



SECTION: PANDEMIC PLAN	Effective Date: July 16 2021
SUBJECT: RESIDENT VISITOR POLICY (REQUIRED FOR ATTESTATIONS)	Supersedes: June 2021

POLICY

Retirement Residences are required to have operational policies and procedures in place for visitors, absences, and activities that are compliant with Directive #3 and guided by the policies from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) and the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA).

For the purposes of this document, an individual is considered to be fully immunized when they have received the total number of required doses of a vaccine approved by Health Canada and it has been at least 14 days since they received their final dose.

The Residence is responsible for ensuring residents receive visitors safely to help protect against the risk of COVID-19. The Residence is also responsible for establishing and implementing visiting practices that comply with Directive #3 and align with provincial guidelines.

All visitors are expected to comply with the visiting policies and failure to comply may result in discontinuation of visit(s) when risk of harm from continual non-compliance is considered too high. Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a Residence is appropriate.

TYPES OF VISITORS

There are three categories of visitors: 1) Essential Visitors, 2) General Visitors, and 3) Personal Care Service Providers.

1) Essential Visitors

Directive #3 indicates that Essential Visitors are persons performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspectors, maintenance, or health care services (e.g., phlebotomy) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident).

In addition to a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident, there are two categories of Essential Visitors: Support Workers and Essential Caregivers.

a) **Support Workers** - a type of Essential Visitor who is brought into the home to perform essential services for the home or for a resident in the home, including the following individuals:

- Regulated health care professionals under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (e.g., physicians, nurses);
- Unregulated health care workers (e.g., personal support workers, personal/support aides, nursing/personal care attendants), including external care providers and Home and Community Care Support Service Providers (formerly LHIN providers);



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- Authorized third parties who accommodate the needs of a resident with a disability; Health and safety workers, including IPAC specialists; Maintenance workers; Private housekeepers; Inspectors; and Food delivery.

b) Essential Caregiver - a type of Essential Visitor who is designated by the resident or, if the resident is unable to do so, their substitute decision-maker.

- Essential Caregivers visit to provide care to a resident. This includes supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision-making.
- There is no limit to the number of essential caregivers. The designation should be made in writing to the Residence. Residents or a substitute decision maker are able to designate the Essential Caregiver and the necessity of an Essential Caregiver is determined by the resident or substitute decision maker.
- Essential Caregivers, provided that they pass the screening requirements, cannot be denied access to residents (ie immunization status should not impact access).
- In order to limit the spread of infection, a resident and/or their substitute decision-maker should be encouraged to change the designation of their Essential Caregiver in limited circumstances, including in response to:
 - A change in the resident’s care needs that is reflected in the plan of care; and/or
 - A change in the availability of a designated Essential Caregiver, either temporary (e.g., illness) or permanent.

Any number of essential visitors are permitted. A maximum of two essential caregivers are permitted to visit at one time.

2) General Visitors

Please note that every Residence will have specific and unique General visitor protocols based on suite size and available common areas. Refer to the e-blast information from the Residence or contact the Residence for clarity.

General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is self-isolating and on Droplet and Contact Precautions, or the home is advised by the local PHU to stop general visits (e.g., during an outbreak). General Visitors must pass screening requirements and be reminded to follow applicable public health measures while visiting the home.

Outdoor visits should be encouraged as much as possible, but depending on the residents’ needs, this may also mean supporting indoor visits, in-suite visits, and/or social absences.

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General Visitors should be permitted regardless of immunization status, and homes must not unreasonably deny visits as long as the following policies are followed:

- General Visitors may visit a resident in an indoor or outdoor designated area, including in-suite.
- General Visitors and residents must maintain physical distancing (2 metres separation) for the duration of the visit. This is with the exception of brief physical contact when hugging.
- General Visitors must wear masks for the duration of the visit, unless exempt under the Directive #3 masking requirements (masking for residents is recommended).
- When indoors, General Visitors must wear a medical mask.
- When outdoors, General Visitors must wear a medical or non-medical mask
- The number of individuals in a group must not exceed provincial limits for indoor and outdoor gatherings, as applicable.
- Group limits for outdoor and indoor visits do not include children 2 years or under.
- The Residence should consider the size of the designated space to allow physical distancing between residents and visitors, and visitors from different households.

For all visits with General Visitors, the following measures should be in place:

- Homes should ensure equitable access for each resident.
- Visits should be booked in advance.
- Opening windows should be considered for indoor and in-suite visits to allow for air circulation.

3) Personal Care Service Providers

A Personal Care Service Provider is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits to provide non-essential personal services to residents. They are permitted to provide services in alignment with provincial requirements.

