

**LONG-TERM CARE DIVISION****Policy Number: LTC8-07.04.01****TAB: INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL****SECTION: OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT****SUBJECT: VISITOR POLICY****A. PURPOSE:**

To ensure a safe environment to protect Residents and staff and to follow Provincial Directives and Ministry guidance/policy documents for visitors in Long-Term Care (LTC) by following principles of:

- **Safety:** Any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of Residents, staff and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Welcoming visitors is intended to support the mental and emotional well-being of Residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.
- **Equitable Access:** All Residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard Residents.
- **Flexibility:** The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the Centre, its workforce/human resources availability, whether the Centre is in an outbreak and the current status of the Centre with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting Centre-specific policies.
- **Equality:** Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, Residents and/or their Substitute Decision-Makers (SDM) have the right to designate caregivers.

**Note:** Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a LTC Centre is appropriate.

**B. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all Peel Long-Term Care Residents, staff, essential visitors, caregivers, support workers and general visitors.

**Note:** The Centre will consult with their local public health unit, Residents' and Family Councils prior to implementation of any infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures that exceed the MOH and MLTC directives, orders or applicable legislation. The current version of this policy will be provided to Residents' and Family Councils and will also be posted in the Centre, communicated to Residents, included in the Resident's Admission/Welcome Packages and posted on the Centre's website.

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### C. MANDATE:

This policy is in accordance with the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 (s. 5) and Ontario Regulation 246/22 (s. 4, 267), [MLTC COVID-19 Guidance Document for LTC](#), December 23, 2022, [MOH Minister's Directives - COVID-19 Response Measures for LTC Homes, August 30, 2022.pdf](#), , the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, [Health Care Consent Act, 1996](#) and the Centre's operational practices.

#### Definitions:

**Epidemiologically link:** when cases are epidemiologically linked, it means one case has either been exposed to a confirmed case or has had the same high-risk exposure as a confirmed case (e.g., both were exposed to a known cluster or outbreak). Local public health units will determine this as part of their investigation, which would inform their decision as to whether or not they will declare an outbreak.

**PCR Test** means a validated real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay laboratory test for the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19.

**Primary series:** two doses of mRNA vaccines or one dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) or three doses of a vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.

**Rapid Antigen Test (RAT)** means a point-of-care rapid antigen test for the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19.

**Up-to-Date:** Means a person has completed their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines and has received a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine within the last 6 months.

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- The goal of the provincial COVID-19 immunization program is to protect Ontarians from COVID-19. Vaccines help reduce the number of new cases and are very effective against severe illness and outcomes including hospitalizations and death due to COVID-19.
- 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.
- COVID-19 vaccine booster doses help to increase protection against symptomatic infection and severe outcomes at the individual level and help to reduce transmission at the population level. Staying up-to-date with recommended doses restores protection that wanes over time. Booster doses help increase protection against symptomatic infection and severe outcomes, including hospitalizations and death. The more people who have all of their COVID-19 vaccinations (including booster doses), the lower the risk of infection and the lower the chance that COVID-19 will enter LTC Centres and affect the lives of Residents.
- It is crucial that all visitors complete their primary series and have booster dose(s) of COVID 19 vaccines as eligible. In order to have optimal level of protection, visitors are strongly recommended to stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines.
- Individuals can prove they have completed their primary series and received their booster dose of COVID-19 vaccines by showing the physical or emailed receipt that was provided to them at the time of vaccination.
- Individuals can book an appointment for vaccination and download/print their vaccination receipts through the [provincial portal](#). Select pharmacies and primary care settings also provide COVID-19 vaccinations.
- For additional information on COVID-19 vaccines including benefits, risks, and eligibility, refer to: [COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario | COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) in Ontario](#).

