



**COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES BRANCH
Long-Term Care**

Visiting Residents during COVID-19 Policy and Procedure

Manual	COVID-19	Policy Number	COV 01 (V 27.0)
Applies to	All Essential Visitors (including Caregivers) and General Visitors		
Effective Date	June 11, 2022	Replaces	April 11, 2022
Summary of changes since last update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated authority section and details about the availability of this policy 		

PURPOSE: This policy provides guidance on meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents while also considering the vaccination requirements and infection, prevention and control measures needed to maintain the safety of residents, staff, and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic

DEFINITIONS:

Essential Visitor	<p>An essential visitor means,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a caregiver b) 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 Regional Staff who are not long-term care staff but attend the Homes to provide required services*) c) 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 d) a government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties <p>* See note in first policy point for vaccination requirements</p>
General Visitor	<p>A person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting the home to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the home or a particular resident or group of residents</p> <p>A general visitor under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult</p> <p>Anyone attending the Home for a tour is also considered a General Visitor</p>
Proof	A vaccine certificate OR a QR code (must show all vaccine doses or active medical exemption)
Fully Vaccinated	An individual is considered fully vaccinated if they have received:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines, or • One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or • Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, and • They received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.
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POLICY: The key requirements of this policy are as follows:

1. COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements:

- All essential visitors and general visitors must show proof they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to come **inside** the Home

Note: Staff from other Community and Health Services Branches or Regional Departments that are in the LTC CUPE bargaining unit, as well as non-union staff who (1) provide services in the Homes AND (2) may have close contact with residents, will be assigned to work in the Homes only if they have supplied their supervisors with proof of having received their third dose/booster of COVID-19, plus any other future boosters that may be required.

Otherwise, staff from other Community and Health Services Branches or Regional Departments who are visiting the Homes to provide services are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

2. COVID-19 Vaccination Exemptions: An essential visitor or general visitor is exempt from the COVID-19 vaccination requirements if **either**:

- They have proof of an active medical exemption (a [QR code](#))
- They are not eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine (for example, they are under 5 years old or they have **not** reached the [optimal interval](#) of eight weeks between vaccine doses)
- They are a government inspector
- They are visiting a very ill or palliative resident for compassionate reasons
- They are visiting **outside** the Home

3. The Homes may restrict visits in certain circumstances:

- When the Home is in a COVID-19 outbreak (suspect or confirmed) or at the direction of York Region’s Public Health Unit
- As directed by Provincial guidance

- Depending on the Homes' ability to meet all required public health measures as well as infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices
- If an essential visitor or general visitor fails active screening or testing

4. The Homes must meet the following requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Limit the total number of visitors for each resident at any one time to four indoors (including caregivers). There are no visitor number restrictions for outdoor visits
- Permit only one caregiver to visit at a time for any resident who resides in an area of the home in outbreak, is symptomatic or is isolating under additional precautions. **No general visitors are permitted for such a resident**
- Maintain a visitor log of all visits for at least 30 days and make this readily available to the local public health unit for contact tracing purposes upon request. The log must include:
 - the name and contact information of the visitor
 - time and date of the visit
 - the name of the resident visited
- Provide visitors with appropriate PPE, information, education and/or training about IPAC, PPE and direct care as required by provincial direction or public health guidance
- Ensure that all visitors have access to the home's visitor policy, including ensuring a current version is provided to the Resident's Council and Family Council, if any and posting it on the Homes' website

5. The Homes may discontinue visits in the following situations:

- If the visitor will not wear a mask or submit to surveillance testing if required
- If a visitor does not follow the IPAC measures in the Home. Further visits may be discontinued until guidelines can be followed
- If the visits do not otherwise comply with this policy

6. Pets are not permitted to visit inside when any Home Area (or the whole Home) is in outbreak: Pets can join an outdoor visit at any time.

PROCEDURES: This section contains procedures for the following:

A. Procedures for a Visit

B. Procedures for Education and Training

C. Procedures for Visitor Non-Compliance

A. Procedures for a Visit

Residents or Substitute Decisions Makers (SDMs) will:

- Designate up to four caregivers using Appendix A: Designation of Caregiver Form

All visitors will:

- Follow procedures outlined in Appendix B: Visitor Policy Guidelines, as current or as communicated by the Home (e.g., memorandum)

B. Procedures for Education and Training

All Visitors will:

- Be provided education and training about physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, and proper use of PPE
- Have access to this policy upon request

C. PROCEDURES FOR VISITOR NON-COMPLIANCE

If the Home needs to end a visit or temporarily prohibit a visitor for non-compliance, the Administrator will take the following steps.

1. Before ending the visit, the Administrator (or designate) must:

- Explain the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor
- Ensure the visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s) (for example, there is sufficient space to physically distance, the Home has supplied the PPE and demonstrated how to correctly put on PPE, etc.)
- Provide the visitor with sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s)

2. Before temporarily prohibiting a visitor, the Administrator (or designate) must consider if:

- There are alternative solutions (e.g., resolving the non-adherence by successfully explaining and demonstrating how the visitor can adhere to the requirements or the policy)
- The non-adherence negatively impacts the health and safety of residents, staff, and other visitors in the home, is demonstrated continuously by the visitor over multiple visits or is by a visitor whose previous visits have been ended before

3. Document any decision to end a visit and/or temporarily prohibit a visitor due to non-adherence. When temporarily prohibiting a visitor, documentation should include why the visitor has temporarily been prohibited, what they need to do to be

able to return and when they can come back

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Role	Responsibilities
Resident or SDM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate caregivers
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with this policy, demonstrate proof of vaccination or medical exemption and adhere to public health measures
LTC Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange visitor accommodations as needed
Education (including Surge system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide visitors with appropriate PPE, information, education and/or training about IPAC, PPE and direct care as required
PSS Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document, record and report on visitor logs, as required
Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a list of designated caregivers, document incidence of visitor non-compliance and advise caregiver(s) of any outbreaks in the Home/Home area

Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Fixing Long-Term Care Act</i>, 2021 s. 3(1)6; General Regulation 246/22 s.267 and s.271; Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its Regulations Pandemic Authority Documents, as current: Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes (April 27, 2022); COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario (June 11, 2022); and York Region Seniors Services Administration 		
Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix A: Designation of Caregiver Form Appendix B: Visitor Policy Guidelines Caregiver Education Modules (SURGE) Related Home Policies: COV-03: Screening and Testing for COVID-19 Policy and Procedure; and IPAC Policy #5 (Pets) 		
Approvals	Manager, Policy and Planning; Directors of Care; Administrators; and Director of Senior Services		
Policy Contact	Senior Program Analyst	Review Period	As required