

November 7, 2022

Dear Families, Friends and Residents,

On October 25, 2022 D.C. Health released new guidance regarding personal protective equipment in health care facilities. As of October 31, 2022 we began following these new guidelines here at Jeanne Jugan Residence.

This news has made our Residents, Little Sisters and staff quite happy and optimistic about life in our Home returning to a greater level of normalcy.

Wearing masks remains an important measure for preventing the spread of COVID-19, especially during periods of higher community transmission in the District. However, **during periods of lower transmission lasting at least two weeks — indicated by the designations of substantial, moderate or low — we as a facility may lift the mask requirement. Thus, for the last week masks have not been required in the Home.**

Anyone who wishes to do so is free to continue wearing a facemask, regardless of the transmission level, and many of our direct caregivers have continued to wear them out of an abundance of caution. In every case their personal choice is being respected.

Likewise, masks must be worn by caregivers, Sisters and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, under the following conditions:

- While inside any area of the Home for 10 days after they were exposed to COVID-19;
- When caring for Residents who are moderately to severely immunocompromised;
- While on a unit/area of the Home experiencing a confirmed outbreak.

Staff, Sisters, Residents and visitors who are themselves immunocompromised are strongly encouraged to continue wearing a mask at all times, regardless of vaccination status.

Following these same guidelines, eye protection must be worn if Washington D.C.'s level of community transmission rises to HIGH and one is within six feet of Residents inside the Home.

Eye protection must also be worn under the following conditions:

- While interacting with someone under isolation for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection;
- While interacting with someone under empiric transmission-based precautions;
- While interacting with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19;
- As required by standard precautions (i.e. when there are anticipated splashes, sprays or splatters);
- As required by transmission-based precautions.

CDC releases the current transmission level once a week and this will guide or protocols for the following week. The current transmission level is posted at our front desk for visitors. Please feel free to call Daisy Alzate, DON, Sr Alphonse Marie, administrator, or the Little Sister responsible for your loved one's care if you wish to know the transmission level and corresponding protocols before you visit the Home.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation with these new guidelines. We hope to be able to remain mask-free indefinitely, but realistically, masking or not will be dependent on the transmission rates in our City, so it is not totally up to us. Let's do all we can to keep COVID-19 out of our Home by vigilant hand hygiene, prudent social distancing and staying home if we feel unwell.

We hope you and your loved ones are well and encourage you to get the latest COVID booster, as well as a flu vaccine. We look forward to seeing you during the upcoming holidays, thank you for your support and ask God's blessings upon you!

Sincerely,
Sr. Margaret Regina and all the Little Sisters

P.S. Current COVID-19 transmission levels can also be found at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>.