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March 12, 2020

Greetings,

Thank you to all of you for your understanding of the cancellations due to the COVID-19. We have <u>no</u> cases of COVID-19 and we are following the guidelines set forth to prevent COVID-19.

Due to the advice of the Minnesota Department of Health, we are banning all visitors as expressed in the fourth bullet point below.

We are learning a great deal about how dangerous the COVID-19 virus can be. Some of the most troubling conclusions include:

- A person may be infected with the virus for as long as two weeks before initial symptoms emerge.
- The virus can be transmitted easily from one person to another, even without direct contact (for example, from a banister).
- Older people are more susceptible to COVID-19, and those 80 years of age or older have a higher mortality rate.
- Communal living increases the chances of spreading the virus, once an infected person had
  entered the living spaces (which is why we are banning all visitors unless a person is at
  end-of-life or in need of dire emotional care).

Because of these challenges, we must take special steps to protect the safety of residents and staff.

- We have already implemented recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
   Because of what we are learning from senior caregivers in other parts of the country, we believe more aggressive restrictions are needed.
- We know that the visiting limitations are inconvenient and confusing for some, and caregivers will need to take additional steps to communicate with your loved ones.
- We have established alternative communication procedures, so families have up-to-date information on our operations and visitation policies.
- Please contact Matt Tobalsky, Senior Campus Administrator, for Columbia Heights at 763-782-1606 and Julia Biehn, Campus Administrator, for Blaine at 763-762-8425, to inquire as to ways to communicate via social media.

By acting today, we believe we can accomplish several goals:

• Better protect residents and staff from COVID-19.



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

- Focus caregiving resources on preventing illness and care for the residents with the greatest needs.
- Do our part to reduce the chances of a major outbreak in Minnesota communities.

## Resident safety is a top priority.

- Every resident and family should have a clean, safe living environment. The spread of this novel virus is a critical issue that requires attention.
- Our goal is to try and keep the virus from reaching residents, staff and their families. If COVID-19 is found in a setting, we want to minimize the spread to anyone else.

Our team is being kept informed and will keep you informed.

Please know we care about your health and safety and taking these precautions proactively.

Blessings and Hope,

Shirley Barnes

**Chief Executive Officer**