



Manual:	Infection Control COVID-19 Pandemic	Reference No.:	April 2022
Section:	Administration		
Subject:	Visitors		

POLICY:

It is the policy of Primacare to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect staff, residents and visitor. Given the highly infectious nature of COVID-19, this obligation may include implementing reasonable screening and testing measures to limit or prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. We recognize that visitors are a vital part of our residents' lives not only for their psychosocial wellbeing but for their quality of life.

Visitors are welcome to visit at times that are mutually agreed upon, that supports the residents wishes. During an outbreak, general visits will be limited or halted as per Public Health direction.

This policy considers the following principles: safety, emotional well-being, and flexibility. It also addresses concepts such as compassion, equity, non-maleficence, proportionality (i.e., to the level of risk), transparency and reciprocity (i.e., providing resources to those who are disadvantaged by the policy).

Types of Visitors:

There are four types of essential visitors

Caregiver means a type of visitor who is visiting the home to provide direct care to meet the essential needs of a particular resident. Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age and must be designated by the resident or his/her substitute decision-maker (if any). Direct care includes providing support or assistance to a resident that includes providing direct physical support (for example, eating, bathing and dressing) and/or providing social and emotional support

Support worker means a person who visits a home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to a resident. Essential services include, but are not limited to, services provided by regulated health professionals, emergency services, social work, moving services, legal services, post-mortem services, maintenance and repair services, food and nutrition services, water and drink delivery services, mail, delivery and courier services, assistive devices program vendors, and election/voting services.

Visitors for the very ill or palliative residents who are receiving end-of-life care for compassionate reasons, hospice services

Government Inspectors- have a statutory right to enter a long-term care community to fulfill their duties

General visitor is a person who is **not** an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the home or a particular resident or group of residents. General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home.

All general visitors, including children under the age of five, can resume visits. General visitors, with the exception of children under the age of five, will need to follow the vaccination policy of the individual long-term care home. **General visitors younger than 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult**

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Up to four visitors (including caregivers) per resident may visit at a time for indoor visits. There are no limits on the number of visitors for outside visits, although available outdoor space is considered a restrictor for the numbers visiting.

At this time all visitors are required to wear a surgical/medical mask when indoor visiting is occurring. When outdoor visiting is occurring fully vaccinated visitors do not require a mask, but those who are not vaccinated will require a mask at this time. Visits will be ended for any visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the visitor policy. When this has occurred further education and consultations will occur before resuming visits to the care community.

NOTE: Visitor policy may change with further directions from Public Health, change in Provincial Directives and will replace this visitor policy. Notice will be given when these directions change.

Fully Vaccinated is defined as someone having received:

- The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines, or one dose of Janssen, or
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada; and
- They received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days before providing the proof of being fully vaccinated.

The Visitor will be responsible for:

1. Participating in the screening process and testing as required prior to entry
2. Participate in wearing a medical/surgical mask and social distancing and any other Personal Protective Equipment required
3. To perform hand hygiene prior to entry, during the visit and when exiting
4. Show proof of being fully vaccinated against Covid-19 to enter the care community. Those who are not vaccinated will have visits in designated areas/or outside visits, and not participate in group activities or dining with the resident. The visitor will wear PPE as directed by the community.
5. Non-vaccinated individuals with the approval of the resident and/or substitute decision maker/Power of Attorney will have a rapid test daily on entry after their screening. The visitor will be required to wait until the test result is read before visiting
6. Vaccinated visitors will be required to take a rapid Covid-19 test daily after screening; they will be required to wait for the result before entry.
7. Vaccinated visitors will not be required to wear masks during outdoor visits.
8. Unvaccinated visitors will be required to wear a mask during outdoor visits

NOTE: Non-compliance with the responsibilities listed above, and/or directives from the provincial authorities will result in discontinuation of the visit for the non-compliant person

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The Executive Director and/or delegate will be responsible for:

1. Ensure that there is an active screening process for visitors to sign in for both outdoor and indoor visits which will includes the physical distancing requirements
2. Establish indoor and outdoor visiting spaces, and spaces for non-vaccinated visitors
3. Collaborate with the Infection Control and Prevention lead to ensure that best practices are being utilized for the screening process and the visiting areas of the community
4. If a resident room is the desired space- the Executive Director or delegate will need to ensure that the space is appropriate. Taking into consideration whether there is a roommate, any outbreak situations, and the ability to social distance during the visit
5. Ensure privacy for the visit
6. Ensure that the visitor log is maintained and readily available upon request from authorities (i.e., Public Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care). The log at a minimum will include:
 - The name and contact information for the visitor
 - Time and date of the visit
 - The purpose of the visit (resident name and/or room number)
 - The screening record for that visit
7. Ensure that Resident Council and Family Council have reviewed the policy and have a copy
8. Ensure that a copy of the policy is readily available upon request.
9. Ensure that there has been a team member has been assigned to the screening area. Ensure that the screener has been educated appropriately on the screening process and on Infection Prevention and Control practices
10. Ensure that all visitors have been educated on physical distancing and masking, and Infection and Prevention Control practices expected of them
11. Ensure areas that are for visiting purposes are cleaned and disinfected after the visit and prior to the next visitor usage
12. Ensure that visits are cancelled if the following occurs:
 - Outbreak in the community
 - The resident they are visiting is ill and being isolated (exception essential caregiver)
 - For outdoor visits weather must be considered
 - Community emergency procedures inactivated
 - With change in direction from Public Health or Provincial Directives
13. Ensure that staff members participate in ensuring that the resident is prepared and assist them to the visit as required

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References:

COVID-19 Guidance Document for LTCH in Ontario

[COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario | ontario.ca](#)

Directive #3 available at:

[COVID-19 Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long- Term Care Homes Act, 2007 \(gov.on.ca\)](#)

Hand Hygiene Video at:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/health-topics/infection-prevention-control/hand-hygiene/jcyh-videos>

McMaster University offers a free online IPAC learning course for caregivers and families at.

[Infection Prevention and Control of Caregivers and Families - NEW! | McMaster Continuing Education \(mcmastercce.ca\)](#)

For more information on recommended doses of COVID-19 vaccine, please review the Ministry of Health's guidance document

[Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses \(gov.on.ca\)](#)