

# **In Person Visitation Policy “No Patient Left Alone Act”**

## **Purpose**

At times there may be circumstances which restrict Resident visitation, such as pandemic flu or presence of infectious diseases which may require isolation. Florida Statute 408.823, the "No Patient Left Alone Act" requires Zon Beachside to implement a policy that allows a Resident to have in-person visits by an Essential Caregiver during these circumstances. The visitation protocols required by this statute must allow in-person visitation by Essential Caregivers in circumstances as outlined in this policy and procedure.

## **Policy**

The following are the procedures to be followed to identify Essential Caregivers for residents and the expectations. These procedures will be administered equally to all residents that request to have an essential caregiver, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity and transgender status), age, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

Essential caregiver visitors provide emotional support to help a resident deal with a difficult transition or loss, upsetting event, making major medical decisions, needs cueing to eat and drink, stops speaking, or end-of-life. Essential caregiver visitors may be allowed entry into facilities on a limited basis for these specific purposes. The provider must allow at a minimum in-person visitation for at least 2-hours daily under these circumstances. At Zon Beachside, the 2-hour visitation will be between 9:00am – 9:00pm.

The Executive Director may make exceptions to the 2-hour visitation on a case-by-case basis for end-of-life residents. These exceptions will be discussed and agreed upon in writing by the facility’s Executive Director and the resident’s responsible party.

### **Exhibit**

- A) Florida Law Chapter 2022-34 Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No.988
- B) Resident Essential Caregiver Designation Form
- C) Essential Caregiver Acceptance Form

## **Procedures:**

### **I. For designation and utilization of essential caregiver visitors.**

1. The community will provide the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) with a copy of the facility’s essential caregiver visitor’s policy and procedure, with the initial licensure application, renewal application and/or change of ownership application.
2. The Zon Beachside essential caregiver visitor’s policy and procedure is available on the website at [www.zonbeachside.com](http://www.zonbeachside.com).

3. The Executive Director will designate key staff to support infection prevention and control training.
4. The Executive Director will set a limit on the total number of visitors allowed in the facility at any given time based on the ability of staff to safely screen and monitor and the space to accommodate the essential caregiver visitors.  
Considerations will include but not limited to:
  - a. Identify locations for visitation/care to occur planning for residents in shared spaces and facilities with minimal common space to identify maximum time availability.
  - b. Provide outdoor visitation spaces that are protected from weather elements, such as porches, courtyards, patios, or other covered areas that are protected from heat and sun, with cooling devices, if needed.
  - c. Create indoor visitation spaces for residents in a room that is not accessible by other residents or in a resident's private room if the resident is bedbound and for health reasons cannot leave his or her room.
5. All residents and/or Responsible party, if appropriate, will be asked if they want to identify an Essential Caregiver.
6. All new residents will be asked if they would like to identify an Essential Caregiver upon move-in.
7. All residents and/or Responsible Party will be allowed to update as requested the named Essential Caregiver of record.
8. Residents are allowed in-person visitation in all the following circumstances, unless the resident objects:
  - a) End-of-life situations.
  - b) A resident, client, or patient who was living with family before being admitted to the provider's care is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person family support.
  - c) The resident, client, or patient is making one or more major medical decisions.
  - d) A resident, client, or patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died.
  - e) A resident, client, or patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver.
  - f) A resident, client, or patient who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking.
9. Maintain a visitor log for signing in and out.
10. No more than three essential caregiver visitors may be designated per resident.
11. The policy does NOT prohibit essential caregiver visitor visits if the specific resident to be visited is quarantined, tested positive, or showing symptoms of a communicable disease. Visits in these circumstances will likely require a higher level of PPE than standard surgical masks.
12. Essential caregiver visitors must wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) per facility's Infection Control Policies. The PPE required must be consistent with

the most recent CDC guidance for healthcare workers. At Zon Beachside the essential caregiver visitors shall wear the same PPE that staff wear to provide care or services to the resident.

13. Any changes to the Zon Beachside essential caregiver visitor policies must be promptly communicated to affected residents and essential caregiver visitors.

