

**POLICY # ICD C-15**

## Covid-19 Visiting Policy

**Policy**

Visits to the home continue to be in place to protect the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors, while supporting residents in receiving the care they need and maintaining their emotional well-being

- **Universal Masking is mandatory for all visits in the home. Masks are not required outside but are strongly recommended and encouraged.**  
**Essential visitors** must wear a medical mask for the entire shift or visit indoors and is strongly encouraged outside, regardless of their immunization status.  
**General Visitors** must wear a medical mask if visit is indoors. A fabric mask is permitted but not required for outdoor visits.
- Physical Distancing between groups and persons and public health measures are to be followed
- Proper Hand Hygiene is to be followed.
- All visitors are to be actively screened for symptoms and exposures for Covid-19 as well as a Rapid Antigen Test and will not be granted admission to home/visit if they do not pass the screening. If visitors for an imminently palliative resident, fails screening, they will still be permitted to enter the home, wearing a surgical mask and must maintain distance from other residents or staff.
- Proof of Vaccination is required upon entry.
- Rapid Antigen Test is required for all indoor visits from caregivers and visitors, ages 3 and up. Anyone entering the home must be up to date with their Covid-19 vaccinations.
- Unimmunized caregivers are not permitted into the home and will be required to have an outdoor visit. Outdoor visits do not require a Rapid Antigen Test.
- If a visitor is unable to wear a surgical mask, they will not be permitted in the home
- Instruction for donning and doffing of PPE and hand washing will be provided and monitored by staff or screener to ensure it is being completed properly, limiting cross-contamination. Frequency of retraining of the visiting policy could occur on a monthly basis. We will provide videos on putting on full PPE, taking off full PPE, handwashing
- All visitors must only visit the resident that they have been approved to visit and leave immediately after the visit.
- Visitor Logs will be kept and are readily available to the local public health unit for contact tracing purposes upon request. Logs contain name of visitor with contact information, time and date of visit and name of resident visited, as well as their Immunization status.
- The home has the discretion to require visitors to schedule their visits in advance, limit the length of visit time to no less than 60min and limit frequency of visits, at least 2 visits per resident per week, as required.
- The COVID-19 Visiting Policy will be located at the screening area on FI. One for easy accessibility.
- Home is not required to supervise visits. However, the home will have a reasonable approach to support health and safety during visits that includes, monitoring flow of visitors, ensuring sufficient distancing, supporting resident through visit, providing suggestions for nearby outdoor areas or common areas

## **Types of Visitors**

**Not Considered Visitors-** Long-term Care Home staff (as defined under the act), volunteers and student placements are not considered visitors. Children under the age of 2 are not considered visitors.

**Essential Visitors** are the only type of visitors allowed when there is an outbreak or when resident is in isolation.

## **Four Types of Essential Visitors**

1. **Person visiting ill or palliative resident** for compassionate reasons, hospice services, end of life etc.
2. **Government Inspectors** are required to provide proof of vaccination.
3. **Support Worker**
  - A person who visits the home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to residents.
  - Essential services provided by support workers include but are not limited to:
  - Lab/Xray service, counselling services, physician, nurse practitioner, moving resident in or out, social work services, legal services, post mortem services, emergency services (such as those provided by first responders), maintenance services that are required to ensure structural integrity of the home and functionality of the homes systems as well as exterior ground work and winter property maintenance, food delivery and Canada Post mail service and other courier services
4. **Caregiver**
  - A caregiver must be at least 18 years of age and is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct physical support (feeding, bathing and dressing) and/or providing social and emotional support. Examples of caregivers include: family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions or translator
  - Examples of direct support are assisting with mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision making.
  - There is no limit to the number of persons who can be designated as a caregiver for a resident.
  - The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and not the home.
  - Designation of a caregiver should be made in writing to the Director of Nursing.
  - In March 2022, immunized Caregivers will receive per visit rapid antigen testing, and unimmunized Caregivers will not be permitted into the home.



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### **General Visitors**

- 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 are not permitted when the home is in outbreak, to visit an isolating resident or when the local public health unit so directs.

There are two broad categories of general visitors:

1. Visitors providing non essential services which include and are not limited to: Personal care service providers (hairstresser, barbers etc.), entertainers, recreational service providers, animal handlers, individuals touring the home for application for admission
2. Persons visiting for social reasons that are not direct caregivers.

**Masking of entertainers-** If entertainer requires the removal of mask to perform their talent, this is permitted provided physical distance of at least 2m can separate spectators from entertainer's or a plexiglass or other impermeable barrier is in place. This is the requirement for indoors or outdoors.

**Screening-** Starting in March 2022, all unimmunized visitors are not permitted into the home. Fully immunized staff, caregivers, students, and volunteers are required to get a rapid antigen test at the start of every shift/visit at least once per week. If they are not immunized, they are required to have an outdoor visit.

**Non Compliance** with the home's policies could result in the discontinuation of visits. Where all strategies to support visitor with the understanding and importance of adhering to the home's visitor policy have been exhausted, visit will then end or be temporarily prohibited. Education and training may need to be completed before visitor may come to home again. If this occurs the home will provide the reason(s) in writing to the caregiver/visitor and will stipulate a reasonable length of prohibition, clearly identify the requirements that need to be met before resuming visits. The home will document where they have ended a visit due to non-compliance. Resident's Councils/Family Council may be consulted for addressing non-adherence.

If a caregiver has been temporarily prohibited, the resident or substitute decision maker may need to designate an alternate individual as caregiver to help meet residents needs.