



Walden School Visitations

Where it is safe to do so, we encourage our Walden School residents the opportunity to visit with their family while on campus. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we outline the following policies that promote the health and safety of our students, staff and families, while adhering to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines.

These guidelines are outlined while considering each of our students' needs. We recognize the importance of staying connected to family during this trying time.

While we have worked diligently to implement various protocols to ensure safety, it is up to each individual (staff, students and families) to accept personal responsibility to follow the guidance as advised by the CDC.

Expectations During Your Visit:

- A [Family Attestation form](#) must be completed 24 hours prior to your visit. A follow-up phone call by the The Learning Center Department of Health Services may be conducted. Health questions that must be monitored include:
 - Do you or anyone in your household have symptoms of COVID-19?
 - Do you or anyone in your household have a fever?
 - Have you or anyone in your household tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days or have been asked to quarantine due to exposure?
 - Within the past 14 days, have you traveled outside of the low-risk states included in the Commonwealth's travel order?
- Temperature check at time of visit
- Avoid close face-to-face contact and kissing. Hugging with faces in opposite directions is allowed. Brief physical contact may be allowed if desired by the resident/visitor(s).
- Limiting close physical contact to less than 15 minutes.
- Masks should be worn at all times.
- Adults should maintain social distancing to the maximum extent possible during the visit.



- A Walden School staff member knowledgeable about the visitation guidance and trained in basic safety and infection control should be available if needed during the visit.
- The frequency and duration of the visit should be discussed with the contracted agency if applicable (DCF, DMH, LEA's, and parents/guardians)
- A staff person designated by Walden School will be responsible for wiping down and disinfecting after each visit. The building has scheduled cleaning time and will be cleaned by C&W.

Limitation on Visits:

- The number of visitors at any time per resident should not exceed four (4) and be conducted in a manner that maintains appropriate social distancing.
- Walden School has the discretion to limit the amount of visitation based on the availability of space, and will prioritize visitation for those families who have had the least amount of in-person visitation with their child since campus closed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- If indoor visitation occurs, families would be limited to available space, but available areas would be expanded if both indoor and outdoor options are considered.
- Visitors or youth who do not follow the health and safety precautions for indoor visits will be reminded of the importance of the precautions to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. Continued refusal to follow health and safety precautions after this reminder will result in the termination of the visit.

Scheduling Visits in Advance and Screening Visitors in Preparation of the Visitation

- Visit schedules will be staggered in a manner that supports social distancing and avoid overlaps with others on campus.
- Advance notice will ensure that Walden School is not under quarantine and that the individual served can be emotionally prepared for the visit.
- Walden School will keep a log of all visitors, including name, date of visit, a number to contact, and staff on shift.



- Walden School will continue to support alternative electronic methods for communication between youth, family and visitors, including Skype, FaceTime, or Google Duo.
- Visitors are not permitted to visit if they/someone in their household have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days, and/or been ordered by a health care professional to quarantine due to exposure.
- If anyone in the visiting party answers 'Yes' to any of the questions in the attestation, the in-person visit cannot occur and the visit will need to be rescheduled.
- Visitors who have traveled outside of the low-risk states in the past 14 days leading up to the visit will not be allowed on campus without proof of a negative COVID-19 test.

Places Where Visitation can Take Place at Walden School

Outdoors

- Grassy area by Walden School Fire House
- Courtyard - when school is not in session
- Playground - when school is not in session
- Use areas on campus that would support social distancing and fresh air: benches, tables, underneath awnings. When possible, choose locations furthest away from the Walden School building to allow families to connect, and not create situations where other students' are triggered by seeing these visitations.
 - Other suggested areas to use: Playground, courtyard by Secondary building, area under the trees between Firehouse and Kellogg House.
 - Coordination with Student Activity Coordinator will ensure plenty of access to things to do during family visitation time.

Indoors

- The Walden School will not allow any visitations if there are any confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in residents in the past 14 days.
- Hand hygiene must be performed upon entering Walden School, before visit occurs.
 - This includes the use of alcohol-based sanitizer and/or washing hands in the bathroom.
- Brown House - 320 Prospect St.



- If there is a quarantine on campus, no visits will be allowed.
- Face masks must be worn by visitors and staff at all times. Residents will also be encouraged to wear face coverings during an indoor visit.

Miscellaneous:

- Family can bring meals to share with the group.
 - If bringing meals/snacks for other staff/students, food must be commercially made and sealed.
 - No food should be shared off the same plate or drinking by mouth from the same container. Each person should use their own eating utensils and not share plates, cups and utensils.
 - Any leftover food not consumed during visit will be disposed of or taken home by the visitors
- Any individual who participates in a visitation and develops signs and symptoms of COVID-19 within two days after the visitation must immediately notify Walden School, and include the date they were on campus, the individuals they were in contact with, and the locations where the visits occurred.
- Bathroom will only be allowed if indoor visitation occurs in Brown House. No outside visitors can use bathroom facilities on the campus.

Visitation Policies Subject to Change:

- Walden School may be required to change this policy as circumstances regarding COVID-19 adjust according to state and local guidelines.
- Walden School may continue to postpone in-person visit on a case-by-case basis if a resident, staff, or visitor tests positive or shows symptoms of illness, or it is determined visitation cannot safely be accommodated for residents, visitors, or staff. In this case, virtual meetings will be arranged instead.

Approval and Protocol for Home Visits:

When clinically appropriate - students are encouraged to go home for the weekend to have an opportunity to connect with their families. This includes students who are scheduled to be in the program only from Monday through Friday (school days).



Expectations:

Clinician will connect with the family prior to the visit home and review activities planned for the time at home to ensure participation in low risk activities and minimize exposure to COVID-19. If any activity suggested that may increase the risk of COVID-19, Walden School has the right to ask for a COVID-19 test and produce a negative test result before returning to the program. The family also agrees to fill out the attestation form before returning the student to the program.

If a student is away from the program for 5 days or longer, then the student may be required to take a COVID-19 test to ensure a safe return to the program.

If the student does become ill during the visit home, the family is to keep the child until he/she feels well enough to return to Walden School and should be in frequent contact with the Health Services as to steps taken to ensure the wellbeing of the student and Walden School.

Visitation with Families from Out of State

Walden School has a number of students who come from out of state. We recognize the additional challenges that this creates for the families. Whenever possible, the families are asked to follow the guidelines established by the Commonwealth Travel Order. Use this link for latest updates: [MA Travel Order](#). If families live in a designated high-risk state, they should produce a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours before arriving to the program.

Families are expected to follow program visitation policies as outlined above. The family will be placed in a hotel close to campus during their stay to visit their child. The child, if clinically appropriate, can participate in a “visit” at the hotel and would be treated in a manner that is similar to a visit to a local weekend visit. The family will attest as to the child’s health before returning to the program.