



February 29, 2020

Dear Residents and Family Members,

As you have likely seen in the recent news, the threat of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has reached the Pacific Northwest, including the Seattle and Portland metropolitan areas. While there are currently no cases of coronavirus identified in any of our communities, we want you to know that we are taking this potential risk very seriously and have begun taking action to mitigate the potential of it entering and spreading within our communities.

As always, our overriding priority above all else is the safety and health of our residents and employees. We have an established and robust infection control protocol we routinely follow for seasonal viruses such as respiratory flu and norovirus. These viruses present far greater health concerns and risks to our communities than the COVID-19 virus, but serve as regular reminders of the importance of effective infection control. Utilizing our infection control protocols provide us a tremendous head start on taking precautionary measures in times like this.

What are the symptoms of Coronavirus? It causes a mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), those affected generally exhibit cold-like symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath. It spreads through contact with another infected person, such as being too close during a cough or sneeze. This general route for disease spreading mimics that of the typical cold or flu.

Earlier this week, based on the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other state, county and city health departments, and in an effort to keep the virus out of our communities, our Chief Quality Officer and Executive Directors began working together to execute and elevate our standard protocol.

Such steps include:

- Re-educating our teams and our residents of our existing infection control protocols – and how they should be observing it;
- Monitoring employees and residents for symptoms, and utilizing potential action plans if symptoms should present themselves;
- Modifying our paid leave policy for employees who are symptomatic, to encourage ill staff to remain home to minimize risk of resident exposure;
- Adjusting our culinary services, such that we will temporarily eliminate higher risk touchpoints (for example: salad bars, shared lobby coffee services, pre-set utensils on tables within our dining rooms, and access to the dining hall for non-diners during non-dining hours)
- Utilizing robust cleaning procedures to keep high resident traffic areas sanitized;
- Displaying signage at community entrances, discouraging visitors with symptoms from entering.

You may be asking how you can help aid us, in minimizing the spread of any illness. Here are some requests we would make of you:

- Wash your hands frequently and use good hygiene behaviors;
- Maintain social distancing – 1 to 3 feet distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing;



- Use a tissue or your bent elbow for a cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the tissue and wash your hands immediately;
- If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, please isolate yourself from others and notify our team immediately or seek medical care;
- If you have been exposed to someone with fever, cough and difficulty breathing, please isolate yourself from others and notify our team immediately;
- Encourage your friends and loved ones to visit after the greater community risk has diminished. Visits by those potentially exposed – whether they are aware of exposure or not - raises our risk of spreading the virus.

We hope that any concerns you may have are alleviated by knowing that our retirement communities are some of the best prepared places to live at a time like this. As opposed to those living in the general public, The Springs Living communities offer robust infection control procedures aimed to reduce the risk of spreading through practices such as:

- **On-site health care professionals** who continually monitor the current guidance to ensure the steps taken follow information received from reputable sources;
- **Connection** to national, state, and county health departments to remain informed;
- **Emergency management station** status that provides primary response from federal and local emergency services, prioritized over other general public environments;
- **Housekeeping services** on site with enhanced cleaning schedules of all surfaces;
- **Education and training** on infection control provided regularly to all employees and residents;
- **Culinary teams** who adhere to rigid guidelines from the Food and Drug Administration for food sourcing and processing. We intentionally engage in safer storage techniques and stricter sanitation standards than most private homes;
- **Responsive measures** to quickly intervene should anyone with symptoms need support.

If you have questions or display signs of symptoms outlined above, please inform your executive director. We will continue to provide educational inputs and update you with additional information as necessary.

Be Well,

Fee Stubblefield
Founder & CEO