

Visitors Policy

NO visitors are allowed across the SBH Health System with limited exceptions!

Based on guidance provided by the New York State Department of Health we have updated our visitor policies at SBH Health System to ensure a safe environment for our patients and visitors amid the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). As of May 22, 2020, due to the COVID-19 emergency, we are prohibiting all visitors across the SBH Health System. This includes visitors to the emergency department.

There are limited exceptions to this policy which include the following:

All Visitors:

Visit only if you are healthy. If you are feeling feverish, sudden onset cough and nasal congestion, please don't enter. All visitors are screened prior to entering the hospital and clinical areas. Hospital staff must conduct a temperature check prior to visitors entering clinical areas and every twelve hours thereafter for the remainder of their presence at the bedside. Sick visitors or support persons who present with or develop symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to leave, and visitors that have traveled outside of the United States are not permitted to visit. All visitors must be 15 years or older. Anyone 70 years old or older is not encouraged to be a support person due to the increased risk of COVID-19 infection.

Inpatient Locations:

The following are restrictions regarding support persons permitted at the bedside for:

- Patients in labor and delivery can have one support person and a doula (if they have one) for the labor, delivery and remaining duration of the patient's stay. These will be the only people permitted for the duration of care.

The patient or caregiver can designate two people but only one person may be present at any given time for:

- **Pediatric patients**
- **Patients for whom a support person has been determined to be essential to the care of the patient (medically necessary) including patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities with cognitive impairments including dementia.**
- **Patients in imminent end-of-life situations.** Imminent end-of-life is defined as a patient who is actively dying, where death is anticipated within less than 24 hours. In the event the patient is a parent of a minor child, one adult family member and one child may be permitted at the patient bedside.

These restrictions must be explained to patient/caregiver in plain terms on arrival or ideally prior to arrival.

Exceptions which restrict support persons may be applied in limited circumstances and must be limited to medical necessity determinations made by the treating clinician and/or based on the facilities' ability to maintain appropriate infection control protocols.

Support persons are required to wear PPE. That is,

- Wear a surgical or procedure mask throughout their time in the hospital,
- Practice scrupulous hand hygiene,
- Remain in the patient's room except for entrance and exit from the hospital, and
- For a patient with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, while in the patient's room, a gown and gloves should be worn to prevent the person's hands or clothes from becoming contaminated. Eye protection should be worn while in the room if available. In these circumstances the risks of acquiring COVID-19 should be fully explained, so that the patient and support person can make an informed decision of whether or not the support person's presence at the patient bedside is essential to the patient's health

If a support person was confirmed as having symptomatic COVID-19 but meets the following conditions:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever (greater than or equal to 100.0 F) without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); AND
- At least 14 days have passed since symptoms attributed to COVID-19 first appeared.
- For a support person who was asymptomatic at the time of their first positive test and remain asymptomatic, at least 14 days have passed since the first positive test.

Discharge: One healthy visitor allowed to pick up discharged patient at lobby or ambulatory surgery unless ambulance pick up.

Emergency Department

1. Peds ED – **One** healthy visitor per patient for duration – parent or legal guardian only
2. Adult ED – **No** visitors unless patient requires assistance. If patient requires assistance, **one** healthy visitor for duration
3. Patients for whom a support person has been determined to be essential to the care of the patient (medically necessary) including patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities with cognitive impairments including dementia ED – One healthy visitor per patient for duration

These policies are subject to change as we continue to closely monitor the situation. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Policy updated on May 26, 2020

