

## Providers May Be Required to Update Visitation Policies as No Patient Left Alone Act Set to Become Florida Law

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Senate Bill 988, known as the “No Patient Left Alone Act,” is on its way to the governor’s desk after being passed nearly unanimously by the Florida House and Florida Senate. Intended to address the negative physical and mental health consequences of isolation reported during the COVID-19 pandemic, the bill, which would apply to licensed nursing home and assisted living facilities, requires that providers allow in-person visitation to residents in a broad list of circumstances.

In addition, a resident may designate a family member, friend or other individual as an essential caregiver who must be allowed in-person visitation with the resident for at least two hours daily, even if such individual does not provide any necessary care to the resident. Notably, under the bill’s language, a provider may not require that visitors provide any proof of vaccination or immunization.

Providers should be aware that Governor Desantis is expected to sign the bill into law, in which event Florida facilities will be required to act quickly to implement visitation policies that incorporate the minimum visitation guidelines under the bill, together with procedures for infection control and education policies for visitors. These updated policies must be made available on the provider’s website.

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