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Type of visitors	Mandatory vaccination	Recommended additional vaccination
<b>Caregivers</b> (e.g., essential caregivers, private caregivers, paid companions, etc.)	Primary series* plus one booster dose	Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines, which means completed the primary series and received a COVID-19 vaccine within the last 6 months.
<b>Support Workers</b> (e.g., MD, NP, SW, lab, x-ray, first responders, funeral home, food delivery, maintenance workers, courier services, care vendors, legal services)	Primary series* plus one booster dose	
<b>General Visitors</b> (e.g., family members, hairdresser, entertainers, tours, recreation providers etc.)	Primary series* plus one booster dose	

**Exceptions:**

- Anyone with a valid medical exemption
- Anyone visiting a very ill Resident or a Resident receiving palliative care/end of life care
- If Resident or SDM requests to have an unvaccinated or partially vaccinated visitor or caregiver, the visitor or caregiver may be able to come into the Centre with additional precautions with permission from the Administrator/Director of Care
- Children under 5 years of age

**Note:** Centre Leadership Staff will determine on a case-by-case basis, visitors who are permitted into the Centre.

\***Primary series:** two doses of mRNA vaccines or one dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) or three doses of a vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.

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- Surveillance testing refers to routine COVID-19 testing of individuals entering the Centre, to help provide a safe environment for Residents, staff and visitors.
- Surveillance testing is required for any individual over the age of one year visiting indoors regardless of their vaccination status. Surveillance testing is not required for outdoor visits or for support workers who solely perform work outside of the Centre (e.g., roof maintenance) however all other health and safety/IPAC requirements remain in place. Outdoor visits can occur regardless of vaccination status where Centres have outdoor visiting spaces that support safe visits (e.g., physical distancing).
- **The rapid antigen test** is used as the COVID-19 screening tests for all visitors to the Centre. It is used for screening purposes only and should NOT be used for diagnosis of acute COVID-19 infection.
- Rapid antigen screening does not replace public health measures such as symptom screening, physical distancing, masking and hand hygiene.
- Rapid antigen testing will be performed by trained staff who have the knowledge, skills, training, and judgement to do so. Self-swabbing may also be permitted as an optional and voluntary swabbing method. For further information on how to self-swab, refer to: [How to use a COVID-19 antigen test at home - YouTube](#) and [Ontario Health - How to Swab your nose](#).
- Testing of children is dependent on available supplies (appropriate swab size). Parents would be required to perform swabbing on their children. Centre staff will then process the test. Should a parent be unable to perform swabbing, support from a qualified staff person will be sought, if available. If a child over the age of one is unable to be tested, they are not allowed to visit the Resident indoors unless visiting a very ill Resident or a Resident receiving palliative care/end of life care.
- Testing must be completed before gaining entry to the Centre. Visitors who refuse to take the test or who have a positive test result will not be allowed entry into the Centre.
- Exceptions to vaccination and surveillance testing are:
  - A person who is visiting an ill/palliative/end of life care Resident for compassionate reasons or a support worker visiting the Centre for an emergency service, to provide timely medical care or the sole purpose of making a delivery is not required to provide proof of vaccination, to undergo a rapid antigen test or

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provide proof of or attest to receiving a negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen test result.

- **Inspectors:** Testing requirements do not apply to inspectors with a statutory right of entry, even when a Centre is in outbreak. Rather, inspectors from the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (including inspectors from the Electrical Safety Authority) have separate and specific testing protocols that have been established within their ministries.
- **Consent:** Is required for COVID-19 testing before rapid antigen testing can be administered (Refer to [IDF-103](#) - Essential Caregivers and General Visitors Consent for COVID-19 Testing and Authorization for Disclosure of Personal Health Information). The consent form will be reviewed the first time the individual undergoes testing, be signed and witnessed. A signed consent form will be kept on file for subsequent testing and a verbal or implied consent provided each and every time a test is completed as per the Health Care Consent Act, 1996. A person who refuses to participate in rapid antigen testing will not be allowed entry into the Centre. Parental consent is required for minors (children under the age of 18 years) that undergo testing.
- All individuals who previously had a confirmed COVID-19 infection will be returned to routine surveillance testing once they are allowed to return to visiting the Centre. Prior to entering the Centre, individuals who tested have positive for COVID-19 will be asked to:
  - Ensure that more than 10 days have passed since the date the test was administered.
  - To verbally attest that they have completed their isolation period as directed by a local public health unit.
  - Ensure they no longer have any symptoms.
- A positive rapid antigen test result is considered a preliminary positive and must be followed with a PCR test within 24 hours to act as a confirmatory test. The following actions will be taken when there is a positive rapid antigen test result:
  - The individual will be counselled that the result is preliminary and that a PCR test confirmation is required within 24 hours.
  - The individual will be asked to leave the Centre and return home to self-isolate until receipt of the PCR test result.
- A negative rapid antigen test result is a screening test result and only applies if the individual tested has no symptoms and no known exposure to COVID-19. If the result is

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negative, individuals should be counselled that a false negative result is possible, and therefore must continue to follow infection prevention and control measures.

