



# OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR HENRY MCMASTER

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For immediate release

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## **Gov. Henry McMaster Requests that DHEC Promptly Issue Guidance to Allow Visitation in Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities**

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – Governor Henry McMaster today requested, [via letter to Chairman Mark Elam](#), that the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), “promptly issue up-to-date visitation guidelines providing all direction and information deemed necessary to resume – or require resumption if necessary – in-person visitation with residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.”

“Restricting visitation to our state’s nursing homes and assisted living facilities in March was a heartbreaking necessity,” the governor writes. “It was the most effective way to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to save the lives of our state’s elderly and at-risk residents.”

“We are committed to protecting the physical, mental and emotional health of our elderly and at-risk people – and their loved ones,” the governor continued. “Although no policy or procedure can eliminate all possibility of risk, it is clear that the time has come to expand current rules to allow in-person visitation by immediate family members, loved ones or caregivers.”

[On March 13](#), the governor directed DHEC to restrict visitation to nursing homes and assisted living facilities, with the exception of end of life situations, as DHEC deemed necessary and appropriate. [On June 26](#), the governor directed DHEC to develop guidelines to allow for or facilitate limited visitation in these facilities. [The governor then, on July 2](#), asked DHEC to delay the release of those guidelines due to concerns about the rising rate of infection and hospitalization.

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