

VISITATION STATUS UPDATE

On July 20, 2020, Interim Director of Health Lance Himes signed a [Director's Order](#) continuing to restrict access to Ohio's long-term care facilities, including both nursing homes and assisted living centers.

During a [press briefing \(58 minute mark\)](#) on Thursday, September 17, 2020, Governor DeWine stated:

"If you have a loved one, and you cannot get into a nursing home, that is the nursing home that is stopping you from going in. It is not the Health Department."

This is incorrect. LeadingAge Ohio has advocated for months for the reopening of safe indoor visitation, and is currently working with association partners and the DeWine Administration on guidance for that reopening. Neither the Governor nor the Ohio Department of Health have given providers guidance or permission to resume indoor visitation, and the Administration later clarified that indoor visitation has not yet been reopened by the state.



Per the still-active [July 20 Director's Order](#):

Nursing facilities and assisted living centers must continue to restrict access and are not permitted to offer indoor visitation.

- The order applies to: nursing facilities, residential care facilities (RCFs) which includes assisted living, and ICF/IIDs.
- Access continues to be restricted only to personnel necessary to the operation of the Homes.
- No visitors of residents are permitted to enter any Home, except for end-of-life situations.

Nursing facilities and assisted living centers may continue to offer outdoor visitation.

- Providers are asked to prepare a comprehensive plan before reopening outdoor visitation.
- Outdoor visitation policies must include visitor screening, mask requirements, adequate staffing, and more.
- Visits at nursing homes/RCFs shall not exceed one hour in length, nor are more than three visitors allowed per resident per visit.

LeadingAge Ohio continues to work with association partners and the Administration on a plan to reopen indoor visitation.

"When the Governor stated that nursing homes were to blame for ongoing visitation restrictions, we heard an immediate outcry from providers around the state. Our members continue to follow state and federal regulations pertaining to visitation, and at no point have Ohio providers been given guidance or permission to offer indoor visitation from the Administration."

LeadingAge Ohio president and CEO Kathryn Brod