

## **VISITOR RESPIRATORY & GASTROENTERITIS PROTOCOLS (ON)**

The presence of family and friends is important to the emotional wellbeing of residents, and we recognize the importance of in-person visits. The health and safety of residents, families, team members, and visitors remains our top priority. The following protocols will support safe, equitable access, flexibility, equality, and opportunities for residents to have visitors to promote their overall wellbeing.

**What you need to know:** The chart below clarifies visitor definitions and highlights some key requirements in addition to protocols that are in place.

**Note:** Communities in outbreak or located in areas of higher community spread of infections may be subject to additional visitor restrictions and per Public Health Unit direction.

**Vaccinations:** Vaccination remains the best defence against respiratory agents (i.e. COVID-19, Measles/Mumps/Rubella, and Influenza), and combined with other measures and actions, high vaccination rates can help prevent and limit the spread of viruses and infections in long-term care communities. All individuals entering our communities are strongly encouraged to stay up to date with their recommended vaccines when eligible. See the Government of Canada Vaccines Guide website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization-vaccines.html>

### **Masking**

Communities are mask friendly, and use of masks during an outbreak will be based on Public Health Unit direction for management of the outbreak.

### **Visitor Requirements**

Visitor Sign-In and Passive Screening requirements to be followed:

- Read the passive screening questions on visitor signage found upon the entry doors of the community and do not enter the community if you are experiencing any respiratory or gastroenteritis symptoms or if you are having any new or worsening symptoms.
- Sign in using the Kiosk/Visitor Sign-In Sheet
- In non-outbreak conditions: conduct passive screening
- In outbreak conditions: additional surveillance testing and screening requirements may be required
- Can participate in recreation activities, both indoor and outdoor, unless otherwise directed by Public Health
- Must adhere to personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements in place at the community
- Masks are not required for indoor or outdoor visits, but are strongly recommended

## Visitor Types and Requirements

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
Essential Visitors	Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated in writing by the resident/substitute decision maker</li> <li>Can be a friend/family member or person of importance to the resident</li> <li>Provide one or more forms of support or assistance to meet resident care needs including providing direct physical support e.g. activities of daily living, social, spiritual or emotional support, whether the individual is paid or unpaid</li> <li>Must be 16 years of age or older</li> <li>The approval of a parent or legal guardian is required to permit individuals under the age of 16 years to be designated as a caregiver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign in upon entry to the community</li> <li>Conduct passive screening for infections including respiratory and gastroenteritis symptoms</li> <li>Additional IPAC training &amp; education required prior to visit</li> <li>Caregiver designated can be changed based on resident care needs</li> <li>Additional PPE required based on isolation precautions and point of care risk assessment (non-outbreak)</li> </ul>
	Support Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide support to the critical operations of the community or to provide essential services to residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct passive screening for infections including respiratory and gastroenteritis symptoms</li> <li>Scheduling not required</li> <li>Location of visit can be designated by site</li> </ul>
	Compassionate Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A person visiting the very ill for compassionate reasons including but not limited to hospice services or end of life care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergo passive screening</li> </ul>
	Government Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties</li> </ul>	
Other Visitors	General Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides non-essential services or visits for social reasons.</li> <li>Individuals providing personal care/ services such as hairdressing, barbers, manicurist, entertainers, recreational handlers as part of animal program, people entering for tours.</li> <li>Infants under the age of 2 are not considered visitors and are excluded from testing and masking requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct passive screening for infections including respiratory and gastroenteritis symptoms</li> <li>General visitors under the age of 14 years must be accompanied by an adult and must follow all applicable public health measures that are in place at the community</li> <li>No limit on number of visitors indoors and outdoors; however, number of visitors permitted will be based on available space at the community</li> <li>Not permitted to visit during a community wide outbreak</li> </ul>

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only permitted if resident home area / neighbourhood is not part of the outbreak and resident is not currently symptomatic/on isolation</li> </ul>

