



### Visitor Policy and Procedures

<b>Manual</b>	Resident and Caregiver Policies	<b>Policy Number</b>	V 2.6
<b>Applies to</b>	All General Visitors		
<b>Effective Date</b>	November 1, 2023	<b>Replaces</b>	Visiting Residents during COVID-19 Policy and Procedure (November 1, 2022)
<b>Summary of updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removed references to designated caregivers. For information on designated caregivers, please see <b>Caregiver (Unpaid) Policy and Procedures</b></li> <li>• Clarified when visitors may resume visits following signs and symptoms of infectious illness</li> <li>• Updated masking requirements</li> </ul>		

**PURPOSE:** This policy provides guidance on meaningful and equitable access to visits for all residents while also considering infection, prevention and control measures needed to maintain the safety of residents, staff, and visitors.

**DEFINITIONS:**

<b>Essential Visitor</b>	<p>An essential visitor means,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a caregiver (whether on a paid or unpaid basis)</li> <li>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</li> <li>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</li> <li>d) a government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care Home to carry out their duties</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Regional Staff who are not long-term care staff but attend the Homes to provide essential services are considered support workers.</p>
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<b>General Visitor</b>	A person who is not an essential visitor and is either visiting a particular resident or group of residents in the Home or on a tour of the Home.
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**POLICY:** The key requirements of this policy are as follows:

**1. Residents may receive visitors at any time** if desired and the visit does not infringe upon the health, safety, or rights of other residents:

- All residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents
- Residents have the right to choose their visitors

**Note:** A visitor under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

**2. Visitors must not** attend the Home when they are sick with signs and symptoms of infectious illness

- **COVID-19:** Visitors with COVID-19 and/or with symptoms of COVID-19 should avoid non-essential visits to the Home for 10 days after symptom onset or positive test result (whichever date is earlier)

**Exception:** Where visits cannot be avoided (palliative and end-of-life), visitors with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 should:

- Wear a surgical or KN95 mask, based on guidance from the IPAC Lead or designate,
- Maintain physical distancing, and
- Should notify a member of the Homes’ staff of their recent illness/positive test.

**Note:** If the resident being visited can also wear a mask, it is recommended they do so. Visitors with COVID-19 and/or symptoms of COVID-19 will not be permitted to eat or drink in the Home

- **Other infectious diseases:** Visitors should avoid non-essential visits to the Home until their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours for respiratory illnesses, and 48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms.

**3. Prior to beginning their visit, all visitors must log in** on the tablets (or alternatives) provided at the entrance of the Homes

**4. It is recommended that all visitors coming inside the Home wear a medical mask.** The Homes may require visitors to wear masks if:

- The Home is in outbreak,

- A resident is on additional precautions,
- Required by York Region Public Health or the Ministry of Long-Term Care,
- There is high community transmission of respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19, influenza, etc., **or**
- Required based on the Home's infection, prevention and control (IPAC) measures.

**5. Visitors must follow any infection, prevention and control (IPAC) measures in place at the Homes**

**6. The Homes may restrict visits in certain circumstances:**

- When the Home is in an outbreak (suspect or confirmed)
- When a resident is under additional precautions
- At the direction of York Region Public Health or provincial guidance
- If visits affect the Home's ability to meet all required public health measures as well as IPAC practices
- If visits do not otherwise comply with this policy

**7. Visiting during an outbreak:**

Only essential visitors are permitted to visit a resident when:

- The Home or Home Area where the resident lives is in suspect or confirmed outbreak, **or**
- A resident is under additional precautions.

**Exception:** Palliative and end-of-life residents may continue to receive visitors. Visitors will be subject to any additional precautions as required by the Home

**8. Visiting Residents in Palliative and End-Of-Life Care:** Caregivers and persons visiting for compassionate reasons, including for end-of-life care, must continue to have access to long-term care homes during an outbreak (suspect or confirmed) of infectious disease (including during an epidemic or pandemic; visitors will be subject to any additional precautions as required by the Home) and other periods of sustained emergency conditions

**Note:** Sustained emergency conditions exclude fire (CODE RED), evacuation (CODE GREEN) and bomb threats (CODE BLACK).

**9. The Homes must meet the following requirements:**

- 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
- Ensure that all visitors have access to the Home's visitor policy. See <https://www.york.ca/health/long-term-care-and-supports/long-term-care-homes>
- Include the current visitor policy in the package of information available to residents, posted in the Home and provided to the Resident's Council and Family Council
- Communicate and provide education to visitors on relevant IPAC information and requirements

**10. Pets are not permitted to visit inside the Home when any Home Area (or the whole Home) is in suspect or confirmed outbreak:** Pets can join an outdoor visit at any time. Please see **Pets Policy and Procedures**.

