



January 5, 2022

Dear IL Residents and Staff Members:

Nearly two years into the pandemic and yet another variant has presented unique challenges for our country and our world. It stands to reason that this will not be last variant to emerge. It is likely that other variants will follow. And so, the question becomes, “How do we live in a world with COVID?” At IKF, our choices are to play it very safe and shut down each time a new threat emerges, as we did in March 2020, or to find some middle ground and try as best we can to balance safety and having a life worth living. Given what we know about this variant, its high transmissibility and its subtle onset, milder symptoms, and the near universal vaccination and booster rates among our residents and the protections offered thereby, we do not plan to close programs and services. We do think that mitigating risk by reducing crowds, continued education, and informed decision-making by each resident will be important to a future that includes Omicron.

Ultimately, each of you must assess your own risk tolerance based on your circumstances. If you are very concerned for your safety based on your own health, then you should opt out of being in public until you feel safe again. If you feel more comfortable with risk, then you should allow yourself more freedoms. The risk, of course, is contracting Omicron and being exposed to whatever severity the virus might have on your body as opposed to someone else’s.

**Regardless of your own level of risk tolerance, you should always display responsible behavior and follow CDC guidance to avoid the inadvertent spread of COVID in our community. Always wear a well-fitted mask in public, require your guests to do the same, quarantine after known exposure, isolate yourself if you feel sick. What follows is the most up-to-date information we have.**

## **Safety Measures at IKF**

### **Mask-Wearing**

- Unfortunately, we are still seeing some residents, staff and private duty aides incorrectly wearing their masks. To be effective, masks must be worn so that your nose and mouth are fully covered, and the mask fits snugly.
- **If you employ the services of a private duty aide, they are always required to wear their masks, even in the privacy of your apartment.**
- Due to the highly contagious nature of the Omicron variant, we highly recommend wearing medical grade, N95, or KN95 masks instead of cloth masks. These can be found easily online on sites such as Amazon or at your local Home Depot or Walmart. Double-

masking provides an added layer of protection if you are using a cloth mask.

### **Program Spaces & Activities**

- Spaces including the Art Studio, Game Room, Card Room, Cultural Arts Center, Classroom, etc. are open with capacity limitations and required mask-wearing. To reserve one of these spaces for an in-person group, please contact Shelly Horn at [shorn@inglesideonline.org](mailto:shorn@inglesideonline.org) or 240-499-9038 or Judy Hayes at [jhayes@inglesideonline.org](mailto:jhayes@inglesideonline.org) or 240-499-9015.
- While card and game players are welcome in the Atrium and Card Room, please observe any signs that indicate a table is closed. We have closed certain tables to reduce the number of people sitting directly next to each other in a space.
- The Fitness Studio is open for use and in-person classes will continue with capacity restrictions.
- Should we observe a trend of residents removing their masks or not wearing their masks correctly, we may decide to close program spaces.
- We encourage those who can transition to Zoom for virtual programming to do so.

### **Singing Programs**

- We are in routine contact with the Maryland Department of Health Infection Prevention & Control Team who have advised that singing, even among fully vaccinated individuals, is a “very high-risk activity.” Because singing can expel virus-infected droplets into the air — and these droplets are known to accumulate and linger in the air for a sustained period, IKF has made the difficult decision to suspend singing programs.

### **Guests**

- Guests are welcome to visit you, but visits may only take place in your apartment. Guests are not permitted in dining rooms, common areas, or program spaces. They must wear their mask while on campus. While not mandatory, we are also asking guests who are not fully vaccinated to postpone their visit to IKF at this time.

### **Transportation**

- Transportation to medical appointments and local grocery stores remain open. We are working with the Trips Committee to determine which Cultural Arts Trips to keep in the coming weeks and which to reschedule for a later time. Because we will be limiting capacity on the buses to reduce crowd size, we will be offering grocery store trips twice a week in January.
- Montgomery County is reporting a positivity rate of 25%. Please reconsider attending community activities and events with groups of people or dining in restaurants. Many grocery stores will deliver your groceries to your apartment door.