#### Additional Visitor Information

- All individuals 2 years of age and older will align with any additional PPE requirements based on point of care risk assessment and as required by Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) Lead/Public Health when visiting.
- The resident/Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will determine who may visit. Resident/SDM will communicate individuals who are designated caregivers to the Director of Programs or designate.
- Designated Caregivers who want to volunteer to support more than one resident during outbreak (caring for residents on additional precautions) and non-outbreak situations provided the community obtains consent from all involved residents (or their substitute decision makers).
- Education on the community's infection prevention and control measures, including hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be available in varied formats i.e. posters, videos, training sessions when the resident is on additional precautions, during an outbreak, and at any other times set out by the community.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will accessible and provided during the visits as required. Additional PPE may be required by designated caregivers based on point of care risk assessment.
- Animals may accompany visitors during a visit upon approval by the Executive Director/designate (note, service dogs will always be permitted and do not require approval).

#### Visitors, please review the following education and training resources.

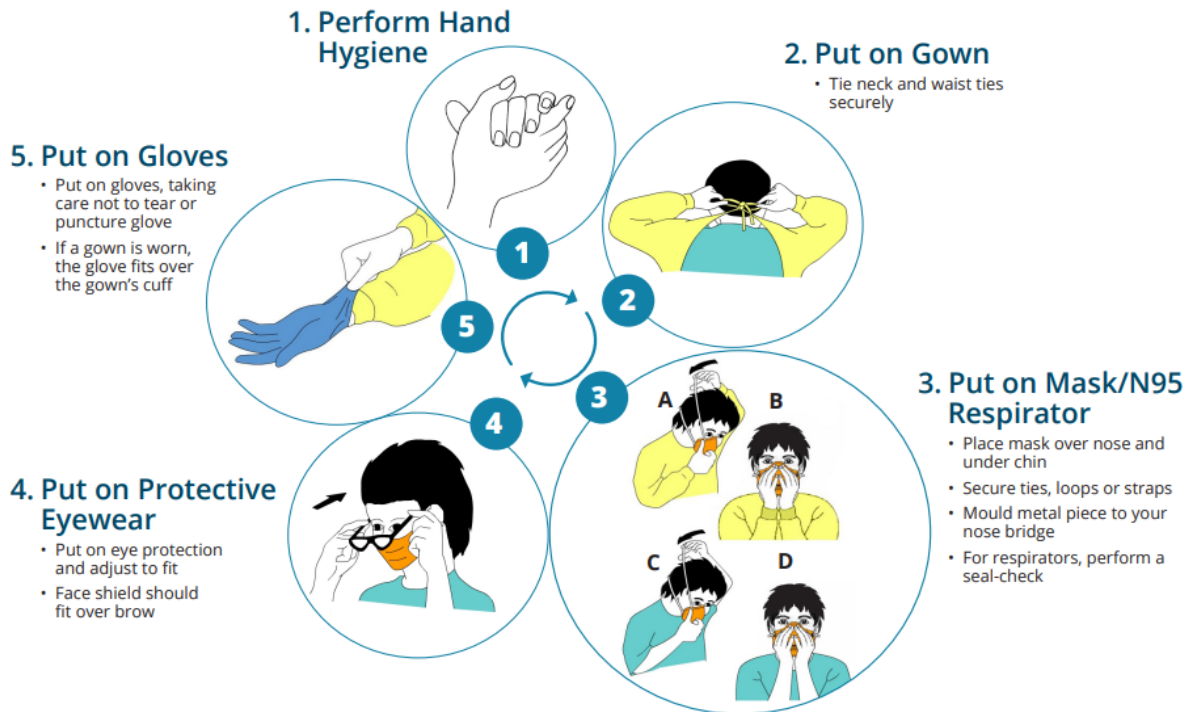
- Video link: Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/I/2021/IPAC-FullPPE-On>
- Video link: Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>
- Video link: How to Wash Your Hands  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handwash>