**PROCEDURES:** This section contains procedures for the following:

- A. Visiting the Home**
- B. Visitor Education and Training**
- C. Visitor Non-Compliance**

**A. Visiting the Home**

**The Administrator (or designate) will:**

- Communicate infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures in place if an outbreak occurs

**Essential visitors will:**

- Follow additional precautions as required during an outbreak or if resident is on Additional Precautions

**The resident will:**

- Wear a mask if tolerated, especially during an outbreak, if the resident is on Additional Precautions, or if their visitor has respiratory symptoms including those of COVID-19, influenza, rhinovirus, etc.)

**B. Visitor Education and Training**

**IPAC Lead (or designate) will:**

- Oversee the delivery of infection prevention and control (IPAC) education to visitors as requested. See **IPAC 2.1: Lead**

**All Staff will:**

- Communicate and provide informal education, as required, to all visitors on relevant IPAC information and requirements, based on the level of risk that visitor presents to themselves and to others in the Home (includes but is not limited to: visitor policies, physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, applicable IPAC practices, and proper use of PPE)

**C. Visitor Non-Compliance**

**If the Home needs to end a visit or temporarily prohibit a visitor for non-compliance, the Administrator (or designate) 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) (for example, there is sufficient space to physically distance, the Home has supplied the PPE, etc.)
- Provide the visitor with sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s)

**2. Before temporarily prohibiting a visitor, consider:**

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

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

- 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:**



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

Role	Responsibilities
IPAC Lead (or designate) and Registered Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide informal IPAC education</li> </ul>
All Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a safe and healthy workplace (the Home) for York Region employees free of actual, attempted, or threatened violence</li> <li>• Respect and promote the Resident’s Bill of Rights</li> <li>• Comply with this policy</li> </ul>
PSS Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document, record and report on visitor logs, as required</li> </ul>
Administrator or Designate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document incidents of visitor non-compliance</li> <li>• Communicate additional precautions</li> <li>• Arrange visitor accommodations as needed</li> <li>• Share current visitor policy in the package of information available to residents</li> </ul>

<b>Authority</b>	<p><i>Fixing Long-Term Care Act</i>, 2021 s. 3(1)6; General Regulation 246/22 s.264(2)9, s.265(1)10, s.267 and s.271; Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its Regulations; <i>CARF’s 2022 Aging Services Standards Manual</i>, s.2.B.9; <a href="#">IPAC standard</a>, as current; and York Region Seniors Services Administration</p> <p><b>Pandemic Authority Documents</b>, as current: <a href="#">Minister’s Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes</a>; and <a href="#">COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario</a>, as current</p>
<b>Related Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Related Home Policies:</b> Infection Prevention and Control Program Policies and Procedures, Caregiver (Unpaid) Policy and Procedures, Violent Outbursts Emergency Plan – CODE WHITE (Policy and Procedures) and Pets Policy and Procedures</li> <li>• <b>Related Regional Policies and Resources:</b> <a href="#">Workplace conduct including Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy</a>, <a href="#">Preventing and Managing Violence in the Workplace Policy</a>, and <a href="https://www.york.ca/health/long-term-care-and-supports/long-term-care-homes">https://www.york.ca/health/long-term-care-and-supports/long-term-care-homes</a>, as current</li> <li>• Caregiver Education Modules (SURGE)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Public Health Ontario resources</a> to support IPAC and PPE education and training:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Guidance document: <a href="#">recommended steps: putting on personal protective equipment</a></li> <li>○ Video: <a href="#">putting on full personal protective equipment</a></li> <li>○ Video: <a href="#">taking off full personal protective equipment</a></li> <li>○ Videos: <a href="#">how to hand wash</a> and <a href="#">how to hand rub</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>Policy Contact</b>	Senior Program Analyst	<b>Review Period</b>	As required