



**United Methodist
Communities**

**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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United Methodist Communities Responds to COVID-19

Multiple strategies implemented statewide

NEPTUNE, N.J., March 18, 2020 — United Methodist Communities (UMC) has acted to address the novel (new) coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Amid this pandemic, the organization continues to work tirelessly and comprehensively to help ensure the health and well-being of residents, clients, and associates. At this time, we have no cases or known exposures of COVID-19 in our UMC communities.

We have formed a COVID-19 Response Team, led by Corporate Director of Compliance and Risk Management, Elizabeth P. Andersen, composed of organizational leaders, registered nurses, and infection control practitioners representing every UMC location. The team communicates regularly and consistently meets via conference calls. Sub-groups address specific areas of concern such as dining, community engagement, and staffing.

In addition to our longstanding infection-control procedures, we are following expert recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), and county health departments. These protocols include infection control training, supply purchasing, staffing preparedness, and other measures.

Recognizing the dangers this virus poses to our fragile residents and clients, we are now prohibiting visitors from entering our full-service communities. Visitors may only enter as essential for the resident's well-being and care (e.g., hospice and end-of-life situations). This is a precautionary measure to reduce the threat of spreading the coronavirus. These measures are necessary to protect residents to the greatest of our ability. Outside groups, as appropriate, no longer visit.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 inside and outside of our communities, handwashing, visitor screening, more frequent cleaning, and social distancing remain in effect. Out of an abundance of caution, we have implemented a robust screening process based on numerous criteria, including temperature. In this dynamic and ever-changing situation, we continue to update all restrictions and other responses.

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Specific to UMC's full-service communities (Bristol Glen, Collingswood, Pitman, and The Shores), we are taking residents' temperatures twice a day and quarantining as appropriate. To further enhance safety, we have asked these residents to voluntarily remain on their campuses. In order to vigilantly uphold and out of a deep concern for the health and safety of everyone on these campuses, residents who voluntarily leave, except for emergencies, may not return pending further notice.

HomeWorks, UMC's homecare division, is taking measures to monitor all clients, caregivers, and nurses for symptoms. Caregivers are equipped with protective equipment to use as the need arises.

President and CEO, Lawrence D. Carlson, noted, "From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank our associates for their dedication to our residents and clients. Without this valued team we would not be at the forefront of the COVID-19 response."

To maintain important social connections, UMC has increased technological capabilities to connect residents with friends and family (including Zoom, Skype and Facetime). A new voice-accessible COVID-19 HOTLINE feature provides residents and families a place to access information anytime through their ALEXA devices or direct dial.

For the latest on UMC's COVID-19 response, or for our direct dial hotline numbers for the four full-service communities, click on the COVID-19 response button on the homepage, www.umcommunities.org. Questions can be sent to Covid19@UMCommunities.org.

UMC understands that even with stringent oversight, our communities could face a coronavirus exposure at any time. As a faith-based ministry, we will communicate relentlessly and transparently as the situation evolves.

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About United Methodist Communities

United Methodist Communities is a not-for-profit organization guided by a volunteer board of directors affiliated in ministry with the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey. The mission of the United Methodist Communities is compassionately serving in community so that all are free to choose abundant life.

With over 112 years of continuous operation, the organization has grown to 13 locations offering independent, residential and assisted living; Tapestries® Memory Care; respite; rehabilitation; long-term care; Bridges® Hospice and Palliative Care; affordable senior housing; and case management, live-in and in-home personal care through HomeWorks.

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