

VISITOR GUIDELINES (BC LTC)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 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 and friends to visit and engage with their loved ones.

Fully immunized against COVID-19 is defined as having received full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines approved by Health Canada and the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was received at least 14 days ago.

The charts below clarify types of visits and highlight some key requirements in addition to protocols that are in place.

DURING A COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Visit Type	Visit Purpose	How Many Visitors?	Is Visitation Permitted?
Virtual Visits	To connect residents and families from a distance. These connections are enabled by using virtual tools or technologies i.e. Zoom.	No limitations	Yes
Essential visit to provide compassionate care (onsite)	To provide compassionate care: palliative/end of life, residents who are actively dying.	One family or friend at time. * Exceptions for allowing more than one visitor at a time must be approved by care team and documented in care plan	Yes
Essential visit to support the resident's mental or physical wellbeing (onsite)	To support or provide care identified in the care plan that cannot be routinely completed by team members and would potentially harm resident if not permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal assistance • Assistance with mobility • Assistance with personal care • Communication assistance for persons with hearing, visual, speech, cognitive, intellectual, or memory impairments 	One family or friend at a time who can assist with care plan needs	Not permitted unless approved by the Medical Health Officer

Visit Type	Visit Purpose	How Many Visitors?	Is Visitation Permitted?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance by designated representatives for persons with disabilities, including provision of emotional support Visits for supported decision making 		
Family/Social Visits (onsite)	To allow for socialization. These visits cannot occur during outbreak.	NONE	NO

NO COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Visit Type	Visit Purpose	How Many Visitors?	Is Visitation Permitted?
Virtual Visits	To connect residents and families from a distance. These connections are enabled by using virtual tools or technologies i.e. Zoom. Schedule in advance	No limitations	Yes
Essential visit to provide compassionate care (onsite)	To provide compassionate care: palliative/end of life, residents who are actively dying.	One family or friend at time. * Exceptions for allowing more than one visitor at a time must be approved by care team and documented in care plan	Yes
Essential visit to support the resident's mental or physical wellbeing (onsite)	To support or provide care identified in the care plan that cannot be routinely completed by team members and would potentially harm resident if not permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meal assistance Assistance with mobility Assistance with personal care Communication assistance for persons with hearing, visual, speech, cognitive, intellectual, or memory impairments Assistance by designated representatives for persons with disabilities, including provision of emotional support Visits for supported decision making 	One family or friend at a time who can assist with care plan needs	Yes
Family/Social Visits (onsite)	To allow for socialization. These are visits made by a family member or friend; may take place indoors (resident room) or outdoors in a designated visiting area.	No limitations	Yes

	Visitors limits may apply based on care community capacity as outline by Work Safe BC (WSBC)/Public Health Officer (PHO) guidance.		
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Visitor Communication/Protocols

