

Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Guidance for Visitation in Residential Settings

[ODP Announcement 20-066 Update](#) provides updated guidance to individuals, families and residential providers to consider for visits with family and friends and individuals served in residential settings, particularly with the upcoming holiday season. The updates appear in red.

The announcement:

- Explains “Level of Community Transmission” and its impact on visitation both in and outside of the community or life-sharing home.
- Provides guidance for developing visitation policies and best practices for visitation.
- Explains the “Compassionate Care Exemption” (see pages 11-13 in the announcement for more details).
 - “Compassionate care” refers to visitation by a caregiver, which is needed to maintain or improve an individual’s health and well-being based on documented “significant change” identified in the individual’s support plan. Compassionate care by a caregiver may be considered if there is a documented “significant change” in an individual’s condition or an end-of-life situation. It may also be considered if support is needed as a result of the loss of a loved one or if emotional support is needed for an individual who has just moved to a residential setting and is adjusting to his or her new surroundings.
- Provides guidance on facilitating personal relationships when in-person visits are restricted.

The Level of Community Transmission is a way to understand the extent of COVID-19 spread within a community. The PCR Percent Positivity Rate for each county is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s [COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard](#). The dashboard is updated every Friday.

Level of Community Transmission in the County	PCR Percent Positivity (Most Recent 7 Days)
Low	Less than 5%
Moderate	5% to 10%
Substantial	Greater than 10%

The dashboard does not describe the Level of Community Transmission as low, moderate or substantial in accordance with the above table; rather, it includes precise case counts per 100,000 people and the PCR Positivity Rate. ODP intends to publish a weekly report showing each county's Level of Community Transmission so providers can easily learn whether the counties where their homes are located are in low, moderate, or substantial status. Providers can also determine the Level of Community Transmission by comparing the PCR Percent Positivity Rate on the COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard to the table above.

Providers can use the Level of Community Transmission to structure their visitation policies in compliance with the following guidelines:

Level of Community Transmission in the County	PCR Percent Positivity Rate (Most Recent 7 Days)	Recommended Home Visitation Status
Low	Less than 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrestricted visitation in accordance with provider's standard screening and infection control protocol
Moderate	5% to 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No indoor visits that increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19 unless covered by the Compassionate Care Exemption. Promote interaction through means other than in-person contact.
Substantial	Greater than 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction through means other than in-person contact only unless covered by the Compassionate Care Exemption.

Please contact the ODP Regional Office with any questions about this announcement.