



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo: Expanded nursing home visitation guidelines must be implemented immediately

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 11, 2021

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19: NURSING HOMES; VISITATION**

In light of recently updated federal guidance allowing for expanded nursing home visitation, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, today called on the state Department of Health to immediately review the new guidelines and revise the state's existing rules accordingly to allow more families to visit with loved ones in residential care facilities. Recent revisions made by the department to the state's visitation policy were inconsequential and insufficient with little to no changes.

The updated guidance from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which is dated March 10, states that "facilities should allow indoor visitation at all times and for all residents (regardless of vaccination status), except for a few circumstances when visitation should be limited due to a high risk of COVID-19 transmission." Compassionate care visits should be permitted at all times.

"New York State, as well as nursing homes, must allow for the expanded visitation outlined in the revised federal guidance immediately," Sen. Griffo said. "Barrier and window visits are unacceptable and obstacles put up by residential care facilities that limit visitation should not be tolerated. While I recognize that we must remain smart and safe as we continue to confront challenges related to COVID-19, it is now incumbent upon nursing homes, which

know their facilities and how to protect staff and residents, to determine new ways, approaches and methods to allow their residents to see their loved ones and make this happen.”

Sen. Griffo believes that the Department of Health also should also ease any restrictions on the commingling of residents.