

# VISITOR POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Purpose

This policy supports residents to receive visitors of their choice while also maintaining safety through infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures.

## DEFINITIONS

### Emergency

An urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home

**Note:** Access to the Home is excluding during some emergencies (e.g., fire, evacuation, bomb threats, person with a weapon, etc.).

### Essential Visitor

(a) A caregiver (paid or unpaid)

(b) Residents' SDMs

(c) A support worker who visits a Home to provide support to the critical operations of the Home or to provide essential services to residents (includes Public Guardian and Trustee staff)

(d) A person visiting a very ill or palliative resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, hospice services or end-of-life care, or

(e) A government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care Home to perform their duties

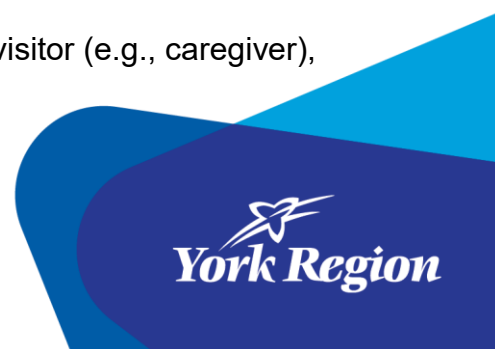
**Note:** Regional Staff attending the Home to provide essential services are support workers.

### General Visitor

Any person wanting to attend the Home who is not an essential visitor (e.g., caregiver), staff, student or volunteer.

### PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
york.ca/longtermcare



**Note:** This excludes Regional staff who are entering the building to attend meetings, education sessions or workshops and not interacting with residents.

## **Workplace Violence**

As defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*:

- (a) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker
- (b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker
- (c) A statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, and that could cause physical injury to the worker

## **Workplace Harassment**

As defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*:

- (a) Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, including virtually through the use of information and communications technology, that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- (b) workplace sexual harassment

“workplace sexual harassment” means,

- (a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, including virtually through the use of information and communications technology, because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- (b) making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome

The behaviour may be written, verbal, physical, online, or electronic, a gesture or display, or any combination of these.

## **Policy**

The key requirements of this policy are:

1. **Visitor Restrictions:** The Home may restrict visits inside the Home in certain circumstances:
  - Following directives, orders, guidance, or recommendations from York Region Public Health, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care or Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
  - At the direction of the Outbreak Management Team and/or Homes' Management Team
  - To prevent workplace violence, harassment and bullying against those living or working in the Homes
2. **Overnight Visits:** No overnight visits are permitted except in special circumstances approved by the Home, including end-of-life situations or when additional support is needed (e.g., helping a new resident adjust)
3. **Visiting in a Non-Outbreak Situation:** Residents can have visitors they choose at any time, provided it does not impact the health, safety, or rights of others
4. **Visiting in an Emergency:**
  - **Essential visitors** (e.g., a caregiver) must continue to have access during an outbreak, epidemic, pandemic, or another emergency
  - **General visitors:** Access is restricted during an infectious disease outbreak in any part of the Home, except when the resident is very ill (such as end-of-life care)
5. **Child and Youth Visitors:** Visitors under 14 must be accompanied by an adult
6. **Symptomatic Residents:** Due to the potential risk of exposure, all visitors should avoid non-essential visits when a resident has signs and symptoms of infectious disease
7. **Symptomatic Visitors:** All visitors are asked not to visit if they have [signs and symptoms](#) of infectious illness
8. **Infection Prevention and Control measures:** All visitors **must** follow any IPAC measures in place at the Homes:
  - Masking is recommended for all visitors during respiratory outbreaks or seasonal increases in respiratory illness  
**Note:** The Outbreak Management Team and/or Homes' Management Team may mandate masking at the Homes at any time
  - Where visits are necessary, and either the resident or visitor is symptomatic, visitors should wear appropriate PPE (mask, gown, gloves, appropriate eye protection, depending on symptoms), perform hand hygiene, maintain physical distancing and not eat or drink
9. **Visitor Policy:** The Homes must:

