



March 19, 2020

The Honorable Megan J. Brennan
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

RE: Mail Delivery to Senior Living Communities

Dear Postmaster General Brennan:

We are writing on behalf of the undersigned organizations that represent thousands of organizations providing housing and care for millions of America's seniors and vulnerable adults.

During this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 outbreak and all the precautions mandated by federal and local authorities regarding visitors and movement within nursing homes, assisted living communities, life-plan communities (independent living, assisted living, and nursing on the same campus), and housing providers, we have been apprised of numerous issues regarding mail delivery to our member organizations.

Specifically, our members are reporting that mail carriers are refusing to comply with new community screening (asking about recent travel and whether they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and/or temperature checks) required by the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for entrance into nursing facilities. In addition, other types of providers, such as assisted living communities and life-plan communities are requiring all visitors (family members, vendors, contractors,

and employees) to pass screening in order to enter their communities as a precaution to protect residents from the spread of COVID-19. When these issues have arisen, rather than simply adhering to the new safety protocol, mail carriers have refused to deliver the mail and/or required providers to retrieve their mail from the local post office.

Our nation's seniors are unable to receive visitors at this time because of their vulnerability and increased risks from the severity of COVID-19. Getting mail is one of the primary ways for seniors to stay connected to loved-ones as well as to continue their important everyday routines. Many seniors also receive crucial packages, such as prescriptions and tax preparation information in the mail.

Many of our organizations have large communities with hundreds of residents and their staffs are stretched very thin right now. We would request that mail carriers be subject to the same screening process as all visitors to our communities. That would help continuation of mail delivery as well as protect the possible transmission of COVID-19. In lieu of mail carrier screening, we ask that mail be left at the community and outgoing mail picked up rather than requiring the community to retrieve mail from the post office. However, this will impose additional staffing pressure on the community when we need those scarce resources to care for our residents.

If you or your staff have questions, we would be happy to answer them and reach a suitable resolution to these issues.

Sincerely,



Mark Parkinson
President and CEO
American Health Care Association/
National Center for Assisted Living



David Schless
President and CEO
American Seniors Housing
Association



James Balda
President & CEO
Argentum



Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO
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