

Manual:	Infection Control COVID-19 Pandemic	Reference No.:	011001.00
Section:	Resident Visiting		
Subject:	Social and Essential Visitors		

POLICY:

The aim of this policy is to support Homes to balance the need to promote safety and mitigate risks to residents, staff, and visitors, with the mental, physical, and spiritual needs of residents for their quality of life.

This policy is compliant with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Directive #3 and is guided by applicable policies, amended from time to time, from the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) and the and Ministry for Service and Accessibility Agreement (MSAA).

This policy considers the following principles: safety, emotional well-being, and flexibility. It also addresses concepts such as compassion, equity, non-maleficence, proportionality (i.e., to the level of risk), transparency and reciprocity (i.e., providing resources to those who are disadvantaged by the policy).

There continues to be an increased risk for severe outcomes as a result of COVID-19 in the elderly population due to age and underlying medical conditions, particularly in shared living spaces like long-term care homes. Vaccination remains the best defense against COVID-19, including the Omicron variant.

All vaccines provided as part of Ontario's vaccine rollout are safe and effective.

Booster doses provide better protection against the Omicron variant. Evidence shows that vaccine effectiveness against symptomatic infection due to the Omicron variant wanes over time, with little to no protective effect six months after the second dose, and that protection from Omicron infection is restored shortly after receiving a third dose to between 50 and 70%. Additionally, evidence shows that boosters are highly effective against severe outcomes, including hospitalizations and death, with a third dose restoring protection from hospitalization to 95%.

GUIDELINES:

Each APANS Health Services home will have a unique plan, based on adaptation of the guidelines within this policy.
Below encompass the guidelines for social visits and essential visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For both social and essential visits, the program will include a process to:

- Provide education about physical distancing, respiratory etiquette (coughing/sneezing), hand hygiene, infection prevention and control practices (IPAC) and proper use of PPE.
- Include allowances and limitations regarding indoor and outdoor visiting options.
- Define the number and types of visitors allowed per resident when the home is in an outbreak and/or not in an outbreak, in accordance with MLTC and MSAA policies.
- Define the number and type of visitors as required.
- Include screening protocols, specifically that visitors will be actively screened on entry for symptoms and exposures for COVID-19 and not admitted if they do not pass the screening. With the exception of palliative visitors.
- **(Start Date Tuesday March 15, 2022 to TBD)**

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Essential Caregivers: All screened on entrance. **Effective March 15, 2022** To gain entry to the home, caregivers are to provide proof of having a third dose by **March 14, 2022**, unless they have a valid medical exemption. For those that are only eligible after March 14, 2022, they must provide proof within thirty (30) days of being eligible.

Those who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days need to be exempted from federal quarantine prior to being allowed to visit. They will also need to be rapid tested for each visit for the next ten days (no face shield required). Individuals who show proof of a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the past 30 days should not be re-tested except with the onset of symptoms or if they've travelled outside of Canada in the 14 days prior to entering a home.

Starting **February 7, 2022** – Moving forward residents can only designate a maximum of **four** essential caregivers.

- With all of the essential caregivers being fully vaccinated, they are able to assist in programs and dining rooms if applicable.

Essential Visitors: Are defined as including a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care services (e.g., phlebotomy) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident. All screened on entrance. Those who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days need to be exempted from federal quarantine prior to being allowed to visit. They will also need to be rapid tested for each visit for the next ten days (face shield required). Individuals who show proof of a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the past 30 days should not be re-tested except with the onset of symptoms or if they've travelled outside of Canada in the 14 days prior to entering a home*.

General Indoor Visitors:

Vaccine Eligibility based on the age of general visitors:

- 0-4: No vaccination required
- 5-12: Two vaccinations required due to their eligibility
- 12 and up- Three doses required

All indoor visitors are limited to four at a time including the designated essential caregivers. All screened on entrance. Those who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days need to be exempted from federal quarantine prior to being allowed to visit.

With the resumption of general visitors into the homes, this will also allow for the resumption of adult day programs, entertainers and personal care services (where the person is not a staff member) in the homes. Social group activities can transition to the rooms maximum capacity limits with proper social distancing and masking required.

