative to COVID-19 prior to being allowed in the building.

Phase 3 - Outdoor Visitation

Last week our communities were excited to begin offering limited outdoor visitation and residents, friends and families have been enjoying time to reunite. Each community must meet certain criteria and at this time all communities meet the criteria and are able to facilitate outdoor visitation. For more information or to schedule a visit contact the Concierge.

Phase 4 - Essential Family Caregivers

The support of family and friends is essential to the health and happiness of our residents. Recognizing the critical role family members and other caregivers have in the care and support of our residents, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) issued guidance that we could allow Essential Family Caregivers (EFCs) who meet very specific criteria and follow outlined rules. This week, residents and/or families could complete an application to see if they qualify for this designation. The goal of EFCs is to help high-risk residents who are missing care previously provided by a loved one or outside caregiver at least two times a week. The decision to designate an EFC is individualized and integrated with person-centered care planning. Realizing both the potential benefits and risks of allowing additional "essential" caregivers into the building, we must consider the current status of COVID-19 in our community and in the surrounding area. To apply for the EFC designation, contact the concierge.

Phase 5 – Dining with Social Distancing

Because we have no positive cases in our communities, we can open our dining room with social distancing and reservations. The dining room will be open Monday through Friday for all three meals. Residents will be seated at individual tables except couples who may share a table. Takeout and delivery will still be available at no additional charge. Everyone is looking forward to welcoming residents back to the dining room.

Please keep in mind that restrictions may return if there is an active outbreak in our community or if the local COVID-19 situation worsens.

Salons - Hopefully, soon the ISDH will release guidelines for opening the salons. We have made your concerns known and we have made suggestions on how we could open the salon safely. As soon as we receive this update from the state, we will do all we can to open the salons quickly.

COVID -19 Cases – At this time, we humbly announce that there are no resident or staff positive cases at any of the Justus Communities. We fully understand that can change very quickly; however, we need to celebrate when it is going well, and our residents and work family are healthy.

Thank you for your phone calls, letters and emails recognizing those heroes who are our front-line team members, for our community leaders who have gone above and beyond and for all our staff who have stayed committed to their calling even through a very challenging time. Your support, encouragement, patience, and understanding are greatly appreciated as we stand together through this global pandemic.

In this together,
The Justus Leadership Team