



Infection Prevention & Control Guidance: Inpatient Passes/Leave of Absences During COVID-19 Pandemic All Phases

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Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) Guidance:
Inpatient Passes/Leave of Absences During COVID-19 – All Phases

Purpose:

To provide a safe and consistent approach to Horizon's inpatient passes/leave of absences, while limiting potential exposure risks for all patients, staff and physicians during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Principles:

- Inpatient movement will be permitted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This includes smoking passes and patient movement off the inpatient unit.
- When the patient has been approved for movement off the inpatient unit, the patient will wear a medical grade face mask at all times outside of their room when the hospital continuous mask policy is in effect. Prior to leaving the unit the patient receives education on Horizon's expectations regarding continuous mask use, physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- Patient passes/leave of absences may include:
 - overnight or day passes/leave of absences
 - diagnostic testing or treatment outside the hospital setting
 - passes that are clinically required for treatment, to assess the patient's readiness for a safe and successful discharge.
- Patient passes/leave of absences are an important part of the patient's treatment, recovery, and discharge plan.
- Vulnerable patients/ patients at risk for severe illness and members of their household will be advised to follow Public Health measures such as physical distancing, use of face masks and hand hygiene.
- The expectation is that the patient will not be in close contact with persons exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during their LOA.
- Patient passes/leave of absences are authorized by the Administrative Director or their designate. Addictions and Mental Health inpatient requests will be approved by the Director of Addictions and Mental Health or their designate.

Guidelines:

- A patient pass/leave of absence will only be approved if all members of the household are free of COVID-19 symptoms/risk factors, are following Public Health guidelines and have had no close contact with a positive case within the past 7 days. The staff member arranging for the patient pass/leave of absence, will screen the family members for symptoms and risk factors the day prior to the planned pass. This assessment must be documented in the patient's chart, noting that the COVID-19 screening was completed and that the family met the criteria.
- The care team must identify and communicate to the family and patient the goals and objectives to be achieved while on pass/leave of absence to evaluate the effectiveness of the pass if clinically related.
- The patient will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms upon return to the facility and continue to be screened daily as per policy during the hospital stay.
- Patients who present with symptoms upon return to the facility, will be isolated and tested for COVID- 19.

- Patients who report having had close contact* with a COVID-19 positive person upon return to the facility will be isolated for 7 days from last date of exposure. These patients will be monitored 2 times per day for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Note: In this context, the reference to patient is the recipient of care. May also be called a client, resident.

*A close contact is defined as a person who has had prolonged close contact (within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with an infected person (from two days before to ten days after the person's symptom onset date or specimen collection date).