



April 13, 2020

Dear Residents, Families, and Co-workers:

Let me start by saying that our diligence in taking the necessary precautions to ward off the COVID virus is paying off. As of today, we do not have any confirmed cases tied to Argent Court, our residents, or our staff. I'm thankful for everything all of us are all doing to keep this virus at bay.

If there's one thing I've learned over the past few weeks, it's that trying to predict the elements of COVID-19 is a bit like trying to predict our weather – challenging indeed, and the outcome is seldom as predicted; however, I assure you brighter days are ahead. To help us prepare for what might be the rough weather ahead, we are going to batten down the hatches a bit more at Argent Court.

To wear a mask or not to wear a mask? That has been the question on all of our minds for the last few weeks, and even more so now that Texas is expected to reach its peak in COVID-19 cases by the end of this month. Before, the consensus was for only those who are considered high risk for the coronavirus (COVID-19) to wear them, but in light of recent findings, the CDC now recommends that we all wear masks or cloth face coverings in public settings that might make it hard to practice social distancing etiquette. That's why I write to you today to inform you that we are now making wearing a mask a mandatory part of our daily routine.

Wearing a cloth face mask is recommended as an extra layer of protection, and this precaution should not alarm anyone. While we do not have any active Coronavirus cases in any of our locations, requiring a mask to be worn is for our residents' and staffs' wellbeing. To decrease the rate of transmission of COVID-19, facemasks will be worn by staff from all departments on all shifts. Residents can also choose to wear a cloth facemask; if they choose not to, they will be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue whenever a staff member is present in the room. Cloth masks provide "source control," meaning that droplets expelled by you when breathing, coughing, or sneezing are trapped in the mask and not expelled into the air where viruses present may be inhaled by someone nearby (within 6 feet).

We currently have ordered cloth masks for each employee, and they will be distributed to all staff and to residents who are able and wanting to use them as soon as they are ready. Our vendor, however, is having a challenging time getting more elastic to complete the remainder of our order, so if you know anyone in your communities that are making face masks (to CDC standards), please reach out to them and let us know if they are able to make any for us.

Here's an overview of precautionary measures we have initiated that will continue to be in place at Argent Court:

- Only Essential visitors allowed



- Screening of all residents, employees, and essential health care professionals before entry.
- Masks will be worn by all employees at all times to start this week as they become available.
- Education on Coronavirus Preparedness, infection control practice, and handwashing assigned via Relias training completed company-wide.
- Enhanced disinfection procedures for every shift in each department.
- Daily Resident checks for any out of the ordinary symptoms; if symptoms present, staff and or Resident is to report immediately to Nurse for further guidance and instructions.
- Continual monitoring of CDC and other state and federal agencies for updates.
- Frequent communication with VPO and site leadership for updates and further instructions.

Here are answers to questions that I'm being asked frequently.

What is the current visitation policy?

No Non-Essential Visitors are still in effect, so please refrain from coming to visit. Only Argent Court personnel and essential health care professionals are allowed entry. Entry will only be permitted after all precautionary measures have been taken.

How can I stay connected to my loved one?

We encourage regular communication with your loved one utilizing technology (i.e., phone, FaceTime, Skype) and are happy to assist any way we can.

Is Argent Court accepting new move-ins?

Yes. We were created to meet the needs of the elderly and will continue to do so during this time. New residents will go through the same procedures and screenings that our current

residents do to enter the Argent Court. As an added layer of protection, new residents will remain in their apartments for a minimum of 5 days.

Is Argent Court hiring?

Yes. Applications are being received and responded to, virtual (or off-site) interviews are being conducted.



Does Argent Court have the staff to care for my loved one?

Yes, but this is an ever-evolving challenge. We are creative in anticipating the needs of things like school closings, daycare, personal family constraints. We know that as an organization, we have to meet our employee's needs so that they will be able to meet our Resident's needs. We are proud of how our staff is rising to the challenge.

Is my loved one safe?

Yes. Flu and other infectious diseases have always created a significant risk for the elderly. Because of this, we are prepared and equipped to meet this challenge. As an example, Argent Courts flu rates are far below the national average. This year we only had one resident test positive for the Flu company-wide.

Are Residents allowed to leave?

