



November 24, 2020

Dear Smith Village Family,

As we anticipate a first-of-its-kind Thanksgiving Day for our community, I encourage each of us to pause and reflect about the benefits of having a grateful heart. Numerous researchers have studied how being grateful can improve a person's emotional and physical well-being.

It can brighten the lives of others, too. So please consider jotting down two or three of your experiences since this past March which give you a reason to appreciate your life today, and share them with fellow-residents and staff members who may have played a role.

Based on orders for Thanksgiving Dinner here, your Smith Village team is very grateful that the majority of residents are taking seriously Illinois' stay-at-home advisory. While Governor JB Pritzker indicated a "glimmer of hope" due to the very recent decline in the State's positivity rate—still in dangerous double digits—and the number of new cases of the virus, we know from personal experience we continue to battle a mighty foe.

On Monday, November 23, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported 8,322 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19, including 2,050 cases in Chicago. Illinois' positivity rate now is 10.9 percent; Chicago's is 13.6 percent.

As the most recent data published on November 14, the positivity rate in 60643, our zip code, rose to 11.2 percent, up from 9.7 percent from the previous week. Our neighbors in the 60655 zip code finally experienced a decrease to 13.8 percent from 19.4 percent previous reporting period.

Update on testing

During the week of November 16, Smith Village completed 331 tests, with employees comprising the largest number because they now are tested twice a week. Of those tests, we already have reported two staff members who already received positive results.

Today, we have two more positive outcomes from last week's tests

- One CNA, who last worked in our assisted living wing on Friday, November 20, has symptoms of the virus
- One server for independent living residents' Dining Room, who last worked here on Monday, November 23, is asymptomatic

Both are recovering at home and only will return to work in compliance with all CDC guidelines.

Today, we tested again the six assisted living residents, who recently tested positive. All are doing well and expect to leave isolation soon. Until then, our staff members helping them wear appropriate PPE and follow all precautions. Please respect our residents' privacy as described in HIPAA regulations.

This week, we tested all employees on Monday and will do so again on Wednesday to comply with Cook County's twice a week protocol. We also tested all residents in our healthcare settings today. Independent living residents, who would like to be tested, should call the Receptionist at extension 7300 to schedule a time.

How you can help

Please set the thermostat in your apartment to "fan" instead of "auto." We also installed industrial-strength HEPA air filters in assisted living common areas.

We ask all residents to always wear a face mask—worn properly to cover both nose and mouth—when leaving their home and when any employee enters their apartment for any reason. All guests on our campus must wear a mask before entering our building and be screened for temperature and use hand sanitizer provided before proceeding to their destination.

Here are more specifics about other precautions temporarily in place

For Oakhaven assisted living residents

- All outdoor and indoor visits are temporarily cancelled
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner are delivered to residents' apartments
- Life Enrichment activities are planned for residents so they can participate in the hallway outside their apartment while observing social distancing
- A greater variety of programs, including informative and entertaining broadcasts, now are available on Channel 36
- The Salon is closed

For skilled nursing care residents

- All meals are delivered to residents' rooms during the construction
- Families can schedule virtual visits with residents by contacting Lisa Madsen at LMadsen@SmithSeniorLiving.org

- The Salon is closed
- Other programs and services remain the same

For independent living residents

- Visitors to residents' apartments are limited to two people from the same household, who must be screened before they go directly to and from their destination
- Dinner is delivered to residents' apartments
- The Marketplace offers carryout for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- The Oak Room, Dining Room and Salon are closed
- Select small group activities now limited to six or fewer people, with social distancing and other precautions, are planned, but others including fitness classes are suspended

Guidelines to protect yourself and others

Please be sure you are following all the directives issued by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Chicago and Illinois Departments of Public Health.

Please be mindful of any symptoms of COVID-19 you might experience

- Fever of 100⁰ or higher or a fever above your typical baseline
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste and/or smell
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

If you think you are experiencing one or more symptoms of COVID-19

- Limit your interactions with others
- Residents should contact me at extension 7314 or Meghan Maple at extension 5563 so we can expedite testing for you here
- Visitors, please stay home

It is essential all of us do our part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by

- Wearing a mask, observing social distancing at all times, and following hand-hygiene and sanitation practices
- Quarantining for 14 days if an employee, resident and prospective visitor has visited any hot spot designated on Tuesdays by the City of Chicago

Communication is key

Because we recently have instituted several changes and there will be more on the horizon, please ask your question and send suggestions to

COVID19SmithVillage@SmithSeniorLiving.org. A senior staff member, who monitors your messages, will ask the appropriate Smith Village employee to respond directly to you.

Everyone on our Smith Village team joins me in wishing you the very best of the spirit of Thanksgiving for you and for everyone whom you treasure. We truly appreciate and count on your support.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marti Jatis".

Marti Jatis

Executive Director