### Frequency of rapid testing, vaccination & other requirements:

#### Support workers:

- Must demonstrate proof of a negative antigen test or PCR test result from a test taken on the day of the visit or taken on the previous day before entry into the Centre.
- If visiting more than one home in a day, testing is only required at the first home visited either on the same day or the previous day (test result is valid for 24 hours) and proof of the negative antigen test result must be provided (Refer to IDF-106 – Antigen Test Result Confirmation).
- Must complete their primary series plus one booster dose of COVID-19 vaccines prior to entry in the Centre except if medical exempted.
- When a Centre is in outbreak, both antigen testing and/or PCR testing may be required.

**Note:** Support Workers who are regulated health professionals (RHPs) must be tested before entry but may have contact with Residents if wearing appropriate PPE and following IPAC guidelines while awaiting results. Decisions regarding allowing specific RHP entry prior to receiving antigen results will be made on a case-by-case basis at the Centre level.

#### General Visitors:

- Must demonstrate proof of a negative antigen test or PCR test result from a test taken on the day of the visit or taken on the previous day before entry into the Centre.
- **All general visitors over the age of 5 are required to complete their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines** to enter the Centre unless they have a valid medical exemption, are visiting a very ill Resident or a Resident receiving palliative/end of life care, or their visits are approved by the Administrator/DOC.
- **Though it is not recommended**, a Resident or their Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) may consent or request to have a visitation from unvaccinated/partially vaccinated general visitors. If they do so, the following measures may be considered:

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#### Potential interventions to consider for unvaccinated/partially vaccinated General visitors

- Consider outdoor visits if appropriate
  - Social day/overnight absences
  - Limiting visitation to Resident's room with full PPE
  - RAT testing each visit
  - Maintain physical distancing
  - Supervise visitation and limit duration of visit, e.g., 1hr /day
  - Book ahead of time to schedule the visit
  - Eating/drinking with the Resident is NOT permitted
  - Testing of the Resident post visitation. Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Lead/Program Support Nurse (PSN)/Designate to identify frequency
- Medically exempted, partially or unvaccinated general visitors must wear PPE as specified by the Centre e.g., surgical/procedural mask and eye protection (goggles, or face shield) at all times.
  - General visitors are not allowed to enter the Centre/unit area during an outbreak.
  - Note: General visitors are permitted to visit if only a section of the Centre is in outbreak, and the Resident they are visiting is unaffected and located in part of the Centre that is not in outbreak.
  - General visitors should postpone non-essential visits to the Centre for 10 days after developing symptoms, regardless of the results of their COVID-19 test results, to reduce the risk of introduction of any respiratory infections into the Centre.
  - In the event of a Centre wide outbreak, Public Health will be consulted for direction on the operation of the Adult Day Services programs.

#### Caregivers:

- Must have antigen testing at least three times per week, on separate days. When entering the Centre on fewer than three times within a seven-day period, Caregivers will be tested on each day they enter the Centre, with the exemption of two consecutive days.



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- If a caregiver is able to demonstrate proof that they are up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccination booster(s) requirements (booster dose within the last 6 months), they can request to be tested twice a week.
- Caregivers who visit the Centre and have received a rapid antigen test at another location must provide proof of the negative antigen test result in order to gain entry to the Centre or take a new antigen test. The rapid antigen test results must be from the day of the visit or previous day.
- All eligible designated caregivers and newly appointed caregivers are required to complete their primary series plus one booster dose of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Caregivers who completed their primary series plus one booster dose of COVID-19 vaccines and have completed the necessary surveillance testing, may continue to join Residents for communal dining/family-style meals, while wearing a mask at all times.
- Caregivers are allowed to enter the Centre/Unit during an outbreak.
- **Though it is not recommended**, a Resident or their Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) may consent or request visitation from an unvaccinated/partially vaccinated caregiver or newly admitted Residents or their SDM may request to have an unvaccinated/partially vaccinated essential care giver designated. If they do so, the following measures may be considered:

