



Manual:	Infection Control COVID-19 Pandemic	Reference No.:	<b>October 2022</b>
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. If these visitors fail screening, they will be permitted entry, but must wear a medical (surgical or procedural) mask and maintain physical distance from other residents and staff.

**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.



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All general visitors, including children under the age of five, can resume visits. **General visitors younger than 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult**

There is no limit to visitors (including caregivers) as long as there is enough space to ensure 6 feet distance between visitors. There must also be consideration for residents sharing a room with another resident, that the roommate's space is respected. 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, there are no masks required, but social distancing is still encouraged.

While masks continue to be required for long-term care all staff, as well as for visitors and others entering long-term care homes, masks while recommended are no longer required when visitors or caregivers are alone with a resident in their room. If a resident shares a room with another resident and wishes for the visitor to remove their mask, arrangements with the Executive Director to a safe location to unmask with one visitor should occur. When not in a one-on-one setting with a resident in their room or a designated space within the home, visitors and caregivers are required to be masked.

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. Everyone must screen when they enter the community
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. Verify that they are fully vaccinated during an outbreak in order to enter the community.
5. Visitor will wear PPE as directed by the community.
6. Vaccinated and Unvaccinated 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.

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**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

**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 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 \(gov.on.ca\)](#)