## **II. To facilitate visits by Essential caregiver visitors upon a request from a resident or friend/family member:**

1. The resident (or their representative) will read and sign the policy and procedures. The acknowledgement of the signature represents that the essential caregiver visitor will abide by the policies set forth in this document.
2. The essential caregiver visitor will complete training on infection prevention and control including the use of PPE, use of masks, hand sanitation, and social distancing.
3. The essential caregiver visitor must immediately inform the facility if they develop symptoms consistent with a communicable disease within 24-hours of their last visit at the facility.
4. Essential caregiver visits may take place in the resident's room or a designated area determined by the Executive Director at the time the visitation schedule is developed and agreed upon.

## **III. When an essential caregiver visitor is scheduled to visit, the facility will:**

1. The facility designee will thoroughly screen the visitor per the facility's infection control policy and procedure and document the name of the individual, and the date and time of entry. Just as with staff entering the building, if the visitor fails the screening, the visitor CANNOT be allowed entry.
2. The Executive Director will ensure that the required consents, training and policy acknowledgements are in place.
3. The designee will ensure that the caregiver visitor has appropriate PPE if applicable.
4. The designee will require the essential caregiver visitor to sign in and out on the visitor log.
5. The facility staff will monitor the essential caregiver visitor's adherence to policies and procedures.
6. If the essential caregiver visitor fails to follow the facility's infection prevention and control requirements, after attempts to mitigate concerns, the Executive Director shall restrict or revoke visitation.
7. In the event the essential caregiver visitor's status is revoked due to the individual not following the facility's policy and procedures, the resident may select a different essential caregiver visitor who will be granted visitation rights upon proper vetting and agreeing to policies and procedures.

## Exhibit A:

Ch. 2022-34

LAWS OF FLORIDA

Ch. 2022-34

### CHAPTER 2022-34

#### Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 988

An act relating to in-person visitation; providing a short title; creating s. 408.823, F.S.; providing applicability; requiring certain providers to establish visitation policies and procedures within a specified timeframe; providing requirements for such policies and procedures; authorizing the resident, client, or patient to designate an essential caregiver; establishing requirements related to essential caregivers; requiring in-person visitation in certain circumstances; providing that the policies and procedures may require visitors to agree in writing to follow such policies and procedures; authorizing providers to suspend in-person visitation of specific visitors under certain circumstances; requiring providers to provide their policies and procedures to the Agency for Health Care Administration at specified times; requiring providers to make their policies and procedures available to the agency for review at any time, upon request; requiring providers to make their policies and procedures easily accessible from the homepage of their websites within a specified timeframe; requiring the agency to dedicate a stand-alone page on its website for specified purposes; providing a directive to the Division of Law Revision; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the “No Patient Left Alone Act.” Section 2. Section 408.823,

Florida Statutes, is created to read: 408.823 In-person visitation.—

(1) This section applies to developmental disabilities centers as defined in s. 393.063, hospitals licensed under chapter 395, nursing home facilities licensed under part II of chapter 400, hospice facilities licensed under part IV of chapter 400, intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled licensed and certified under part VIII of chapter 400, and assisted living facilities licensed under part I of chapter 429.

(2)(a) No later than 30 days after the effective date of this act, each provider shall establish visitation policies and procedures. The policies and procedures must, at a minimum, include infection control and education policies for visitors; screening, personal protective equipment, and other infection control protocols for visitors; permissible length of visits and numbers of visitors, which must meet or exceed the standards in ss. 400.022(1)(b) and 429.28(1)(d), as applicable; and designation of a person responsible for ensuring that staff adhere to the policies and procedures. Safety-related policies and procedures may not be more stringent than those established for the provider’s staff and may not require visitors to submit

proof of any vaccination or immunization. The policies and procedures must allow consensual physical contact between a resident, client, or patient and the visitor.

(b) A resident, client, or patient may designate a visitor who is a family member, friend, guardian, or other individual as an essential caregiver. The provider must allow in-person visitation by the essential caregiver for at least 2 hours daily in addition to any other visitation authorized by the provider. This section does not require an essential caregiver to provide necessary care to a resident, client, or patient of a provider, and providers may not require an essential caregiver to provide such care.

(c) The visitation policies and procedures required by this section must allow in-person visitation in all of the following circumstances, unless the resident, client, or patient objects:

1. End-of-life situations.
2. A resident, client, or patient who was living with family before being admitted to the provider’s care is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person family support.
3. The resident, client, or patient is making one or more major medical decisions.
4. A resident, client, or patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died.
5. A resident, client, or patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver.

6. A resident, client, or patient who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking.

7. For hospitals, childbirth, including labor and delivery. 8. Pediatric patients.

(d) The policies and procedures may require a visitor to agree in writing to follow the provider's policies and procedures. A provider may suspend in-person visitation of a specific visitor if the visitor violates the provider's policies and procedures.