#### Potential interventions to consider for unvaccinated/partially vaccinated Caregivers

- Consider outdoor visits if appropriate
- Social day/overnight absences,
- Limiting visitation to Resident's room with full PPE
- RAT testing each visit
- Maintain physical distancing if possible
- Supervise visitation and limit duration of visit, e.g., 1hr /day
- Book ahead of time to schedule the visit
- Eating/drinking with the Resident is NOT permitted
- Testing of the Resident post visitation. IPAC Lead/PSN/Designate to identify frequency

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- PCR testing may be required by public health for essential visitors when the Centre is in outbreak. Proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR test result must be shown if required. The result (e.g., print out or on a mobile device) must clearly show the individual's name and test date.
- PCR testing may also be used where individuals are symptomatic, have a positive antigen test result, individuals have been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, or as otherwise directed by local public health.
- Testing can be done at any [Getting tested for COVID-19 - Region of Peel \(peelregion.ca\)](https://www.peelregion.ca/health-services/COVID-19-testing/) and [COVID-19 test and testing location information | COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) in Ontario.](https://www.ontario.ca/covid-19-test)

**Data Collection:** The Minister's Directive requires the Centre to collect, maintain and disclose statistical information as follows:

- a) The number of staff, caregivers, student placements, volunteers, support workers and general visitors tested with an antigen test, and the number who received a positive test result from an antigen test.
- b) The number of staff, caregivers, student placements, volunteers, support workers and general visitors tested with a PCR test, and the number who received a positive test result from a PCR test.
- c) The number of staff, caregivers, student placements, volunteers, support workers and general visitors that provided proof of a negative test to gain entry into the Centre.

**Note:** Upon request, the Centre must disclose the statistical information to the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, the public health unit for the area in which the LTCH is located or to Ontario Health. The Centre shall ensure that no personal information or personal health information is disclosed.

**Screening and infection prevention and control requirements:**

- All visitors must be actively screened for symptoms and exposure history for COVID-19 prior to either entering the Centre (indoor visits). Visitors who fail screening will not be allowed into the Centre, will be advised to go home immediately to self-isolate, and will be encouraged to complete a rapid antigen or PCR test.

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- Exception: First responders must be permitted entry without screening in emergency situations.
- Residents returning from an absence must also be actively screened. Residents will be screened by nursing staff on the Resident's Home area (RHA). Residents who do not pass screening i.e., have COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated in their room on Droplet and Contact Precautions and tested for COVID-19.

**Indoor Visits:**

- **Masks:** All visitors must wear a medical mask. Exceptions to the masking requirements are:
  - Children who are younger than two years of age.
  - Any individual who is being accommodated with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 or the Ontario Human Rights Code.
  - Resident is in a single room or the Centre has designated a space in the Centre where the Resident can visit in a one-on-one setting.

**Note:** Caregivers and general visitors can only remove their mask if a Resident is not sharing a room or the Centre has designated a space in the Centre where the Resident can visit with their caregivers and general visitors in a one-on-one setting. When not in a one-on-one setting, visitors are **required** to be masked. Removal of masks for eating are restricted to areas designated by the Centre.

  - If entertainment provided by a live performer (i.e., a visitor) requires the removal of their mask to perform their talent.
  - Someone (i.e., staff, students, volunteers, visitors or Residents) who has a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask and/or are unable to put on or remove their mask without assistance from another person.
- During an outbreak, essential caregivers must wear appropriate PPE as directed by Public Health and the Centre. This may include a fit-tested or non-fit tested N95 mask, eye protection, gown and gloves.
- **Eye Protection:** Regardless of their COVID-19 vaccination status, appropriate eye protection (for example, goggles or face shield) is required for essential visitors when providing care to Residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and in the provision of direct care within two metres of Residents in an outbreak area.
- **Visit Limits:** There are no limits on the number of visitors that may visit a Resident however the number of indoor visitors will depend on the Centre's operational capacity and space and will be determined by the Centre Leadership Team (CLT).

