



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

NED LAMONT
GOVERNOR

MIRIAM E. DELPHIN-RITTMON, Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

COVID 19: DMHAS VISITATION ORDER

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020 Governor Ned Lamont (the Governor), in response to the global pandemic of 2019 Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), declared a public health and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State of Connecticut pursuant to Sections 19a-131a and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes, to remain in effect through September 9, 2020, unless sooner terminated by the Governor; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the Governor, in furtherance of the authority granted by virtue of such emergency declaration, issued Executive Order 7C to address critical issues regarding COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, said Executive Order provides that for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergencies, or until such time as the Governor repeals or modifies Executive Order 7C, notwithstanding Section 17a-547 of the Connecticut General Statutes or any other statute, regulation, local rule or ordinance or provision of law, the Commissioners of the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services and the Department of Public Health are authorized to issue any and all orders restricting entrance into Facilities, as defined in Section 17a-540(1), including Whiting Forensic Hospital, that the Commissioners deems necessary to protect the health and welfare of patients, residents and staff.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me by Executive Order No. 7C, and in response to the ongoing public health crisis arising out of COVID-19, especially among people over the age of 60 and people with co-morbid conditions, I hereby **ORDER**:

Effective immediately, all facilities operated by the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services shall impose a complete ban on all visitors to such facilities, for a period of THIRTY (30) DAYS commencing on the date of this order, unless terminated earlier by virtue of a future order.

Except that, a Facility shall continue to provide reasonable access to:

1. First responders, including Emergency Medical Services, law enforcement, firefighting and Emergency Management personnel;

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2. Family members, domestic partners or other persons designated by a patient only when the Facility's Medical Director, a licensed physician or advance practice registered nurse has determined such patient to be at the end stage of life with death being imminent;
3. Any person authorized by law to oversee or investigate the provision of care and services; and
4. Service providers who are required to do maintenance or repair necessary without delay for the Facility's continued operation.

In all instances where visitors are permitted entry to a Facility as enumerated above, such visitors shall only be permitted into the Facility after Facility personnel have performed a risk screening of each such visitor for COVID-19, and with the use of appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) in accordance with CDC guidance documents, if necessary. Please refer to CDC guidance documents at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/> . The risk screening to be performed shall include, but not be limited to, recent travel history, contact with a person presumed or confirmed positive for COVID-19, fever of 100 degrees or greater, sneezing, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath and recent travel by airplane. The Facility shall ban entrance to any visitor who confirms the existence of any of the utilized screening conditions or who the Facility determines meets one of such criteria.

Except as provided herein, nothing in this order shall suspend or modify the provisions of Sec. 17a-546 et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes, providing the right to communicate privately with persons of the patient's choice, send and receive the patient's personal mail unopened and make and receive telephone calls, unless medically contraindicated, as documented by the patient's physician or advanced practice registered nurse in the patient's medical record.

The restrictions imposed herein shall be modified as circumstances warrant but shall, in no event, continue beyond September 9, 2020.

ORDERED this 17th day of March, 2020



Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D.
Commissioner