(e) The providers shall provide their visitation policies and procedures to the agency when applying for initial licensure, licensure renewal, or change of ownership. The provider must make the visitation policies and procedures available to the agency for review at any time, upon request.

(f) Within 24 hours after establishing the policies and procedures required under this section, providers must make such policies and procedures easily accessible from the homepage of their websites.

(3) The agency shall dedicate a stand-alone page on its website to explain the visitation requirements of this section and provide a link to the agency's webpage to report complaints.

Section 3. The Division of Law Revision is directed to replace the phrase "30 days after the effective date of this act" wherever it occurs in this act with the date 30 days after this act becomes a law.

Section 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law. Approved by the Governor April 6, 2022.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 6, 2022.

**Exhibit B:**

**Essential Caregivers Designation**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Responsible Party) designate \_\_\_\_\_ (Essential Caregiver) as an essential caregiver for \_\_\_\_\_ (Resident). In making this designation, I consent and understand that:

- Visits by essential caregivers are subject to Zon Beachside’s policies and procedures and ability to screen visitors and monitor visits.
- All essential caregiver visits may be scheduled daily and can occur, at the resident discretion, for at least two (2) hours per day.
- Visits are limited to one visitor at a time, and are limited to designated areas only. (Please speak with the Executive Director regarding possible exceptions for end-of-life situations)
- This policy allows in-person visitation for the following circumstances unless the resident objects to the visitation:
  1. End-of-life situations.
  2. The resident who was living with family before being admitted to Zon Beachside is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person family support.
  3. The resident is making one or more major medical decisions.
  4. The resident is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died.
  5. The resident needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver.
  6. The resident who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking.
- Essential caregivers will need to follow the facility’s infection control and education policies and procedures and agree to such. At no time will they be more stringent than those for staff and at no time require to submit proof of vaccination.
- Essential caregivers must sign an acknowledgement of completion of required trainings and adherence to infection prevention and control policies.
- Visits by a specific essential caregiver may be suspended for failure to follow infection prevention and control requirements or other related rules of Zon Beachside. At that time the resident or resident’s representative can designate a new essential caregiver.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Resident or Legal Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Resident or Legal Representative Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zon Beachside Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zon Beachside Representative Printed Name

**Exhibit C:**

**Essential Caregivers Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Essential Caregiver) accept the designation as an essential caregiver for \_\_\_\_\_ (Resident).

I understand that:

- My visits as an essential caregiver are subject to Zon Beachside’s infection control and education policies and procedures. I acknowledge receiving the policies and procedures and agree to always abide by them.
- My visits as an essential caregiver may be scheduled and at the resident discretion can be at least two (2) hours in length.
- Essential caregiver visits cannot occur if the resident personally objects/declines your visit no matter the circumstance per 408.823 of F.S.

“(c) The visitation policies and procedures required by this section must allow in-person visitation in all of the following circumstances, unless the resident, client, or patient objects:

1 End-of-life situations. 2. A resident, client, or patient who was living with family before being admitted to the provider’s care is struggling with the change in environment and lack of in-person family support. 3. The resident, client, or patient is making one or more major medical decisions. 4. A resident, client, or patient is experiencing emotional distress or grieving the loss of a friend or family member who recently died. 5. A resident, client, or patient needs cueing or encouragement to eat or drink which was previously provided by a family member or caregiver. 6. A resident, client or patient who used to talk and interact with others is seldom speaking”

- When visiting as an essential caregiver, I will utilize personal protective equipment (PPE) as determined by facility policies and procedures related to current facility status and current medical condition of the Resident.
- I acknowledge having received training on infection prevention and control, use of PPE, use of masks, hand sanitation, and social distancing. I am satisfied with the training provided and do not have any questions regarding any of these topics.
- I acknowledge my obligation and agree to **immediately** notify the Executive Director if I experience symptoms of a respiratory infection, cough, fever, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, chills, headache, muscle pain, repeated shaking with chills, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, symptoms possibly related to a contagious infection, or if I test positive for COVID-19 within fourteen (14) days of a visit.
- Visits by essential caregivers may be restricted or revoked for failure to follow infection prevention and control procedures of Zon Beachside.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Designated Essential Caregiver Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Designated Essential Caregiver Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zon Beachside Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zon Beachside Representative Printed Name