



October 29, 2021

Still Hopes Apartment, Cottage and Concierge Residents,

After a summer filled with the resurgence of COVID, via the D-Variant, it feels as though we are now turning the next corner with the global pandemic. Numbers, locally and nationally, are thankfully trending downward both in numbers of cases and in the calculated positivity rates DHEC and CMS uses to guide our licensed neighborhoods. These trends, along with the numerous requests of residents who are confident it is time to move our plans forward, together create the right atmosphere to make some changes in our COVID restrictions of operations. While we have been able to continue allowing your visitors on campus throughout the surge, I know it was difficult to live through the catering and event pullbacks and the re-emergence of the masks requirements we were compelled to make.

### **Masks**

As of Monday, November 1, residents are no longer required to wear masks on campus, provided they have been fully vaccinated. This includes workout times in the Wellness Center. Please feel free to continue to wear a mask if you are not yet ready to be in public areas without one. While we are now ready to allow residents to gather without a mask, we fully respect and support any resident's desire to continue to wear their mask. The ability to be without your mask also applies to group activities such as Trivia. We will also ask you now to use your own judgement with regard to social distancing. We will not be setting rooms up in this manner beginning next week, but you may certainly arrange yourselves so that you honor the amount of distancing that is comfortable for you.

I know many of you are asking if staff can "lose the masks" as well, and that is certainly our goal for the future, but for now, while DHEC continues to require our staff in licensed areas to wear masks, we are committed to continue with masking all staff, both as a means to keep you safe, and as a sign of support and solidarity for all our staff as a single family of people. Despite this continuing requirement, staff who are conducting any sort of session with residents will be allowed to remove their masks while they do their work, but they are asked to maintain social distancing as they do this, as a means of helping protect you, our residents, as best we can.

### **Food**

As of Monday, November 1, we will begin to allow refreshments at group gatherings. However, please know that this will continue to be dependent on our Culinary Department's capacity at any given time, as they continue to find it difficult to recruit sufficient staff to fill our necessary positions. While we seem to be in a good place to provide refreshments as needed, please extend understanding if Culinary needs to alter plans from time to time, when they find staffing concerns that would prevent their ability to perform the desired or planned service well. This same principle extends to catered gatherings. Michelle and Derek will work together to bring food service to gatherings and events, as best they can, while we continue to work our way back to full service.

A la carte dining will be returning to the Palmetto Dining Room in the days ahead. A separate memo from Derek Graham will be coming out to better outline how this program will be re-started. Thanksgiving is right around the corner now, and Derek will also be sharing his plan for your dining options on that special day.

### **Booster Shots**

We do not, at present, know if the definition of “fully vaccinated” will be altered to include the taking of a booster vaccine, but we do certainly recommend that you take this booster as soon as the clinics are arranged here. Tacey will be communicating details about the clinic days soon, so watch your box for details. Presently, it seems that the clinics will be offered the week of November 8<sup>th</sup>, so please try to keep your calendars flexible for this important event.

Thank you for your patience during these last 20 months. While we have had D-Variant setbacks in our plans, it does now appear that we are making progress again. Your continuing support and understanding throughout this difficult time means everything to me and to all of our staff. Your Operation Safe Journey Workgroup has been invaluable as we have been forced to work and then rework plans again and again. We are all indebted to their good efforts.

Peace for the continuing journey is my prayer for us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danny Sanford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danny Sanford, CEO