

Katina Rankin: Tennessee Governor Bill Lee announced loosened restrictions for nursing home visitors. And many of those reunions will start tomorrow. Although there will be plenty of joy and excitement, there won't be any hugs and kisses when family members reunite with their loved ones living in nursing homes. It'll be for the first time in months, too. Local 24 news reporter Jalyn Soucek explains the updated guidelines and the preparations to make those visits happen.

Jalyn Soucek: For the last seven months, family members have only seen their loved ones living in nursing homes virtually or through [00:00:30] window visits and parades like this one on Grandparents Day at Quail Ridge Assisted Living.

Dawn Blankenshi...: This has been tough on them not being able to see their loved ones. Many of our residents are nearing their last few years of life. And that human interaction with family is so very important.

Jalyn Soucek: COVID-19 clusters hit nursing homes in Shelby County far more of [00:01:00] the 450 plats in the county. Before visits can [inaudible 00:01:04] without a positive COVID-19 case. Quail Ridge executive director, Dawn Blankenship, said they'll resume visits on Thursday after going a month without a new case.

Dawn Blankenshi...: No, there will be social distancing, masks worn, temperatures taken, questionnaire regarding symptoms.

Jalyn Soucek: Per state guidelines, two adults can visit a resident at one time for 45 minutes. No children will be allowed. The reunions will still have to be socially distant, meaning [00:01:30] long missed hugs and kisses are out of the question.

Dawn Blankenshi...: It's going to be so hard. You know? Even just seeing that is heartbreaking. But letting them at least see the community thrive thriving as usual will be great for the family members.

Jalyn Soucek: Inside and outdoors, quail Ridge said they'll mostly keep their visits outdoors unless the weather is bad.

Dawn Blankenshi...: We're very excited for our residents. We've been waiting [00:02:00] quite a long time for this, and I know their family members are waiting and ready.

Jalyn Soucek: If a COVID-19 case happens at any facility, visits will once again be suspended for at least two weeks. Jalyn Soucek, Local 24 News.