

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 26

NEW VISITOR GUIDELINES

VISITING HOURS ARE 8 A.M. TO 8 P.M. AT ALL VIRTUA HOSPITALS



Due to recent developments related to the COVID-19 virus, we have updated our visitation protocols in order to protect the health and safety of our patients and their families as well as our staff and the communities we serve. Unless otherwise described below, **general visitation is currently limited to one designated visitor per patient.** In certain circumstances, it may be possible to designate an alternate visitor. **We request that visits are limited to no more than two hours.** General visiting hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at all Virtua hospitals.

Virtua Health strongly encourages all visitors to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Due to safety protocols associated with COVID-19, visitors are asked not to eat or drink in patient rooms or in the cafeteria. We encourage visitors to eat before or after their visit to the hospital to minimize the need to remove masks.

Important Requirements for Our Visitors:

- Facemasks and other appropriate Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) are required for all visitors in all areas of our facilities. Visitors must wear either two ear-loop masks, one ear-loop mask under a cloth mask, or a KN95 mask. Virtua has ear-loop masks available for visitors.
- Sanitize hands to protect those whom you are visiting and our staff who are caring for your loved ones.
- Temperature checks and COVID-19 screening protocols will be administered by our staff prior to a visitor entering the facility.
- If visiting a patient in a semi-private room, if both beds are occupied, the visitor must draw the curtain between the beds and keep his/her mask on at all times.
- Visitors must be 18 years or older.
- Visitors who do not satisfy these requirements, or who show signs of illness – even mild sickness, such as coughing and/or cold-like symptoms – will be required to leave.

Exceptions and/or additional limitations related to the above requirements may be considered depending on the circumstances, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Patients must wear a face mask when a visitor is present.

Visitation Rules for Certain Patients and Areas in Our Hospital

Pediatrics

One or both parents/guardians, or a parent/guardian and identified support person, can visit/remain with a patient who is a minor at any time.

Patients with Disabilities

Patients with physical or cognitive disabilities, including but not limited to sensory impairment or developmental/cognitive disability, may have one support person at any time, including overnight for inpatient procedures.

Same Day Surgery or Medical Procedure and Outpatient Procedures

Unless otherwise specified in this policy, the following apply:

- For outpatient procedures one support person may accompany the patient.
- For same day surgeries and procedures, one support person may accompany the patient into the facility, remain with him/her through the intake process and rejoin the patient at discharge. At the facility's discretion, the support person may be permitted to rejoin the patient before discharge.
- Visitors may wait for the patient in the hospital's designated waiting area while the patient is having his/her procedure, or will be directed to wait outside of the facility or in their vehicles. In some cases, a passcode is utilized so that the visitor can call in for patient updates and information.

Labor and Delivery / Post-partum Stay

One specifically identified support person can accompany a laboring patient. Under certain circumstances, an alternative support person can be substituted. Such substitution can be discussed with the care team. The support person should restrict his/her movements to the unit in order to minimize potential spread or exposure to COVID-19. A doula is considered part of the care team and is not included in the visitor capacity limit.

High-Risk Obstetrics

For post-partum readmissions of breast feeding mothers, an identified support person may visit with a newborn, and the newborn must remain with the support person at all times. The patient may identify an alternative support person who can visit when the main support is not present.

Mother/Baby Units

One identified primary support person has unrestricted visiting; an additional support person may visit when the primary support person is not present.

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or Special Care Nursery

Up to two parents/guardians, or one parent/guardian plus an identified support person, may visit anytime. Certain limitations may apply due to safety protocols, as determined by the hospital.

Emergency Department

Visitation is limited to one guest per patient, with certain exceptions for pediatric patients, those with physical or cognitive disabilities, or individuals requiring end-of-life care. Patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 may not have a visitor. Administration reserves the right to suspend visitation due to patient volume or other operational considerations.

Behavioral Health Units (Virtua Mount Holly and Virtua Willingboro hospitals)

One designated visitor per patient can visit by appointment only from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Hospital Patients in Isolation

Visitation is not permitted for patients who are positive for COVID-19 or under investigation for COVID-19.

Patient Discharge

Unless otherwise specified above, one visitor may enter the facility upon a patient's discharge to receive discharge instructions and caregiver education. Please coordinate with the patient's care team.

This document collates CDC, CMS, other professional society (where available) & institutional guidelines and offers guidance for treatment of COVID 19 disease while minimizing risk to staff. This is an evolving area, in some cases without definitive evidence that underwent multi-disciplinary discussion. This has been approved for posting on the Virtua COVID-19 Policy and Procedure SharePoint site by QIPCC, effective beginning March 9, 2020 (with the implementation of Virtua's Emergency Operations Plan) until further notice. The guidance in this document applies to all Virtua care locations as applicable to the service provided, unless otherwise specified.