



COVID-19 Update

March 12, 2021

This week the CDC announced new recommendations for fully vaccinated people who don't live in congregate settings. It also issued recommendations in response to vaccination for skilled nursing. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) both issued different guidance for visitation, communal dining, and activities that consider vaccination status. And we are still waiting for updated guidance from local health departments and the California Department of Social Services.

This incomplete information has led to some confusion (and consternation) in our communities as we figure out what this means for us. Changes will happen slowly and fairly conservatively until we get more clarity. In the meantime, please be patient, especially with your administrative team who need further information before they can make significant changes.

As it happens, it is Long Term Care Administrators' Week. Our executive directors and healthcare administrators have been working their way through a shifting maze of information and regulation, trying to find an elusive and ever-changing sweet spot balancing compliance, safety, and freedom for residents, families, and employees alike. It is a hard, endless, and often thankless task. Please take a moment to thank them!

Kevin Gerber, our President and CEO, was able to visit some of communities this week and will be at others in the days to come as he says his farewells before leaving Covia when we begin our affiliation with Front Porch on April 1. One of the many things we believe will change once people are fully vaccinated is that more of us will be able to see you in person once again. In the meantime, we will do everything we can to make sure the restrictions on gathering together can be lifted safely. As we wait, please join us in wearing those masks when you are out and about, keeping six feet of distance between yourself and others, washing your hands, monitoring yourself for symptoms, and, yes, still staying home except for essential travel.

There are lots of anniversaries this month. It was March 4th, 2020 when Governor Newsom declared a state of emergency and March 11th when the Director General of the World Health Organization announced we were in a pandemic. Just a few days after that, on March 16th, that our Support Services office in Walnut Creek closed. If you find yourself reacting strongly to things this month, you may be having an emotional

response as you remember where you were one year ago. Please be kind to yourself as well as to the people around you. We have come a very long way, and things are improving, but this is still not easy, and we are not out of the woods yet.

This morning we learned that one of our Market Day volunteers, a 75-year-old Asian American man, died after being assaulted near his home in Oakland. Among its other pernicious effects, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to reveal the racial prejudices and injustices that lead to losses that affect all of us. Covia will continue to work for the health, dignity, and well-being of all people. We invite you to join in these efforts, however you can.