



VISITOR COVID-19 PROTOCOLS (ONTARIO LTC)

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.

Vaccination remains the best defence against COVID-19, and combined with other measures and actions, high vaccination rates can help prevent and limit the spread of this virus in long-term care communities. All individuals entering our communities are strongly encouraged to stay up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses and obtain their COVID-19 booster doses when eligible. See the Government of Canada Vaccines for COVID-19 website: [Vaccines for COVID-19 - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/vaccines-immunization/covid-19-vaccines.html).

Effective November 7, 2022, all staff, support workers, student placements, and volunteers are required to have at least 2 doses of approved COVID-19 vaccines to enter our community. Visits by unvaccinated caregivers and general visitors will be accommodated provided that they don a mask upon entry to the community, maintain the mask all times during the visit, and adhere to surveillance testing requirements (rapid antigen) as set out by the community. Additional infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures may be required to allow entry of an unvaccinated visitor to the community.

A mask throughout this documents refers to a medical/surgical mask unless a point of care risk assessment is completed to determine additional PPE requirements, and additional PPE requirements as directed by public health.

Non-compliance with the community's visiting policy and guidelines could result in discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor. Where the community has previously ended a visit, or temporarily prohibited a visitor, additional education/training must be provided to the visitor before visitation can be resumed. If a caregiver is temporarily prohibited, the resident/substitute decision maker may designate an alternative individual as the caregiver to help meet resident care needs.

Visitor Requirements

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

- Sign in using the kiosk/Visitor Sign-In Sheet
- Complete the passive screening questions on 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. Caregivers and general visitors may accompany a resident for meals to assist a resident with

eating; however, the visitor should remain masked at all times while in the community and not eat with the resident except in designated areas.

- Must adhere to personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements in place at the community.
- Mask are not required for outdoor visits, but are encouraged.
- Mask are required for indoor visits upon entry to the community. Masks, while recommended, are no longer required when visitors or caregivers are alone with a resident in their room unless the visitor or caregiver does not have at least 2 doses of approved COVID-19 vaccines. When not in a one-on-one setting with a resident in their room or a designated space within the community, visitors and caregivers are required to be masked.

Visitor Types and Requirements

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
Essential Visitors	Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated in writing by the resident/substitute decision maker • Can be a friend/family member or person of importance • 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 • Must be 16 years of age or older • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign in upon entry to the community • Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19 • No limit to the number of visitors when the community is not in outbreak. • Additional IPAC training & education required prior to visit • Should not visit any other long-term care home for 10 days after visiting another resident who is self-isolating including those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are being assessed and if a home or area of a home is affected by an outbreak • Caregiver designated can be changed based on resident care needs • PPE – mask required when indoors, but recommended (not required) when alone with a resident in their room. A mask must be maintained at all times when indoors if a visitor does not have at least 2 doses of approved COVID-19 vaccines. • Additional PPE required based on isolation precautions and point of care risk assessment (non-outbreak).
	Support Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the critical operations of the community or to provide essential services to residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19 • Scheduling not required • Location of visit can be designated by site • No limit on the number of visitors

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
	Compassionate Reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person visiting the very ill for compassionate reasons including but not limited to hospice services or end of life care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergo passive screening No restrictions on number of visitors
	Government Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With a statutory right to enter a long term care home to carry out their duties 	
Other Visitors	General visitors	<p>Provides non-essential services or visits for social reasons.</p> <p>Individuals providing personal care/ services such as hairdressing, barbers, manicurist, entertainers, recreational handlers as part of animal program, people entering for tours.</p> <p>Infants under the age of 1 are also not considered visitors and are excluded from testing and vaccination requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19 General visitors including those 5 years or younger are excluded from organization's vaccine policy requirements 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 No limit on number of visitors indoors and outdoors; however, number of visitors allowed will be based on available space at the community. PPE – mask required when indoors, but recommended (not required) when alone with a resident in their room. A mask must be maintained at all times when indoors if a visitor does not have at least 2 doses of approved COVID-19 vaccines. Not permitted to visit during a community wide outbreak. Only permitted if RHA/unit is not part of the outbreak & resident is not currently symptomatic/on isolation Coordinate the initial visitor with the community designate to review visitor policy and procedures and training resources prior to indoor visit

Additional Visitor Information

- All individuals 2 years of age and older will align with indoor masking requirement and additional PPE requirements as required by Public Health when visiting.
- The resident/Substitute Decision Maker will determine who may visit.