## **Dining**

- Effective Monday, 1/10/2021, the Coffee Shop will re-open for in-person dining Monday thru Friday from 8AM-2PM.
- Effective Monday, 1/10/2021, the Courtyard Café will open for in-person dining Monday thru Friday from 11AM-1:30PM. During this time there will not be delivery service. Carry-out service is available.
- There are no guests permitted in the dining room.
- Please wear your mask unless you are sitting at a table.

## **On-Campus Billing Office**

- On campus Business Office hours will be suspended until further notice. For questions about your bill or to connect with someone in the billing department, please call 301-407-2078 or email [thopkins@inglesideonline.org](mailto:thopkins@inglesideonline.org).

## **Ingleside Engaged**

- Ingleside Engaged, IKF's social day program, has re-opened. Please contact Maureen Charlton for more information at 240-499-9024 or [mcharlton@inglesideonline.org](mailto:mcharlton@inglesideonline.org)

## **Self-Testing**

- Self-testing is one of several risk-reduction strategies to reduce the chances of COVID-19 transmission. Consider using a self-test before joining indoor gatherings with others who are not in your household. If your self-test has a positive result, stay in your apartment, call your healthcare provider and call Luwana Cameron, Wellness Director at 240-499-9048 or 301-300-2013; email [lcameron@inglesideonline.org](mailto:lcameron@inglesideonline.org).
- We are often asked if IKF can provide rapid tests (antigen) or lab-based PCR (molecular) to residents living in IL. Ingleside at King Farm has limited tests due to a nationwide test shortage. These tests must be accessible for us to use for our staff to maintain operations. We will continue to test new staff before their first day at IKF or if they think they have had an exposure.

## **Booster Clinic Coming to IKF**

- Please, get your booster if you are eligible to do so at your local Safeway or CVS.
- IKF will host a booster clinic for all residents and staff on January 20<sup>th</sup> from 9AM-5PM in the Cultural Arts Center with our partners at Safeway.
- Safeway will bring BOTH Moderna and Pfizer Boosters. More details to come.

## **Isolation and Quarantine**

The CDC has published new guidance as of December 27, 2021 and IKF adopted this guidance as of 1/4/2021. (<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>) This includes adopting the 5 day quarantine/isolation guidance detailed below.

## **What to do if you are exposed to someone with COVID (Quarantine)**

For those who may have been exposed to COVID-19:

- Contact your primary care physician and Luwana Cameron, Wellness Director at [lcameron@inglesideonline.org](mailto:lcameron@inglesideonline.org) or 240-499-9048 or 301-300-2013.
- Unvaccinated people or vaccinated people who are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days. Do not go to dining rooms for in-person dining.
- Vaccinated and boosted people do not need to quarantine following an exposure but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. Do not go to dining rooms for in-person meals.
- For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure.
- If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

## **What to do if you suspect you have COVID or have tested positive (Isolate)**

Regardless of your vaccination status, you should:

- Call your primary care physician and Luwana Cameron, Wellness Director.
- Stay home for 5 days. By alerting Luwana Cameron, we can coordinate services for you such as meal delivery. Luwana will also routinely check in on you.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your apartment.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days. Do not go to dining rooms for in-person dining.
- If you have a fever or your symptoms persist or worsen, continue to stay home until your symptoms resolve.

We continue to be moved by the spirit of this community. Thank you to those who reach out with suggestions and offers to help. A special thank you to our Monday night meal delivery volunteers! Please reach out to the IKF Hotline at 240-499-0477 or [ikfhotline@inglesideonline.org](mailto:ikfhotline@inglesideonline.org) if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

*Pete Dalbenigno*  
Interim Executive Director

*Kate Kavitski*  
Independent Living Administrator

*Cody Christian*  
Community Director of Healthcare Services