

Visitation During COVID-19 Pandemic

Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare recognizes the importance of family support in the healing process and supports safe visitation.

Policy:

Entry to hospital and visitation is being limited at all MLH facilities until the transmission of COVID-19 is no longer a threat to our patients, staff, and community.

Purpose:

To protect our patients, staff, visitors, and community during the outbreak of COVID-19, all facilities at Methodist Le Bonheur are limiting visitation.

Definitions:

- MLH facilities include inpatient, outpatient, ambulatory, and emergency departments and patients having surgery or procedures
- PUI – person under investigation per CDC definition
- Visitor – family, friend, support person, partner-in-care, caregiver, legal guardian (must be ≥ 18 years old)
- Duration of visit- this includes the time of screening until leaving the hospital

General Information for visitors (including vendors):

1. Visitors must screen negative to COVID symptoms to enter the hospital.
2. Visitors must adhere to social distancing and wear mask while in the hospital, including while in the patient room. The mask should remain on during the entire visit.
3. Visitors who are sick or have a compromised immune system or pulmonary complications should not visit.
4. Patients who are not a PUI but have a pending asymptomatic test or a negative test may have a visitor.
5. Patients who refuse the admission COVID test may not have a visitor.
6. Use remote interpreting services and language lines as needed.
7. In the event of over-crowding, leadership can make a decision to further limit visitors, including in the Emergency Department (ED).
8. For any other situations, the administrative supervisor or clinical director/manager of the unit will determine if visitor exceptions are appropriate.
9. COVID positive or COVID PUI
 - NO visitors allowed in rooms of patients who are under investigation for COVID or have positive COVID-19 tests; this includes the emergency department.
 - End of life guidance for COVID PUI or COVID positive is in separate policy.
 - Pediatric patients who are under investigation for COVID or who have a positive COVID-19 test may have one visitor in the inpatient setting and in the emergency department

10. Vendors and sales reps can only come onsite for required business by appointment. Essential business only allowed.
11. For instances of non-compliance with guidelines that cannot be readily resolved, call Security.

For inpatients

1. Adult and pediatric patients may have one visitor per day.
2. The one visitor per day may have in and out privileges.
3. The one visitor may switch with another visitor if necessary on the following day, but there will still only be one visitor per day.
4. Obstetrical patients may have one support person. Doulas are not counted as visitors.
5. Visitor must remain in the patient's room, except for necessities, such as going to the cafeteria or gift shop. Visitors should not congregate in common areas of the hospital.
6. No visitors to arrive after 8 p.m.

Emergency department patients – adult and pediatric

1. One visitor may accompany the patient
2. Depending on patient condition and needs, the health care team, using their clinical judgment, may alter the number of family members allowed.
3. ED patient visitors may be asked to wait in their car and will be called in when the patient has an ED room.

Operative and procedural areas

1. For pediatric and adult patients, one visitor may accompany the patient and stay in the waiting area.
2. Based on patient condition, visitor may see the patient post-operatively.

Ambulatory setting, including clinics or other outpatient areas

1. In adult facilities, patients may be accompanied by 1 visitor.
2. For pediatric patients, one visitor is permitted

Visitor Exceptions

1. Patients at end-of-life may have a limited number of visitors who must remain in the room for the duration of the visit. See COVID-19 end of life policy for suspected or confirmed COVID patients.
2. Internal and external events or circumstances may dictate a change in policy to ensure safety of patients, visitors and staff