CMP Application for In-Person Visitation Aid Requests

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the application for in-person visitation aids?**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued guidance for Nursing Home Visitation – COVID-19.[1] By following a person-centered approach and adhering to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention, visitation can occur safely based on this guidance. Recognizing that considerations allowing for visitation in each phase of re-opening may be difficult for residents and their families, CMS has developed this application template for requests for the use of Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Reinvestment funds to provide nursing homes with in-person visitation aids.

2. **Will applications requesting CMP funds for in-person visitation aids be expedited?**

State Agencies can approve applications that meet the defined CMS parameters without review by CMS. CMS anticipates that this process will reduce the amount of time needed to review and approve the use of funds for in-person visitation aids.

The purpose of this application is to provide a template to potential applicants so they provide all the required information for the State Agency to make a timely determination on the request for the use of funds.

3. **When can states approve CMP applications without CMS review?**

States must first retain 60% or $1M (whichever is lowest) of their available CMP funds for emergencies. If a state has questions or concerns about the maximum amount they may spend on in-person visitation aid projects, they should work with their LTC Branch.

4. **What criteria must Applications meet?**

Applications must meet ALL of the following criteria:

   A. Applications must be on the COVID-19 In-Person Visitation Aid Application Template.
      - If the application is for in-person visitation aids but is on the standard CMP Application template, the state may follow up with the applicant to request they resubmit on the correct template.
   B. Applicants must only include requests for funds to purchase in-person visitation aids (i.e., tents or other shelter for outdoor visitation and/or clear dividers (e.g., Plexiglas or similar product)).
      - The application should not include requests for items identified as prohibited (Personal Protective Equipment, infrared temperature scanners, COVID-19 testing machines or supplies, etc.).

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[1] https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-20-39-nh.pdf

C. Applicants must ensure:
- Requests directly address the need to facilitate in-person visits for residents.
- Appropriate Life Safety Code requirements found at 42 CFR 483.90 are met, unless waived under the PHE declaration.
- Tent or other shelter allows for social distancing to be observed.
- Core principles of infection prevention and control practices are followed. Surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected between resident use.
- Work with state officials to determine the appropriate level of visitation restrictions within available guidelines from the CDC (e.g., limiting the number of individuals visiting with any one resident).

D. Facilities may use up to $3,000 for in-person visitation aids, including installation, installation materials, and shipping costs for the in-person visitation aids.

E. Expenses incurred on or after the release of Memorandum QSO 20-39-NH (September 17, 2020) are eligible for reimbursement.

5. **Can states approve CMP Applications in excess of the $3,000 maximum?**

No, states cannot approve these requests.

6. **Can applicants use the standard CMP Application process to request additional in-person visitation aids?**

No, Applicants cannot use the standard CMP application process to supplement their visitation aids request to obtain additional in-person visitation aids in excess of the $3,000 maximum limit.

7. **What if an applicant fails to use the CMP COVID-19 In-Person Visitation Aid Application Template?**

In-person visitation aid requests submitted via formats other than the CMP COVID-19 In-Person Visitation Aid Application Template can **NOT** be approved by the states. These applicants should be provided a copy of the correct template and advised to resubmit their request.

8. **What are types of visitation aids that promote in-person visits?**
- tents or other shelter for outdoor visitation (purchase and/or rental); and/or
- clear dividers (e.g., Plexiglas or similar product) to create a physical barrier to reduce the risk of transmission during in-person visits.

9. **What expenses are prohibited for in-person visitation aid requests?**
These applications are strictly for in-person visitation aids only. Prohibited expenses include but are not limited to:
- Outdoor furniture (chairs, tables, etc.)
- Portable air conditioning and/or heating units
- Fans
- Ventilation systems
- Air purifiers

- Lighting system
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Portable fire extinguishers of approved types
- Disinfectant and Cleaning Supplies (Disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- No-Smoking signage
- Administrative fees
- Indirect Cost. For example: federally determined indirect (facilities and administrative-F&A) costs such as staff fringe benefits or facility maintenance.
- Travel expenses
- Infrared temperature scanners
- COVID-19 testing and testing equipment

10. How can a facility prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in the facility while using in-person visitation aids?

Facilities should ensure person-centered approaches and core principles for preventing COVID-19 transmission are followed while using in-person visitation aids. Core principles and best practices that reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission include:
- Screening of all who enter the facility for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., temperature checks, questions or observations about signs or symptoms), and denial of entry of those with signs or symptoms
- Hand hygiene (use of alcohol-based hand rub is preferred)
- Face covering or mask (covering mouth and nose)
- Social distancing at least six feet between persons
- Instructional signage throughout the facility and proper visitor education on COVID-19 signs and symptoms, infection control precautions, other applicable facility practices (e.g., use of face covering or mask, specified entries, exits and routes to designated areas, hand hygiene)
- Cleaning and disinfecting high frequency touched surfaces in the facility often, and designated visitation areas after each visit
- Appropriate staff use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Effective cohorting of residents (e.g., separate areas dedicated to COVID-19 care)
- Resident and staff testing conducted as required at 42 CFR 483.80(h) (see QSO-20-38-NH)

11. What must be included in the application and application budget (application template Section 5)?

To be considered for funding, each application must include the following information:
- Name(s) of facility(ies) to receive visitation aids (and CMS Certification Numbers (CCNs)).
- Number of certified facility beds.
- Type(s) of visitation aids.
- Cost per visitation aid.

- Total number of visitation aids requested.
- Total funds requested.

Applicants must also provide a line-item budget for all visitation aids (i.e., tents or other shelter for outdoor visitation and/or clear dividers (e.g., Plexiglas or similar product)), broken down per facility for which CMP funding is requested.

12. How should funds be tracked by states?

In accordance with 42 CFR 488.433, states shall maintain a list of all nursing homes receiving CMP reinvestment funds for in-person visitation aids during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. This information should be entered into the Annual CMP Reinvestment Tracker completed by each state. The CMP-Info@cms.hhs.gov mailbox should be carbon-copied (cc) on all state approval and denial notifications.