

**SBH Health System**  
Bronx, New York

<b>TITLE:</b> <b>Hospital Visitation Guidelines</b>	<b>SECTION:</b> <b>Administrative Policy and Procedure</b>	<b>Effective: 09/88</b>
		<b>Reviewed:04/06</b>
		<b>Revised: 10/13,12/15, 6/17, 1/2020, 3/2020, 6/2023</b>
		<b>Approved By:</b> <b>Senior Administration</b>
<b>Prepared By: Senior Director of Patient Experience</b>		<b>Date:3/11/2020</b>

**Cross Reference: During the COVID-19 epidemic, please refer to Policy- Patient and Visitor Guidelines COVID-19 for additional visitation guidelines.**

**I. POLICY:**

St. Barnabas Hospital recognizes the importance of visitation to our patients, their families and friends. Patients and families are welcomed as essential members of the health care team, helping to ensure quality and safety. Families provide support, comfort, and important information throughout a hospital stay from admission through the transition to home and community care.

All visitors of patients at St. Barnabas Hospital are afforded equal visitation privileges consistent with patient preferences and in accordance with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation and New York State Department of Health regulations. Visitation privileges shall not be restricted, limited or denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

**II. PURPOSE:**

To provide visiting guidelines that are in accordance with the Hospital's philosophy of patient centered care that supports quality and safety, taking into consideration individual patient/family needs and circumstances.

**III. PROCEDURES:**

- A.** Each patient (or the patient's support person or representative, where appropriate) has the right to choose who may visit them during an inpatient stay and the right to withdraw or deny consent at any time.
1. At the time of admission to the hospital, each patient (or the patient's support person or representative, where appropriate) is advised of the hospital visitation policies, in writing, through the receipt of the Patient Guide.
  2. The Hospital shall accept verbal confirmation from a patient or the patient's support person or representative, where appropriate of individuals who shall or shall not be allowed to visit. A support person can be a family member, a support person can be a family member, spouse, domestic partners of the same or opposite sex, and friends, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and/or disability. As well as, other individual who support the patient during the hospital stay and may exercise the patient's visitation rights on patient's behalf if patient is unable to do so.

3. In the event the patient is a minor, the legal parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity to verbally designate the individuals permitted to visit. The hospital shall allow at least one parent/guardian to remain with the patient at all times.
4. St Barnabas Hospital encourages a quiet healing environment after 8pm. An announcement will be made at 7:30 p.m. in English and Spanish to remind visitors that visiting hours are drawing to a close. An additional announcement will be made at 9:00 p.m. to reinforce this. Visitation after this time will be managed by nursing services.
5. All visitors shall enter through the hospital main lobby. From 8 pm to 6 am all visitors shall enter through the Emergency Department.
6. Only two (2) visitors are permitted with a patient at one time in the SICU and MICU and Pediatric Unit
7. Anyone below the age of fourteen (14) must be accompanied by an adult

#### **B. Patient's Visitation Restrictions.**

Except when the patient chooses to restrict visitors, limitations on the presence of these individuals may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances, such as when:

1. There is a legal reason that is documented in the chart, (e.g., a restraining order or the patient is in legal custody with a court order prohibiting visitors).
2. Their behavior creates a direct risk or threat to patients, families, staff, or others in the immediate environment or is disruptive of the functioning of the patient care unit.
3. They have a contagious illnesses or have had known exposure to a communicable disease that would jeopardize the patient's health.
4. An infectious disease outbreak in the community requires severe access restrictions. Hospitals can develop a process for selected family members to have access to the patient and ensure that families understand any risks they may be subject to by choosing to stay with their family member in the hospital. The hospital may choose to limit family movement or access to specific areas within the hospital (e.g., public areas such as cafeterias, family lounges).
5. A patient in a shared room requires immediate lifesaving measures (e.g. resuscitation) or a sensitive/private discussion needs to occur. In these instances those present with the other patient may be asked to temporarily step out of the room.
6. Decisions to restrict or limit presence must be discussed with the patient and documented in the medical record.

#### **C. Overnight Visitation:**

1. Overnight visitors are not permitted to stay at the patient's bedside unless the patient is in a private room.
2. Overnight visitation is allowed under special circumstances with the approval of the Nurse Manager/Supervisor. Only one family member/significant other may stay overnight in the room.

3. In critical care areas, overnight visitors will not be permitted to stay in the patient's room. The waiting room/lounge will be used for this purpose.

#### **D. Modification of Visiting Hours:**

There may be unique and extenuating circumstances (i.e. imminent death, impending surgery, etc.) that require compassionate exceptions to these visiting hours. The Nurse Manager/Director/Supervisor, using professional judgment and in collaboration with the patient or the patient's support person or representative, where appropriate, will consider the unique family circumstances and patient needs when applying these guidelines to the extent that it is feasible.

#### **E. Maternal Child Health Visits**

St Barnabas Hospital respects the safety and security needs of our smallest patients by following these guidelines:

- a. For the benefit of our mothers and their babies, general visiting hours in the Family Birthing Center are only from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- b. All Maternal Child visitors must ring for entrance to the unit.
- c. Only four people may visit with mother and baby at one time. There is a waiting room for additional visitors in the main lobby.
- d. Siblings of the new baby are encouraged to visit as long as they are accompanied and monitored by an adult.

#### **F. Grievance**

1. If any patient believes that his or her patient visitation rights are being violated, they may file a complaint using the Hospital's internal grievance system.
2. The patient also has the right to file a complaint utilizing the following mechanisms:
  - a. Medicare beneficiaries may file a complaint through IPRO (Island Peer Review Organization)
  - b. The New York State Department of Health
  - c. The Joint Commission

#### **REFERENCES**

Department of Health Section 405.7

CMS § 482.13 Condition of participation: Patient's rights

The Joint Commission Comprehensive Accreditation and Certification Manual

#### **Cross Reference;**

Administrative Policy: Patient Rights and Responsibilities

**APPENDIX A**

**Visiting Hours**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Medical, Surgical and Pediatrics	11:00 am – 8:00 pm Visitors can rotate 2 support persons per patient at bedside
Medical/Surgical	No children under the age of 12 years
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit	Siblings: Every Saturday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm Parents and Grandparents: 24 hours except 7:00 am – 8:00 am, and 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Intensive Care Unit	11:00 am – 8:00 pm 10 minutes per hour Visitors can rotate 2 visitors per patient
Hospice	Visitation hours are 24/7 Maximum 4 people at bedside
Maternity	4 people may visit at a time.
	Husband/Partner: 10:00 am – 10:00 pm
	General Hours: 11:00 am – 8:00 pm
	Siblings 12 and below (must be accompanied by an adult): 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm
During flu season, children under 12 years of age are not permitted to visit unless vaccinated for the flu.	
Labor & Delivery	Two designated support persons are permitted at the bedside.
Children under 18 not permitted unless the patient has received permission in writing from the Labor & Delivery manager or administrative supervisor.	
Psychiatry Units (Kane 2/Kane 3)	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm daily 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm daily The minimum age of visitors to the psychiatric units is 16 years old.
ED – Adult / Pediatrics	1 visitor to be determined by physician or charge nurse
ED – Psychiatry	No visiting hours.