- Provide a letter to family members/residents outlining the guidelines. Communicate to team members around visits and expectations. Share the Family/Visits Guidelines documents.
- Visitors will be screened for signs and symptoms of illness, including COVID-19, prior to every visit. Visitors with signs or symptoms of illness, as well as those in self-isolation or quarantine in accordance with public health directives, shall not be permitted to visit. The visitor must conduct hand hygiene, follow respiratory etiquette procedures, and wear a mask (cloth is permitted) if outdoors.
- Conduct an assessment with resident/substitute decision maker for the designation of essential visitors. Use applicable health authority tools provided to document the assessment and retain on the resident health record.
- Visitors are asked to conduct a self-screening prior to visiting and before attending the care community using the BCCDC self-assessment screening tool:
<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>.
- PPE (mask) must worn appropriately during in common areas to the designated visiting location. In resident room, PPE may be removed if the visitor is fully immunized. Outside of the resident room in common spaces a medical mask is required. Medical masks are required for indoor visits to Long Term Care and Assisted Living. A medical mask will be provided to visitors upon entry to the care community.
- Visitors will complete the required onsite screening and provide proof of being fully immunized against COVID-19. Visitors who do not provide proof will be required to wear a medical mask during the visit.
- Visitor will proceed to and from the resident room and designated location during the visit; avoid contact with other residents and team members, and will not engage in activities outside of the resident room/designated space in which the visit is occurring.
- Food or drinks can be shared during the visit with residents if the visitor is fully immunized in the resident room/designated visiting area. Please continue to follow the process for dropping items at the main entrance for team members to clean and deliver.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early to check in for screening, review protocol, and set up a meeting spot.
- Visitation of pets will be determined on a case by case basis to support the wellbeing of the resident.
- Refrain from moving additional furnishing such as chairs from dining and lounge spaces into resident rooms.
- Visitors will conduct hand hygiene using hand sinks or ABHR before, during, and after the visit. This is especially important in the case of any physical touch between the visitor and the resident.
- Visitors may bring the resident to a designated outdoor area on the resident's neighborhood. Maximum occupancy limits for the designated outdoor visiting areas will be posted. Masks must continue to be worn at all times, even in outdoor visiting areas on the neighborhood.
- If a visitor or the resident requires assistance during the in room visit, the visitor is encouraged to use the call bell to alert the clinical team.
- Residents must follow the provincial directives and health authority guidelines when on outings, such as no social gatherings and adhering to infection prevention and control practices.

Prior to the Visit

- There is no limit to the number of social visitors; however, the care community may set capacity limits based on WSBC/PHO guidelines to ensure safety measures area maintained.
- All visitor entries will be logged using care community/provincial health authority forms during the screening process and vaccination status requested and documented prior to visits.
- Whenever possible, residents residing in multi-bed rooms should receive visitors in a separate, designated location. When a resident is unable to move to a designated visiting area and visiting occurs in a multi-bed room, the number of visitors may be limited to maintain physical distance from the other residents.
- The care community will provide an information package along with education on all required visitation protocols prior to the visit.
- Virtual visits will continue to be scheduled in advance to ensure staffing availability to coordinate the equipment required to conduct the visit. An online booking platform may be used.
- All essential visitor requests must be logged, including those that are accepted and those that are denied. The requirements of the essential visitor's log include: First and Last Name, Email, Phone number, Date, Time they arrived, Time they departed.
- The community may establish designated visit times (e.g. Wednesday through Sunday; XX-XX am; XX pm-XX pm) with a minimum of 60 minutes per visit.
- Each care community to identify a central point person to coordinate essential visitors and ensure internal communication and awareness among team members regarding the number of visits occurring at any given time.

Monitoring Visits

Care communities must be able to safely provide oversight for these visits:

- Including adequate staffing to provide pre-screening
- Active screening prior to visit and again upon arrival
- Providing information on IPAC and Sienna protocols for the visit

Signage & Education

The following signage and education will be provided to designated visitor when a visit is booked:

- Hand Hygiene
- Donning and Doffing of Personal Protective Equipment
- Physical Distancing
- How to Wear a Face Mask
- Self-Isolation Dos & Don'ts
- Social Visiting Guidelines for LTC & Assisted Living

Visitor Appeal and Review Process

- See pages 10-11 at link below, which outlines the BC visitor appeal and review process:
http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Visitors_Long-Term_Care_Seniors_Assisted_Living.pdf

Essential Visitors Only

https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/CommunicableDiseaseControl/covid19/POSTER_ACUTE%20CARE_Essential%20Visitors.pdf

Reference:

Essential Visitor Protocol LTC & AL, June 25, 2020. Available at:

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/employees/clinical-resources/coronavirus-information/ltc-al-li/resources/Operations/472-Essential-Visit-Protocol---DRAFT-June-25-AM--final-draft.pdf?la=en&hash=6E88F99A06B45AFB517296EEAB8D1F5028AD01E5>

Ministry of Health – Overview of Visitors in Long Term Care and Seniors’ Assisted Living, July 19, 2021.

Available at:

https://www.providencehealthcare.org/sites/default/files/LTC_AL%20Visitation%20Guidance_July%2014%202021_FINAL.PDF