

Buckner Retirement Services Weekly Update June 22, 2020

Dear Buckner Residents and Families,

As we've all observed over recent weeks, the coronavirus and COVID-19 are still very much a threat to the world. It is important that we remain vigilant now, just as we have throughout the pandemic. This week's update provides updated information about the coronavirus at our communities and recommendations for travel safety as people think about summer vacations.

Last week, I mentioned the success of the community-wide testing initiative across all six Buckner communities. The reason we must stay vigilant is that a negative test on a Friday does not guarantee a negative test on a Monday.

During the past few days, we learned of a positive resident at Parkway Place in Independent Living and four asymptomatic positive residents at Buckner Villas in The Grove Assisted Living. Isolation procedures were immediately implemented with all cases, and contact tracing helped identify those who came into contact with the positive residents, so they can follow CDC guidelines.

Please continue to visit the BRS website (www.BucknerRetirement.org) for a real-time tracker of any PUIs or cases our community may have. Also available online is a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) related to the Governor's orders and our community-wide testing for your reference – and you may call 855-754-3338 with questions at any time.

Now that summer officially started last week, many of us are wondering about travel plans. I'd like to share information that comes from the Centers for Disease Control and LeadingAge, our nonprofit senior living association:

CDC Travel Guidelines:

CDC has a **broad portfolio of resources** geared towards helping individuals consider the risks and benefits of various forms of travel during the pandemic. These resources include considerations around **domestic travel, international travel, cruise ship travel, U.S. travel bans and restrictions, travel health notices, and travel FAQs.**

These tools are a great way for individuals and employers to evaluate the risks inherent in the various forms of travel that staff may engage in. Additionally, there are a variety of **downloadable travel notices** that you can use to educate both residents and staff on the risks and considerations around travel during COVID-19.

Key takeaways include:

- COVID-19 transmission can happen anywhere that people gather – not just on vacation. CDC also has a “**Deciding to Go Out**” tool that may help individuals evaluate – and remember – the risks inherent with destinations that are nearby or at a distance.
- All individuals should avoid going to places where you will be closer than 6 feet away from other people.
- When individuals head out on vacation, they should still practice all the CDC-recommended COVID-19 practices: washing hands, staying home if sick, wearing cloth masks, practicing social distancing, and avoiding large groups of people.
- Individuals should first consider two questions: is COVID spreading where you are traveling TO, and / or is COVID spreading where you are living NOW? Check all local health departments for this information.
- International travel will present a significant challenge for most; individuals should thoroughly review the travel bans and restrictions related to the country they plan to visit – and whether they will be permitted to return to the U.S. after their trip.
- If traveling domestically, individuals should evaluate whether the locality they are visiting will permit them entry (with or without self-quarantine,) as well as whether their home state/ locality will permit them to return (with or without self-quarantine.)
- If travelling by a congregate method (bus, train, or airplane), individuals should anticipate a greater risk of exposure and take enhanced measure to protect themselves.
- If an individual’s travels require stops along the way, they should consider where/ if they will be permitted to stop, what the potential for exposure is in such areas, and take extra PPE, hand sanitizer, and other enhanced measures to protect themselves.
- If traveling with, to, or from vulnerable individuals, those who are traveling should either reconsider traveling, or take enhanced precautions. Remember, the people we serve, with whom our staff work in close contact, are in this vulnerable population.
- “Enhanced precautions” related to travel may include: making sure all travelers are up to date on measles, mumps, and seasonal flu vaccinations; packing extra alcohol-based hand sanitizers; packing non-perishable foods, or planning to order curbside or drive through take out; and being prepared to **clean and disinfect** your travel lodgings.

If you plan to travel away from your Buckner community, please exercise extreme caution for your safety and for the safety of others around you. This includes even small excursions away from the community. I strongly urge our Independent Living residents to consider limiting their outings to essential errands only. Even if we follow all the safety guidelines laid out, each of us is still dependent on others to do the same – and that doesn’t always happen.

Be safe and thank you again for the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,
Charlie Wilson
Senior Vice President
Buckner Retirement Services