

VISITOR DEFINITIONS & PROTOCOLS (ONTARIO RETIREMENT)

The health and safety of residents, families, team members, and visitors remains our top priority. The presence of family and friends is important to the emotional wellbeing of residents, and we recognize the importance of in-person visits. The following guidelines will support safe, physically distanced outdoor and indoor visits for family members to visit and engage with their loved ones. Our residences will facilitate visits for residents and will not deny visitors based on frequency of visits. Additionally, visitors will not be refused based on their COVID-19 immunization status.

Note: Visits may be stopped at anytime for any visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the retirement residence’s visitor policy requirements inclusive of when risk of harm from continual non-compliance is considered too high.

What you need to know: the chart below clarifies visitor definitions and highlights some key requirements in addition to protocols that are in place. Retirement residences located in areas of higher community spread of COVID-19 or co-located with a long term care property may be subject to additional measures to restrict access and duration of visits during an outbreak, or when the Public Health Unit deems it necessary.

<p><u>COVID-19 Testing/Screening process to be followed by visitors</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All visitors must complete the active screening questionnaire upon entry at each visit to the residence regardless of vaccination status. • Asymptomatic Visitor testing is no longer required • All visitors must adhere to PPE requirements during visit of universal masking and physical distancing at all times. • An individual with confirmed COVID-19 on a molecular or rapid antigen test may resume asymptomatic screening testing after 90 days from their COVID-19 infection (based on the date of their symptom onset or specimen collection). If there is uncertainty whether the individual is infected with COVID-19 (e.g. individual is asymptomatic and a COVID-19 PCR test result demonstrated a high cycle threshold indicative of a low viral load), that individual may resume asymptomatic screen testing.
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All visitors are required to at minimum have training and/or be provided with training resources on hand hygiene, physical distancing, and donning and doffing a mask. Additional training may be required as noted below in the chart.

<p>Note:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact is permitted between all residents and visitors regardless of immunization status. • For the safety of residents and team members, any visitor who is on self-isolation, awaiting COVID-19 test results, or is positive for COVID-19 and not cleared by Public Health will not be permitted to visit. • Visitors must adhere to the visitor guidelines for the safety of residents. Should any resident develop COVID-19 symptoms, they will be tested for the virus and placed in isolation pending test results. • Visitors must adhere to a safe physical distance. • Regarding Concerns: Please speak with residence’s General Manager for any concerns
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Types of Visitors

There are 3 categories of visitors: Essential Visitors, General Visitors, and Personal Care Service Providers. Retirement home staff, students and volunteers as defined in the Retirement Homes Act, 2010 are not considered visitors.

<p>Essential Visitors: Essential Visitors are persons performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspectors, maintenance, or healthcare services)</p>	<p>A. Support Workers</p> <p>A Support Worker is brought into the residence to perform essential services for the residence or for a resident in the residence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Regulated health care professionals under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (e.g. physicians, nurses); b. Unregulated health care workers (e.g. PSWs, personal/support aides, nursing/personal care attendants), including external care providers and Home & Community Care Support Service Providers (formerly LHIN providers); c. Authorized third parties who accommodate the needs of a resident with a disability; d. Health and safety workers, including IPAC specialists; e. Maintenance workers; f. Private housekeepers; g. Inspectors; and h. Food delivery. <p>B. Essential Caregivers</p> <p>Essential Caregivers provide care to a resident including meal assistance, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision-making. Essential Caregivers may be family members, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions and translators even if the person would also be considered a Support Worker.</p> <p>Essential Caregivers must be designated by the resident, or if the resident is unable to do so, their substitute decision-maker. The designation should be made in writing to the residence, and the residence should have a procedure for documenting Essential Caregiver designations. The necessity of an Essential Caregiver is determined by the resident or the SDM.</p> <p>Essential Caregivers must not be denied access to residents, provided that they pass the active screening and PPE requirements (e.g. vaccination status should not impact access). To limit the spread of infection, a resident and/or their SDM should only be encouraged to change the designation of their Essential Caregiver in limited circumstances, including in response to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A change in the resident’s care needs that is reflected in the plan of care; and b. A change in the availability of a designated Essential Caregiver. <p>Essential Visitors are permitted regardless of vaccination status if they pass active screening. Essential Visitors may visit a resident who is isolating, but must follow public health measures (e.g. hand hygiene and masking and appropriate PPE) for the duration of visit.</p>
<p>General Visitors</p>	<p>A General Visitor is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For social reasons (e.g. family members and friends of resident); b. To provide non-essential services (may or may not be hired by the residence or the resident and/or their SDM); and/or c. As a prospective resident taking a tour of the residence.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Visitors are permitted regardless of vaccination status if they pass active screening. • General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is isolating and on Droplet and Contact (Not permitted to visit a resident that is on isolation) precautions, or the residence is advised by the local PHU to stop general visits (e.g. during an outbreak). • To further limit risk to residents, General Visitors who have symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for it or who are close contacts of someone with COVID-19, are required to follow MOH’s Public Health Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario and COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Home and Retirement Homes. • For all visits with General Visitors, the following measures should be in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The residence should ensure equitable visitor access for those residents who are not isolating. ○ General Visitors should wear a medical mask while indoors, maintain physical distancing and perform hand hygiene for the duration of their visit. ○ Opening windows should be considered for indoor and in-suite visits to allow for air circulation
<p>Personal Care Service Providers</p>	<p>A Personal Care Service Provider is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits to provide non-essential personal services to residents. Personal Care Services include those outlined under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, such as hair salons and barbershops, manicure and pedicure salons, and aesthetician services, that are not being provided for medical or essential reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT permitted during an outbreak • Must pass active screening • Follow required public health and IPAC measures for Personal Care Service Providers and those of the residence; • Wear at minimum a medical mask for the duration of their time at the residence; • Practice hand hygiene and conduct environmental cleaning after each appointment. • Recommend residents wear at minimum a medical mask during their services, if services do not require the removal of masks. • Document all residents served and maintain this list for at least 30 days to support contact tracing
<p>External Care Providers (ECPs):</p>	<p>ECPs are employees, staff or contractors of Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) (formerly LHINs) and provide services to residents. They are considered Essential Visitors to retirement homes and must comply with applicable requirements under the MOH’s COVID-19 Guidance: LTCH/RH for PHUs.</p>

References:

1. COVID-19 Screening tool for Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes – [Screening Tool for LTCH-RH - English \(gov.on.ca\)](#)
2. [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Other Congregate Living Settings for Public Health Units](#)
3. [Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility Covid-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario – June 24.2022](#)
4. RHRA - Toll-Free: 1-855-ASK-RHRA (1-855-275-7472) Email: info@rhra.ca