

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Oneida Health Increases Visitation at the Hospital

Oneida, NY – In collaboration with the New York State Department of Health, Oneida Health announced today it will be lifting some of its visitor restrictions at the hospital which were initially activated in March as an effort to keep patients, residents, and staff safe during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oneida Health will begin permitting limited visitation for inpatients. New visitation policies for admitted medical/surgical patients to the hospital include:

- A close relative (i.e. spouse or significant other, parent, child, grandparent, designated care partner) will be permitted to visit the patient
- No more than two (2) visitors will be allowed to visit at any one time
- Visitation hours are limited to 1:00 pm -5:00 pm, seven days a week
- Once in the hospital, visitors must remain in the patient's room throughout the visit except when directed by the hospital staff
- All visitors must be at least 18 years of age

Visitors will also be required to wear a mask, practice social distancing and proper hand hygiene, and will be screened at the door for COVID-19 symptoms before entering. The hospital will also ask each visitor to provide proper identification, a valid driver's license or non-driver ID card, when entering the hospital's main entrance.

“The safety of our patients, residents, and staff remain our top priority,” said Gene Morreale, President and CEO of Oneida Health. “Our Medical Staff and Senior Leadership team has been encouraged by the findings of the New York State Department of Health's pilot hospital visitation program. We recognize the positive benefits visitation can have on a patient's recovery and are confident that we can ensure a safe environment for care while permitting expanded, but still limited visitation at the hospital during this time.”

On May 26, the New York State Department of Health launched a pilot hospital visitation program in twenty-one hospitals across the state. The results of the pilot visitation program prompted the Department of Health to recently announce statewide visitation for all able and willing hospitals beginning June 19 based on the hospitals ability to meet state guidelines.



Oneida Health's previous visitor restrictions remain in place at their rehabilitation and extended care, emergency room, surgical center, maternity, and all outpatient offices. "We will continue to evaluate our visitor restrictions on an ongoing basis in collaboration with the Department of Health," said Mr. Morreale. "Future changes will only be adopted when it can be done in a manner that continues to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the health of our patients, staff, and visitors. We thank the community for their continued cooperation in helping us provide a safe environment for patient care."

With the expectation of increased visitors and its impact on the hospital's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supply, Oneida Health is currently asking community members who are willing, to donate homemade ear-loop face masks. Homemade face masks will be used for visitors who may not be able to provide their own while allowing the hospital to maintain its inventory of purchased face mask for future patient care needs.

For more information on visitor restrictions throughout Oneida Health's network or how to make and donate homemade ear-loop face masks, please visit [oneidahealth.org](https://www.oneidahealth.org).

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About Oneida Health

Oneida Health serves an area comprised of approximately 29 communities in Madison and western Oneida counties with a population of approximately 100,000. Operated by Oneida Health Systems, Inc, a New York State not-for-profit corporation, the organization includes a 101-bed acute care hospital, emergency department, state of the art surgery center, 160-bed extended-care and short-term rehab facility, primary care offices, comprehensive laboratory and pathology services, home medical equipment, comprehensive imaging services, outpatient therapies, and care specialties in: da Vinci Robotics Program, Oncology, Neurology, Podiatry, Vascular, Sleep Disorders, OB/GYN, Orthopedics, Wound Care, GI, ENT, General Surgery, and Urology. To learn more about Oneida Health, visit www.oneidahealth.org.