

# Coronavirus Updates for Older Adults and Their Families

Information and best practices for your loved ones.



During this extremely challenging time, we're working around the clock to meet our clients' needs, help families stay informed on COVID-19 updates, and share recommendations on how to mitigate infection exposure among older adults and their caregivers.

If you're considering home care for your loved one, be sure to work with an agency that can provide specific details on the steps they're taking during this unprecedented time. We've implemented enhanced protocols and new policies to take into account the presence of coronavirus within the communities where we provide care. Here are Honor's latest updates.

## Supporting safe social distancing:

On March 15th, California Governor Gavin Newsom recommended that all adults over 65 and with chronic conditions stay isolated in their homes. On March 16th, Governor Newsom announced a "shelter-in-place" order for all residents in six counties in the Bay Area, effective 12:01 am Tuesday, March 17th through April 7th. This order currently restricts

non-essential activities and businesses—but does not apply to home care or caregivers—in San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Marin, Contra Costa, and Alameda counties. Several other counties and states quickly followed.

Other regions may impose similar measures soon. Here are some suggestions to support safe social distancing and shelter-in-place situations.

- Have someone other than an older adult run any necessary errands and shop for groceries.
- If you're near a Safeway or Target store, take advantage of their store hours reserved for seniors and at-risk shoppers. Safeway's hours are currently on Tuesday and Thursday and vary by store, so check your local location. Target's reserved hour is the first shopping hour of every Wednesday.
- Review your loved one's medical appointments. Talk to their doctor about options for non-urgent appointments and, if possible, moving to Telehealth appointments, which are now being covered by Medicare.

- Talk to their doctor about getting a two or three month supply of critical prescription medicines and explore medicine delivery, which many stores offer for free.
- Social isolation may be particularly challenging for older adults right now. Consider using Google Hangouts, FaceTime, or Amazon Echo Show to keep in touch with your loved one or connected with their friends.
- Emphasize the importance of maintaining good self-care habits, including sufficient sleep, healthy eating, and exercise.

### Honor's enhanced protocols:

We've significantly updated our policies to mitigate the risk of spreading the coronavirus.

#### Enhanced infection controls:

- If an Honor Care Pro exhibits any flu-like symptoms, we're re-staffing and filling their visits with another Care Pro. We've also updated and expanded our clearance process for any Care Pros returning to work after being sick. We're not penalizing Care Pros, but instead actively encouraging them to stay home if they feel sick.
- We're working with our clients and their families to make appropriate adjustments to the Care Plan if a client exhibits symptoms of infectious illnesses. This includes working with family members to ensure that proper personal protective equipment is in the home.

### Honor Care Pro safety precautions:

- We're sending frequent reminders to all Care Pros about the importance of taking universal precautions, including thorough, frequent handwashing and using disinfectants.
- We're making key safety tools available to Care Pros, including hand sanitizer, flu shots, and gloves.
- We're honoring client requests that Care Pros take their temperature before visits and are in the process of rolling out a requirement that they do so before every visit.

### If your loved one is in a care facility:

We believe that care at home is safest for older adults. If you're considering care for a loved one who's currently in assisted/supported living, or other facility—or they are currently receiving third-party care in a facility—**ask the facility what their current policy is for allowing third-party caregivers inside.** Recently we've seen skilled nursing and assisted living facilities significantly changing policies for allowing non-employees into their facilities. This has led to some Care Pros being blocked from entering to provide care or facing new requirements to enter.

We are continuing to provide in-home care to new and existing clients—and doing our absolute best to keep all of our clients informed as we work to support the health and safety of our older population.