

# COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees  
of Southcoast Health

*February 4, 2022*

*Greetings, Southcoast Colleagues.*

In this Bulletin, you will find the following:

- **UPDATED Hospital Visitation Policy, effective Feb. 7**
- **At-home COVID-19 test kits**
- **Don't delay getting your booster shot**
- **STATUS REPORT: COVID-19 cases**

Please scroll through the entire Bulletin for these updates, and be sure to visit Southcoast's [COVID-19 Employee Hub](#).

*Thank you.*

---

## **UPDATED Visitation Policy: effective Monday, February 7**

With the recent decline in COVID cases in our hospitals, **Southcoast is changing its visitation policy to allow one inpatient visitor at a time (2 visitors if one is between 5 and 17 years of age).**\* This change is effective Monday, February 7.

Hospital visiting hours remain unchanged. All visitors must still show proof of full vaccination or a negative test result in the prior 24 hours.\*

In our Family Care Unit (FCU), 1 to 2 birth partners are allowed during and after the birth. Children ages 5+ may visit, if vaccinated.\*

**\*Please see below for full details of the Visitation Policy:**

# Visitation Policy

**As of 2/7/22**

For the protection and wellbeing of Southcoast Health's patients, employees, and providers, please adhere to the following:

## **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT:**

Visitors allowed at discretion of the care team. Exceptions will be made for guardians, essential companions and other circumstances.

## **HOSPITAL VISITING HOURS: 11am – 2pm and 5pm – 8pm**

### **INPATIENT VISITOR POLICY:**

- ONE visitor allowed at a time\*
- Maximum of three visitors per patient each day\*

### **All visitors must be able to do one of the following:**

- Show proof of COVID-19 vaccine or
- Provide a negative COVID-19 PCR test, provided by a laboratory taken no more than 24 hours prior to visit

If visitor is between the ages of 5-17, two visitors are allowed to ensure that the minor is accompanied by an adult (proof of vaccine or negative COVID-19 laboratory test required for both visitors)

## **MATERNITY VISITING HOURS: 11am – 2pm and 5pm – 8pm**

### **MATERNITY / FAMILY CENTERED UNIT VISITOR POLICY\***

- On FCU, 1-2 Birth Partners (if fully vaccinated) can be on site for birth of baby, and visit after the birth with negative screening for symptoms and a negative COVID test.
- On FCU, 1-2 Birth Partners (if unvaccinated) have to quarantine for 5 days beyond mother's isolation period. 1-2 Birth Partners may attend birth if negative test result, but would need to leave 1 hour after the birth due to not being vaccinated.

### **\*EXCEPTIONS:**

- Visitation will not be allowed for patients with COVID-19 unless "visitor" is there as a birth partner, or present for patients at end of life care or on comfort measures only
- Parents of infant and pediatric patients
- Designated support person for patients with disabilities
- Allowed by clinical teams for unique circumstances

### **All Approved Visitors**

- Must remain in patient room unless entering/exiting the building or using a rest room
- Are required to **remain masked** for the duration of the visit

### **Surgical Patients and Same Day Surgery Center**

ONE visitor will be allowed to visit and/or accompany a patient

### **Physician Offices, Imaging, Radiology, Laboratory Patient Service Center**

ONE visitor will be allowed to visit and/or accompany a patient

NO visitors experiencing cough, shortness of breath, temperature over 100 degrees or other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be allowed

We appreciate your cooperation.

 Southcoast Health

[Visiting Hours & Visitor Policies Southcoast Health](#) are updated on Southcoast.org as changes are made.

---

## **At-home COVID-19 test kits**

### **For all employees**

The Federal Government has announced that every home in the U.S. is eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-19 tests. Orders usually ship in 7 – 12 days. Go to <https://www.covidtests.gov/> to order yours now, so you have them when you need them.

Southcoast Retail Pharmacies (at St. Luke's, Charlton, Fairhaven) have a **limited** supply of at-home tests available for purchase. Employees must show their Southcoast Employee ID badge and may only purchase one (1) test. If you have health insurance coverage, please show your health plan ID card or prescription ID card at time of purchase. Depending on the provision and limitations of your health insurance plan, you may have no out-of-pocket cost. Please see information below regarding Southcoast Health Plan coverage.

You may wish to use an at-home test kit when you plan to be in contact with an immune compromised or otherwise vulnerable person outside of the healthcare setting, if you are exposed and asymptomatic, or if you are planning to travel.

### **For employees participating in the Southcoast Health Plan**

Southcoast Health Plan covers members for up to eight (8) COVID-19 at-home tests per thirty (30) consecutive days.

- If you purchase the tests at a participating network pharmacy, such as Southcoast Retail Pharmacies, CVS, Walgreens, etc., and present your health plan ID card, you may purchase at-home tests with no upfront out-of-pocket cost.
- If you have paid out-of-pocket for COVID-19 at-home tests on or after January 15, 2022, you may request reimbursement by visiting [Caremark.com/covid19-otc](https://www.caremark.com/covid19-otc) for reimbursement of up to \$12 per test for up to eight (8) at-home tests per thirty (30) consecutive days. See [instruction sheet](#) for reimbursement.

- **Note that as a Southcoast employee, you are eligible for free PCR testing at a Southcoast Health laboratory testing facility.**
  - All testing appointments should be made through MyChart. Walk-up testing is NOT available; an appointment is required.
- 

### **Don't delay getting your COVID-19 booster shot.**

Southcoast encourages all eligible employees to get a booster shot. Studies show after getting vaccinated against COVID-19, protection against the virus and the ability to prevent infection with variants may decrease over time. Remain protected and keep your loved ones safe by getting your booster shot. Individuals 12 years and older are recommended to receive a booster shot 5 months after the second shot in a Moderna or Pfizer series or 2 months after a single dose of J & J.

Go [here](#) for the latest employee vaccine clinic schedule. No appointment needed.

Please complete the consent via the link below in advance of arriving: <https://southcoastapps.southcoast.org/covidform>.

---

### **STATUS REPORT: COVID-19 cases**

As of this morning, we have 60 patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 hospitalized across our system – with 8 positive cases in ICU. **This is more than a 60% drop in daily cases from the current surge high of over 160 daily cases.** In addition, we have 8 PUI hospitalized across our system – with no PUI in ICU.

COVID-19 daily dashboards, generated by the Southcoast Analytics Team, are available [here](#).

---

*Thank you, and be well.*