- Designated Caregivers who want to volunteer to support more than one resident during outbreak (caring for COVID-19 positive residents) and non-outbreak situations provided the community obtains consent from all involved residents (or their substitute decision makers).
- Visits will be accommodated in designated areas within the community as per ED and IPAC Lead direction.
- All designated caregivers and general visitors will receive education on the community's infection prevention and control measures, including hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to the initial visit, during an outbreak, and at any other times set out by the community.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) mask must be worn appropriately during the visits as required. Additional PPE may be required by designated caregivers based on point of care risk assessment.
- Visitors are not required to adhere to physical distancing measures with the resident they are visiting.
- Animals may accompany visitors during a visit upon approval by the community Executive Director/designate (note, service dogs will always be permitted and do not require approval).
- Staff members will be available to escort visitors to designated visiting location as required.

Additional considerations for outdoor visits:

- Visitor will receive education on infection prevention and control measures (5 to 10 minutes) from the screener/designate.
- If weather permits, visitor will be directed to the designated meeting area to visit with their loved one.
- Team member will escort visitor from the designated meeting area at the end of the visit.

Visitors please review the following education and training resources prior to your visit.

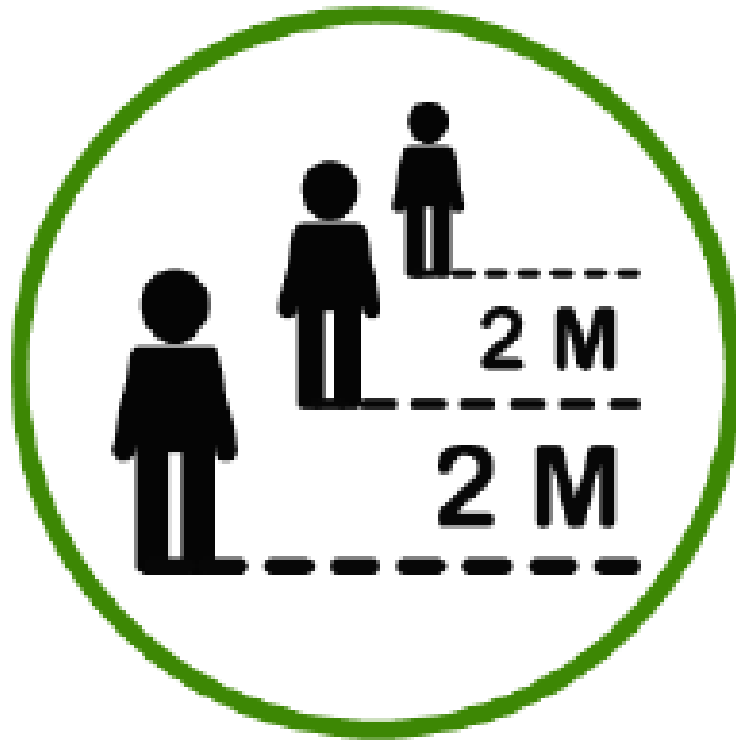
- Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps>
- Video link: Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>
- Video link: Taking off 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:

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

Training Posters

Physical Distancing:



Maintain physical distancing between all others, including other residents, team members, and other visitors.

Donning and Doffing PPE:

- Place mask over nose and under chin
- Secure ties, loops or straps
- Mould metal piece to your nose bridge
- For respirators, perform a seal-check



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.

