



**Visitor Restriction Guidance for Jackson Hospital & Clinic  
Inpatient, Outpatient, Clinic and Ambulatory Sites  
UPDATED August 19, 2021**

Per the “Safer at Home” proclamation issued by Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, *visitors* remain restricted in hospitals. Exceptions for caregivers and continued restrictions for the hospital, clinics, and Outpatient services are set forth below. Allowances will be considered in situations where a Caregiver’s presence improves the patient’s safety, emotional well-being, physical care, or end-of life experience (compassionate care). Compliance with guidelines below is required at all times.

Jackson Hospital shall ensure that each patient may be accompanied by one caregiver at a time, subject to reasonable restrictions imposed on the entrance of persons because of the COVID-19 county positivity rate, the facility’s COVID-19 status, a patient’s COVID-19 status, caregiver symptoms, lack of adherence to proper infection control practices, or other relevant factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with the following guidance from the federal government:

For hospitals: “Hospital Visitation – Phase II Visitation for Patients who are Covid-19 Negative” issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on June 26, 2020, and available at <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-hospital-visitation-phase-ii-visitation-covid-negative-patients.pdf>.

In addition, Jackson Hospital has posted at the front door of the hospital, which is utilized for all public entrance to the hospital, a statement substantially similar to the following statement:

*By order of the Governor of Alabama and the State Health Officer, each patient or resident of this facility enjoys certain rights to have one caregiver or one visitor present at a time, subject to reasonable restrictions. If you have questions, you may ask to inspect the facility’s written policies concerning visitation.*

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Caregivers** are defined as “the primary contact; parents, spouses, other family members or friends determined to improve the patient’s safety, emotional being, or physical care” and designated by the patient. One primary and one alternative caregiver should be identified by the patient. If the patient lacks the capacity to designate the caregivers, the caregivers will be designated based on current guideline (Power of Attorney / Health Care Proxy / Next of kin).

**Clergy:** Jackson Hospital ensures patients have adequate and lawful access to chaplains or clergy in conformance with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. Clergy are allowed a 15 minute visitation with a caregiver and patient upon request and approval based on patient's COVID status. Clergy must follow caregiver entrance guidelines.

**COVID-19+:** Individuals who are positive for the coronavirus.

**PUI:** Persons under investigation. PUI patients are being tested for the coronavirus and/or are were in an environment that has been determined to be at high risk for the transmission of the coronavirus, which includes but is not limited to nursing home residents, forensic patients, group home residents, homeless, and/or patients exhibiting signs and symptoms of the coronavirus infection (fever, respiratory distress, and cough).

### **CAREGIVERS FOR COVID-19+ / PUI / NON-COVID PATIENTS**

#### **COVID -19+ & PUI Inpatients**

- COVID-19 positive or PUI patients will not be allowed to have any Caregivers present at the bedside except in end-of-life situations or other extenuating circumstances (approval by CNO).
- Caregivers must be able to wear PPE provided by the hospital without restrictions.

#### **Non-COVID Inpatients (Non-Critical Care)**

- Caregivers must be competent in his/her ability to improve the care of the patient and is able to be independent for all ADLs.
- Only one caregiver is permitted inside the facility at a time for each patient. Caregivers may rotate with the alternate caregiver once during a 24-hour period. The rotation must occur before 9pm. At 9pm, any caregiver currently in the hospital will either need to exit the hospital immediately or will need to remain overnight.
- Caregiver visitation will begin at 8am each morning and no caregiver will be allowed to enter after 9pm without permission from the unit Director or in the absence of the Director, the House Supervisor.
- Caregivers will be permitted to obtain food from the cafeteria or Java Shop and should return to the patient's room promptly.

### **CAREGIVER ENTRANCE GUIDELINES:**

- Caregivers will be allowed entrance to the hospital at 8am each morning.
  - Exceptions are made for caregivers arriving with patients scheduled for early morning surgeries and/or procedures.
  - Women's Services' caregiver access will be granted access outside of normal visitation hours and must be verified by the staff of that department.
- All caregivers must comply with entrance screening guidelines. Jackson Hospital may refuse access to anyone for noncompliance of infection control and screening practices.

- Caregivers must be wearing their own face covering upon arrival to the facility and are required to wear the mask at all times.
  - The face covering must cover the nose and mouth of the caregiver and should not slide down when the individual speaks.
  - The hospital reserves the right to require the caregiver to wear a facemask provided by the hospital if a care provider determines the facemask to be ineffective in protecting the patient and/or the staff of Jackson Hospital. Individuals who are unable to wear a mask or refuse to comply with the facemask requirement will not be allowed to visit due to the increased risk of disease transmission.
- Caregivers must submit a picture ID at the screening location. After verification, the caregiver will be provided a visitor identification badge and it will be placed in a visible area on the caregiver's clothing.
- Entry will be denied to anyone who screens positive for (1) symptoms of COVID-19 such as temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (2) exhibit signs and symptoms of illness, such as cough or other respiratory symptoms AND/OR have (3) tested positive for the coronavirus or (4) have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for the coronavirus virus.
- Caregivers must perform hand hygiene upon arrival and frequently while in the hospital. Hand hygiene is required before and after any contact with the patient or items / furniture within the patient's room. Caregivers may not wear gloves into the hospital.