**Additional References:** <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2025-02/moh-recommendations-for-outbreak-prevention-and-control-in-institutions-and-clc-en-2025-02-28.pdf>

Training Posters

Donning and Doffing PPE:

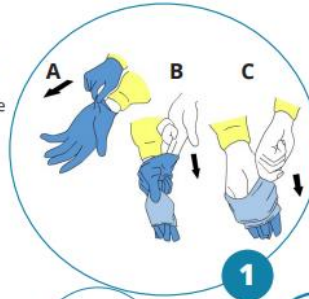
Recommended Steps:  
Putting On Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



## Recommended Steps: Taking Off Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

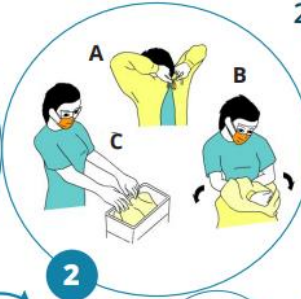
### 1. Remove Gloves

- Remove gloves using a glove-to-glove / skin-to-skin technique
- Grasp outside edge near the wrist and peel away, rolling the glove inside-out
- Reach under the second glove and peel away
- Discard immediately into waste receptacle



### 2. Remove Gown

- Remove gown in a manner that prevents contamination of clothing or skin
- Starting with waist ties, then neck ties, pull the gown forward from the neck ties and roll it so that the contaminated outside of the gown is to the inside. Roll off the arms into a bundle, then discarded immediately in a manner that minimizes air disturbance.



### 6. Perform Hand Hygiene

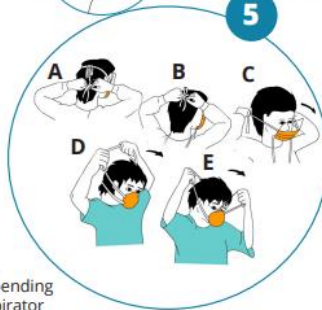


### 3. Perform Hand Hygiene



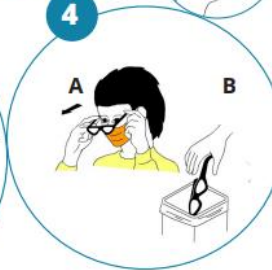
### 5. Remove Mask/ N95 Respirator

- Ties/ear loops/straps are considered 'clean' and may be touched with hands
- The front of the mask/respirator is considered to be contaminated
- Untie bottom tie then top tie, or grasp straps or ear loops
- Pull forward off the head, bending forward to allow mask/respirator to fall away from the face
- Discard immediately into waste receptacle



### 4. Remove Eye Protection

- Arms of goggles and headband of face shields are considered to be 'clean' and may be touched with the hands
- The front of goggles/face shield is considered to be contaminated
- Remove eye protection by handling ear loops, sides or back only
- Discard into waste receptacle or into appropriate container to be sent for reprocessing
- Personally-owned eyewear may be cleaned by the individual after each use



**Hand Hygiene:**

To clean hands properly, rub all parts of the hands and wrists with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. Pay special attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs.

## How to handrub

**Rub hands for 15 seconds**



1  
Apply 1 to 2 pumps of product to palms of dry hands.



2  
Rub hands together, palm to palm.



3  
Rub in between and around fingers.



4  
Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.

**Rub hands for 15 seconds**



5  
Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palms.



6  
Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



7  
Rub hands until product is dry. Do not use paper towels.



8  
Once dry, your hands are safe.



**JUST CLEAN YOUR HANDS**



## How to handwash

**Lather hands for 15 seconds**



1  
Wet hands with warm water.



2  
Apply soap.



3  
Lather soap and rub hands palm to palm.



4  
Rub in between and around fingers.

**Lather hands for 15 seconds**



5  
Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.



6  
Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.



7  
Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



8  
Rinse thoroughly under running water.



9  
Pat hands dry with paper towel.



10  
Turn off water using paper towel.



11  
Your hands are now safe.



**JUST CLEAN YOUR HANDS**

