

Consumer Update: Using Cameras to Monitor and Communicate with Residents of Long Term Care Facilities During COVID-19

Many people have questions about using cameras to monitor and communicate with residents they care about. This post contains information to help answer questions about placing and using cameras.

If a resident wishes to use technology to communicate with loved ones, the facility should help make reasonable arrangements to accommodate such communication.

If you as a resident or resident representative wish to place a camera for monitoring purposes, you need to be familiar with a new law that allows for such placement. You can [review the law here](#); find [consent forms here](#); and study a [fact sheet here](#). You can also consult an attorney with specific questions regarding your situation, or call the Minnesota Elder Justice Center at 651-440-9300. With regard to cameras:

- the law allows a resident or a resident's representative to place a camera in the resident's room;
- the resident or resident's representative must complete and file a consent form and notify the facility when a camera is placed; there is a 14-day notification exception in certain cases, as noted [here](#);
- the facility must allow the camera, but is not required to pay for the camera or necessary connections it may need; and
- the facility is also not required to place the camera for the resident. Some facilities may work with residents or resident representatives to place the camera if access to the facility is limited.

Because the COVID-19 outbreak has made it difficult for people other than residents or staff to enter long term care settings, it hasn't always been possible for family or friends to assist residents in placing cameras. Nonetheless, a camera can be a critical tool to monitor care and reduce isolation. Given the current situation with COVID-19, the Minnesota Elder Justice Center is encouraging

providers to assist with placing cameras to enable residents to communicate with loved ones. Meanwhile, concerned friends and family who wish to place a camera should:

- engage in conversation about the camera needs with the provider whenever possible;
- provide complete technology including connectors or cables;
- understand what internet connections are available in the resident's room;
- consider providing a clear and straightforward written instruction regarding the technology, how it works, and its installation for the resident and/or facility; and
- be familiar with the requirements of Minnesota law including notice, exemptions to notice, and roommate consent to the camera placement.

The COVID-19 crisis has created rapid change and confusion around long term care issues. If you or someone you care about has questions about placing a camera for monitoring or communication in a resident's room, call the Minnesota Elder Justice Center at 651-440-9300. We are happy to discuss this and other issues with you: our helpline remains open and available during the COVID-19 outbreak.