### **CRITICAL CARE / CVICU**

- One caregiver will be allowed to visit during designated visiting times for 30 minutes.
- All caregivers will need to immediately exit the unit and hospital at the end of the visitation time.
  - The designated caregiver will be allowed to enter the hospital 15 minutes prior to the set visitation time.
  - There will be a designated waiting location for caregivers that will allow for social distancing.
  - All caregiver requirements to enter the facility must be met prior to arriving to the designated waiting location.
  - Patients who are COVID-19+ or PUI will not be allowed "in room" visitation by a caregiver. The caregiver will be allowed to stand outside of the patient's room and view the patient. If the patient is able to communicate via phone, the patient and caregiver will be allowed to communicate in that manner.

### **WOMEN'S SERVICES:**

- Each patient will be allowed one Caregiver/Support person to accompany them throughout their stay.
- Caregiver/Support person guidance:
  - The Caregiver/Support person will be screened on admission to the hospital. If the Caregiver/Support person does not pass screening, they will not be allowed to enter the facility.
  - The Caregiver/Support person will be required to wear a mask at all times.
  - The Caregiver/Support person will not be allowed to rotate with others during the patient's stay, as we continue to recognize the importance of reducing unnecessary exposure.
  - COVID-19 positive or Symptomatic PUI patients will not be allowed to have any visitors, including Caregiver/Support person.

### **NEONATAL / NURSERY SERVICES:**

- Each neonatal admission will be allowed visitation by mother and one Caregiver/Support person.
- Neonatal Caregiver/Support person guidance:
  - Mother/Support person will be screened prior to admission to the ICU. Anyone failing the screening process will not be allowed to enter the unit/facility.
  - Mother/Support person will be required to wear a mask at all times while in the facility.

### **END OF LIFE GUIDANCE FOR CAREGIVERS:**

- COVID+ patients or PUI patients will only be allowed caregiver visitation upon approval by a collaborative discussion between the physicians and nurses caring for the patient. Visitation will only be allowed for patients who are cognizant and will benefit from the caregiver's visit.
- For non-COVID-19 patients in whom death is reasonably anticipated within 24-48 hours, two Caregivers (meeting the caregiver entrance guidelines) will be allowed at the bedside.
  - Caregivers may rotate with other caregivers once every four hours until 9pm. At 9pm, any caregiver currently in the hospital will need to remain overnight.

## **SURGICAL / PROCEDURAL AREAS:**

- During a Pre-Admit Testing Visit (PAT), no visitors/caregivers will be allowed to accompany the patient unless needed to complete or assist with the accuracy of information required. An information card will be given to the patient who may share the information with the caregiver regarding day of surgery/procedure guidelines.
- One Caregiver (meeting the caregiver entrance guideline) may accompany the patient to assist with entry into the hospital and registration.
  - The Caregiver will be permitted to utilize existing waiting rooms for initial check-in observing social distancing requirements. The caregiver will be allowed to stay with the patient until the transport team arrives.
  - The caregiver will return to the waiting room once the patient has been taken to the procedural area (Holding room or procedural suite) to prepare the patient for the procedure. The caregiver must provide a contact number for communication between the care team and the caregiver.
  - Surgical outpatient and other indicated procedures may require a caregiver or responsible person to be immediately available during the surgical procedure and be readily available at the time the patient is ready for discharge to home.
  - If the patient is staying overnight, the inpatient area will notify the caregiver once the patient has arrived to the room. ALL requirements for inpatient caregiver guidelines will go into effect at that time.

## **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT:**

- One Caregiver will be permitted to remain at bedside with a patient if:
  1. The patient is NOT COVID-19 + or Person under Investigation (PUI).
  2. The patient is NOT in a hallway stretcher.
  3. The patient is NOT being evaluated for a psychiatric condition.  
An exception may be made for pediatric patients.
  4. The patient is NOT a forensic patient.

The Emergency Department has the authority to restrict caregiver visitation if allowing caregivers may be detrimental to patients, staff or other caregivers due to risk of exposure or harm.

**JACKSON HOSPITAL AMBULATORY CLINICS:**

- One Caregiver/Support person will be allowed to accompany the patient IF the waiting area has the space to accommodate social distancing.
- All Caregivers and patients must wear a mask.
- Symptomatic screening to include temperature check will be conducted at specified entrances.
- Proper social distancing at 6 feet is maintained at all times while within the facility. Seating and elevator restrictions will be marked by signage to ensure adequate distancing.