All residents are strongly discouraged from leaving unless there is a "critical" need if a need arises please discuss with your Administrator, due to the high risk of exposure. However, if a resident chooses to leave, they will be screened before returning into the building. If the Resident fails or refuses this screening, they will be quarantined upon return for a minimum of 14 days, and their primary physician will be notified immediately. You are also being asked to wear a mask when you are leaving one of our locations for medical appointments (if virtual visits are not allowed) or for any other essential reasons. While you are out, you may be exposed to someone in the community with Covid-19. The cloth mask will not offer you full protection from the virus; only social distancing and proper handwashing will offer that. The mask may provide some benefit, but equally important, it will help prohibit you from spreading any virus you may have come in contact with once you return to the building.

What if COVID-19 is reported in Argent Court?

If there is a case of COVID-19 in one of our locations, we will notify the family and residents of the occurrence. We will follow CDC guidelines and have personal protective equipment available for use. The Resident will be quarantined for a minimum of 14 days, and we will follow the instruction and guidance of their primary physician.

What is Argent Court doing to help prevent (employees) from bringing in the virus?

All employees and essential health care professionals are being screened each day before starting their shift. We also educate our employees and request that they follow CDC guidelines on how to avoid exposure to COVID-19 while not at work. All employees have been actively discouraged from going anywhere that is not essential during their off-hours to help minimize their exposure.



How is Argent Court monitoring residents for signs of COVID-19?

Our Residents are being monitored daily, and the staff is to report any symptoms to the Nurse immediately for further guidance.

Can medical health care professionals visit residents?

Only essential health care professionals will be allowed entry. All professionals must meet our stringent infection control requirements, including our screening process.

Are routine medical appointments going to continue?

The RSC will coordinate with the Resident and provider, to determine if the visit is essential or can be temporarily delayed and rescheduled if virtual visits are not being offered.

Can I still bring supplies and care packages to my loved one?

Yes, please notify the Administrator or RSC of your intention to deliver a package. Packages are to be delivered to the front door and are to be clearly labeled with the Resident's name. Each package (and its contents) will be sanitized due to the potential for COVID-19 contamination.

If I am currently setting up medications for my loved one, do I continue to do so?

Yes. Deliver the pillbox to the front door and appropriately notify us. The pillbox will be sanitized and delivered. Please contact the Administrator or RSC if you would like help with the medications during this time.

Does Argent Court have the supplies to support my loved one's needs during this time?

Yes. Argent Court has longstanding relationships with a multitude of vendors to continue to meet the needs of our residents. We have procedures in place to ensure the continued supply and delivery of all essential items, including food, medical equipment, incontinence products.

Is Argent Court using a chemical disinfectant that will kill COVID-19?

Yes. Argent Court has been using chemical disinfectants in our locations, that kills all viruses and bacteria. This chemical is 100% effective. We do not use bleach, as you might in your own home, due to its caustic nature.

Who will provide services to my loved one that I was previously providing?

Any services that you were previously providing your loved one coordinate with the Administrator or RSC to ensure the continuation of those services.

Are Chaplains still visiting?

No. Chaplains are still available to connect with residents and families virtually. Please reach out to the Administrator or RSC if you have questions on how to establish this connection.



The most significant challenge we are all facing is dealing with the stress of what this pandemic is causing. We can assure you that we have been incredibly devoted to helping our residents through this challenging time. We encourage our staff and family members to take care of their emotional health during this stressful time. We find our residents often deal with stress better than we expected. They are resilient, having overcome many challenges in their lives before this. Their optimism and sense of humor are helping all of us to stay positive. Our staff will continue to check in frequently with residents and do our best to meet their emotional and physical needs. Our primary focus is the care and protection of all of our residents and staff. Unfortunately, there will always be some that do not necessarily agree with the guidelines that are in place for the health and wellness of others. These types of situations are unfortunate, and we ask that if you have any issues with any of these guidelines that you simply reach out to us to discuss the matter so further explanation can be given as to why these steps are necessary. These are trying times for everyone; please treat others – with kindness and understanding.

If you have any questions about the steps being taken to ensure the health and safety of our residents, please reach out to your Administrator or RSC. Further questions can also be directed to me, please reach out at any time. We will continue to communicate regularly, while also focusing our energy on the care & safety within our communities.

Above all, please remain calm. Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain a healthy environment. We are indeed all in this together. I am continuing to pray for the health and wellbeing of all of us! Each time we all wash our hands for those 20 seconds. Let's pray for our Residents and each other.