- Provide the current version of the visitor policy to the Residents' Council and Family Council, if any
- Include the current version of the visitor policy in the package of information given to every resident and SDM, if any, during the move in process
- Post the current version of the visitor policy in the Home and on the [website](#)

10. **Visitor Log:** The Homes must maintain a visitor log for at least 30 days that includes the:

- Name and contact information of the visitor
- Time and date of the visit
- Name of the resident visited

11. **Pets as visitors:** Pets can visit the Home when it is not in outbreak. Pets cannot visit any Home Area, or the entire Home, during a confirmed outbreak

**Note:** Pets can join an outdoor visit at any time.

## Procedures

This section contains procedures for the following:

- A. Visiting the Home
- B. Visitor Non-Compliance

### A: VISITING THE HOME

**The Associate Administrator, Administrator (or designates) will:**

- Communicate IPAC measures in place at the Homes during an outbreak

**All visitors will:**

- Sign in and out of the Home
- Discuss the need for any non-essential visits (such as birthday celebrations) during an outbreak with RN/RPNs
- Log their visit and exit on the tablets provided at the entrance of the Home
- Follow hand hygiene and other IPAC measures in place at Home
- Follow direction from Staff
- Follow any additional precautions **before** entering a resident's room

**RN/RPN and/or IPAC Practitioner (or designate) will:**

- Communicate and provide informal education to visitors on relevant IPAC measures in place at Home
- Reinforce the importance of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette with visitors,

as required

- Report incidents of visitor workplace violence, harassment and bullying of staff from visitors to their direct supervisor

**Visitors can:**

- Raise any issues or concerns with any staff, student or volunteer

## **B: VISITOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

**If the Home needs to end a visit or temporarily prohibit a visitor, the Associate Administrator will:**

**1. Before ending the visit**

- Explain the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor
- Ensure the visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s), if applicable (for example, the Home has supplied the PPE, etc.)
- Provide the visitor with sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s)
- Consider:
  - If the visitor repeatedly fails to comply during visits or if past visits ended due to non-compliance
  - Alternative solutions (e.g., successfully explaining and demonstrating how the visitor can adhere to the requirements or the policy)
  - If the non-compliance puts at risk the health, safety and wellbeing of the residents or staff
- Discuss decision with Administrator and debrief with staff, student or volunteer involved in any incident with a visitor

**2. Document any decision to end a visit and/or temporarily prohibit a visitor due to non-adherence**

- Documentation should state the reason for the visitor's temporary prohibition, steps for their return, and when they can return
- If a visitor's behavior has an impact to the resident, staff will enter this into PCC. The Homes use the Bodily Injury Reporting Form (in Surge) to document visitor incidents

**3. Notify corporate partners (e.g. Corporate Security, Legal Services, Risk) when appropriate, such as in cases of workplace violence, harassment and bullying**

**4. Inform the Home's staff that the visitor is temporarily prohibited so that they are aware not to let that person on-site**

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Infection Prevention and Control Practitioner and RN/RPNs

- Provide informal IPAC education to caregivers and visitors

### Director of Care, Assistant Director of Care and Infection Prevention and Control Practitioner

- Oversee infection control education and training for visitors on outbreak management and IPAC principles
- In collaboration with the outbreak management team, discuss any non-essential visits during an outbreak

### All Visitors

- Support safe and healthy workplace (the Home) free of actual, attempted, or threatened workplace violence, harassment and bullying
- Respect and promote the Resident's Bill of Rights
- Follow the requirements of this policy

### Paramedics and Seniors Services Data Team

- Document, record and report on visitor logs, as required

### Associate Administrator, Administrator

- Document incidents of visitor non-compliance and arrange visitor accommodations as needed

## AUTHORITY

*Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*; General Regulation 246/22; *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and its Regulations; [IPAC standard](#), as current; [Recommendations for Outbreak Prevention and Control in Institutions and Congregate Living Settings](#), as current; CARF International Aging Services Standards Manual; and York Region Seniors Services Administration

**Alternate formats or communications supports are available upon request by contacting [newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca](mailto:newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca) or [maplehealthcentre@york.ca](mailto:maplehealthcentre@york.ca).**