General Outdoor Visitors: General visitors must undergo active screening upon arrival at the home and are not allowed beyond entry points / areas in homes. Homes may use tools and practices to make this screening as efficient as possible (e.g., phone apps). General outdoor visitors do not need to undergo rapid antigen tests

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as their visit will be outdoors. No longer any limitation on number of visitors. Homes are to consider the need for social distancing when scheduling visits. Those who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days need to be exempted from federal quarantine prior to being allowed to visit.

- Comply with the home's IPAC protocols, including donning and doffing of PPE.
- Provision of the required PPE for the visit, when required.
- Include a process for communicating with residents and families about policies and procedures including the gradual resumption of social visits and the associated procedures.
- Ensure that non-compliance with the home's policies could result in a discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor.
- Includes a process for gradual resumption of family visitors that stipulates:
 - a. Visits may be required to be pre-arranged.
 - b. A home may determine the number of total visitors in the home at one time.
 - c. Visitors to only visit their loved one, and no other resident.
 - d. Visitors must wear a medical mask at all times. Mask will be provided by the home. Essential Caregivers and general visitors who are fully immunized (and therefore able to have close physical contact with the resident) are not required to wear eye protection whether visiting indoors or outdoors.
 - e. Social distancing guidelines to be adhered to. Regardless of resident and visitor vaccination status, brief hugs can now take place. Where both the resident and visitors are fully immunized close physical contact, including handholding, can now take place safely. It continues to be important that residents and visitors continue to adhere to public health measures in the home, including good hand hygiene and appropriate masking.
 - f. Social visits are not permitted when:
 - i. A resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or
 - ii. The residents home area is in an outbreak.
 - iii. The home is experiencing PPE challenges.
 - iv. Heat advisory or inclement weather conditions (outdoor visits)
 - v. Staffing issues which impact the ability for the home to facilitate scheduled visits.
- Specify that essential visitors:
 - a. Be defined as including a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health care services (e.g., phlebotomy) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident.
 - b. Providing direct care to a resident must use a surgical/procedure mask surgical/procedure mask while in the home, including while visiting the resident that does not have COVID-19 in their room.
 - c. Who are in contact with a resident who is suspect or confirmed with COVID-19, must wear appropriate PPE in accordance with Directive #3.

During an Outbreak- Essential visitors and Caregivers are permitted into the home with the following protocols

- Limited to one person in a resident room at a time

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- PPE required when in an isolation room- including a non-fitted respirator, gown, gloves and eye protection as specified by Public Health

VISITATION TYPES & GUIDELINES

Visitation Type	Commencement Date	Screening Tool	Home Guidelines	Visitor Guideline
Essential Visitor (Indoor) <i>(person visiting a very ill or palliative resident)</i>	Please refer to V.15 of this policy for any previous guidelines. December 30, 2021 March 15, 2022	 Essential Visitor Screening Tool	 Essential Visitor - Home Guideline FINA	 Essential Visitor's Guideline FINAL.docx
Phase 3: Outdoor Visitation	Please refer to V.15 of this policy for any previous guidelines. December 30, 2021 February 21, 2022 March 15, 2022	 Outdoor Visit Screening Tool 13.0	 Outdoor Visit Home Guidelines	 Outdoor Visit Visitor Guidelines
Phase 3: Indoor Visits	Please refer to V.14 of this policy for any previous guidelines. December 30, 2021 February 21, 2022 March 15, 2022	 Indoor Visit Screening Tool V.13	 Indoor Visit Home Guidelines	 Indoor Visit Visitor Guidelines
Essential Caregiver (Maximum of 4 individuals designated)	Please refer to V.14 of this policy for any previous guidelines. December 30, 2021	 Essential Caregiver Screening Tool 11.0	 Consideration for Essential Caregiver	 Essential Caregiver Guidelines

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	February 7, 2022			
	March 15, 2022			

APANS Voluntary Assumption of Risk, Indemnification and Waiver of Liability



Liability Waiver

References:



AsDM Memo_LTC
Pandemic Response 2

AsDM Memo_LTC Pandemic Response 2022-03-09



Key Messages to
Support Residents an

Key Messages to Support Residents and Families in LTC Homes 2022-03-09_EN



LTC Guidance
Document 2022-03-0

LTC Guidance Document 2022-03-09



Pandemic Response
FAQs

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What residents can
expect

What residents can expect - 2022-03-09_EN