Personal Care Services include hair salons and barbershops, manicure and pedicure salons, aesthetician services, and spas, that are not being provided for medical or essential reasons (e.g., foot care to support mobility or reduce infections).

Personal Care Service Providers must:

- Follow required public health and IPAC measures for Personal Care Service Providers and those of the home, including wearing a medical mask and eye protection for the duration of their visit to the home, practicing hand hygiene and conducting environmental cleaning after each appointment.
- Recommend residents wear a medical mask during their services, if services do not require the removal of masks.



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- Document all residents served and maintain this list for at least 30 days to support contact tracing.

ACCESS TO RESIDENCE

Directive #3 requires that all visitors to the home follow public health measures (e.g., active screening, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and masking for source control) for the duration of their visit in the home.

Local PHUs may also advise further restrictions on visitors in part or all of the home, depending on the specific situation. The home and visitors must abide by any restrictions imposed by a PHU.

Please note: Residents who are self-isolating under Contact and Droplet Precautions may only receive Essential Visitors (e.g., residents may not receive General Visitors or Personal Care Service Providers).

Residences may permit other residents within the home who are not self-isolating to receive General Visitors and Personal Care Service Providers, provided this is in alignment with provincial requirements.

When a resident is self-isolating, the Residence must provide supports for their physical and mental well-being to mitigate any potential negative effects of isolation. This includes individualized mental and physical stimulation that meet the abilities of the individual.

SCREENING VISITORS FOR COVID-19 – ACTIVE SCREENING

All visitors must be actively screened on entry, according to the requirements outlined under Directive #3. Visitors are not permitted access if they do not pass screening; however, homes should have a protocol in place that assesses entry on a case-by-case basis which includes the assurance that resident care can be maintained if entry is refused.

All Sifton Residences are using the Welcome Kiosk to capture screening information. All visitors are asked to screen in using the Kiosk and also confirm exit of the Residence using the Kiosk.

Safety Review – Essential Visitors

Prior to visiting any resident in a home declared in outbreak for the first time, the home should provide training to Essential Caregivers and Support Workers who are not trained as part of their service provision or through their employment. Training must address how to safely provide direct care, including putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) required PPE, and hand hygiene.

Alternatively, if the home does not provide the training, it must direct Essential Caregivers and Support Workers to appropriate resources from [Public Health Ontario](#) to acquire this training.

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For homes not in outbreak, prior to visiting any resident for the first time, and at least once every month thereafter, homes must ask Essential Caregivers and Support Workers to verbally attest to the home that they have:

- Read/Re-Read the following documents:
 - The home's visitor policy; and
 - Public Health Ontario's document entitled *Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*.
- Watched/Re-watched the following Public Health Ontario videos:
 - Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment; Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment; and How to Hand Wash.

Safety Review – General Visitor and Personal Care Service Provider

Prior to visiting any resident for the first time, and at least once every month thereafter, homes should ask General Visitors and Personal Care Service Providers to verbally attest to the home that they have:

- Read/Re-Read the following documents:
 - The home's visitor policy; and
 - Public Health Ontario's document entitled *Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*.
- Watched/Re-watched the following Public Health Ontario videos: Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment; Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment; and How to Hand Wash.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

PPE - Essential Visitors

Support Workers are responsible for bringing their own PPE to comply with requirements for Essential Visitors as outlined in Directive #3. Retirement homes should provide access to PPE to Essential Caregivers if they are unable to acquire PPE independently. This should include providing access to medical masks (surgical/procedure), face shields or eye goggles and any additional PPE required to maintain Contact and Droplet Precautions when providing care to residents who are isolating on Droplet and Contact Precautions.



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INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL MANUAL

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Directive #3 notes that Essential Visitors:

- Must use a medical mask (surgical/procedure) while in the home, including while visiting a resident who does not have, or is not suspected to have COVID-19 in their room (the resident should also wear a mask, if tolerated).
- Must wear appropriate eye protection (e.g., goggles or face shield) when they are within 2 metres of a resident as part of the provision of direct care and/or their interaction with the resident in an indoor area.
- That are health care workers providing direct care or in contact with a resident who is suspected or confirmed with COVID-19 must wear appropriate PPE in accordance with Directive #5.

PPE - General Visitors and Personal Care Service Providers

General Visitors and Personal Care Service Providers are responsible for bringing their own mask for visits as outlined in Directive #3.

Visitors must wear either a medical or a non-medical if the visit is outdoors. If the visit is indoors, a medical mask (surgical/procedure) must be worn at all times.