

January 14, 2022

Dear Beatitudes Community,

As the COVID-19 pandemic nears its two-year anniversary, Beatitudes Campus is preparing for ongoing surges and new variants, such as the Omicron variant, which now accounts for 95 percent of all COVID-19 cases. The Omicron variant is concentrated in the upper airways (nose and throat), which makes it much more transmissible than previous variants. If infected with the Omicron variant, the illness is apparently less severe than the Delta variant, especially for vaccinated and/or boosted individuals.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has shortened the recommended time in isolation for those individuals who have tested positive. People with COVID-19 need to remain home for five days (as opposed to 10 or more) if they are asymptomatic or if their symptoms are resolving without fever for 24 hours. CDC and the campus are requiring those returning from isolation to wear a well-fitting mask (KN95 or N95) as directed to minimize the risk of infecting others. Safety of our residents and staff is our top priority. We will be issuing isolation guidelines for those individuals testing positive and quarantine guidelines for those individuals exposed to COVID on shortly. The guidelines may change as conditions change.

Many of us feel fatigued by COVID-19 and the protocols we must take for protection. This virus and its variants have been causing infections in people for nearly two years now. But we still have to be vigilant and take precautions. Protecting ourselves and each other is our top priority. I urge you to **get vaccinated and get your booster if you are able and haven't already**. For the same reason you got vaccinated to begin with, which is to reduce the serious consequences of infection, you should get a booster. The booster raises your immune response to COVID-19 and the higher the immune response, the higher the antibody levels and the greater protection from these new variants. Additionally, I urge you to "layer" your protection by wearing a well-fitting mask like a KN95 or N95, practicing good hand hygiene, keeping your distance from others and getting tested if you feel symptoms of COVID.

Maricopa County continues to be in a high transmission status with a 31% positivity rate – that's nearly one in three tests come back positive. The campus is continuing its twice-weekly all-staff testing, and it is proving beneficial, particularly for picking up asymptomatic COVID-19 cases. As of today, we have 26 staff positive cases from all across the campus – Health Care Center, Assisted Living and Administration. Most have no or very mild symptoms. All are in isolation at home. In doing contact tracing, most have been exposed to the virus from family members or attending gatherings of people. Earlier this week, a family member of a resident who lives in the Piper Residences (early memory support) informed us that they recently tested positive for COVID-19, so all residents in the Piper Residences were tested and four residents tested positive. Most cases are mild with few symptoms. Visitation for non-infected Piper

residents can continue, with COVID symptom screening at the building entrance, and we ask that Piper visitors wear a well-fitting mask and face shield (the same as staff who work in Piper Residences).

Please stay safe and healthy.

My best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle L. Just".

Michelle Just, President and CEO