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- General visitors will notify screeners that they are at the Centre for an outdoor visit and wait in the area, as directed by the Screener, to meet with the Resident.
- Masking is not a requirement for outdoor visits, but it is strongly recommended to prevent infection transmission. A medical or non-medical mask that covers the mouth, nose, and chin at all times during the visit is recommended.
- Must practice regular hand hygiene.
- There is no limit on the number of people visiting outdoors, space permitting. Visitors are to contact the Centre in advance of their visits to check if outdoor space is available.
- Where the Centre does not have sufficient outdoor space to accommodate visits, outdoor visits can also take place in the general vicinity.

**All visitors:**

- Caregivers and general visitors may accompany a Resident to communal dining area for meals to assist them with eating; however, caregivers or general visitors must remain masked at all times and not join in the meal.
- Must perform regular hand hygiene when entering and exiting the Centre.
- Must discard mask and face shield (where appropriate) when exiting the Centre.
- Close Contacts\* of someone (regardless of whether a person lives with them or not) who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has COVID-19 symptoms, may enter the Centre while following the guidance below:
  - Self-Monitor for symptoms for 10 days from last exposure to the individual with COVID-19.
  - Self-Isolate immediately if any symptoms develop.
  - Wear a well-fitted medical mask or fit or non-fit tested N95 respirator or KN95 mask while in the Centre. Do not remove mask in the presence of others.

**Note:** If close contact with a household member (ongoing) exposure, obtain an immediate PCR (or RAT) and re-test at Day 5 from initial exposure if initial test was negative. RAT daily for 10 days may be recommended as an alternative. Caregivers to follow the Centre's return to work guidance.

- \*A "close contact" is defined as an individual who has a high-risk exposure to a confirmed positive COVID-19 case, an individual with COVID-19 symptoms, or an individual with a positive rapid antigen test result. A person is considered a close contact

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if they were less than two metres away from the case/symptomatic person for at least 15 minutes, or multiple shorter lengths of time, without personal protective equipment in the 48 hours before the case's symptoms began or their positive test result, whichever came first.

- A visitor log of all visitors to the Centre must be maintained with the name and contact information of the visitor, time and date of visit, name of the Resident and other details regarding the purpose of the visit. These records will be kept for 30 days and be readily available to the local public health unit for contact tracing purposes upon request.

For detailed screening information refer to the Types of Visitor and Requirements Table Summary.

### Types of visitors:

#### **Not Considered Visitors:**

LTC Staff, volunteers and students are not considered visitors as their access to the Centre is determined by the Centre. Infants under the age of 1 are also not considered visitors and are excluded from testing requirement.

During a suspect or confirmed outbreak the local Public Health may provide further direction on the types and numbers of visitors to the Centre depending on the specific situation.

Visitors planning to visit the LTC Centre are advised to contact the Centre in advance to make sure the Centre is not in an outbreak, and to get information on the Centre's Visitor policy and any other restrictions.

All visitors are required to comply with this policy and IPAC measures, including all PPE requirements. The Centre is responsible for providing PPE such as surgical/procedural mask, gloves, gowns and eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles), as appropriate.

If the Centre is not able to provide the appropriate PPE, visitors may not be permitted inside the Centre.

#### **Essential Visitors:**

Essential Visitors are individuals who perform essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance workers health care services (e.g., phlebotomy)) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative/end of life care Resident. Essential visitors also include "essential caregivers" as defined by MLTC. There is no limit on the number of essential visitors allowed to come into the Centre at any given time.

Essential visitors are the only type of visitors allowed when there is an outbreak in the Centre or area of the Centre.

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1. Persons visiting very ill or palliative/end of life care Residents for compassionate reasons including but not limited to, hospice services, end of life care, etc.
2. Government inspectors (e.g., MLTC, MLITSD, etc.) with a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties.
3. Support Worker (definition follows)
4. Caregiver (definition follows)

**A support worker is defined as:**

A support worker is defined as a type of essential visitor who is visiting to provide support to the critical operations of the Centre to provide essential services for the Centre or for a Resident at the Centre. Essential services provided by support workers include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment, diagnostic, intervention/rehabilitation, and counselling services for Residents by regulated health professionals such as physicians and nurse practitioners
- Assistive devices Program vendors e.g., the Centre's oxygen therapy vendors
- Moving a Resident in or out of a home
- Social work services
- Legal services
- Post-mortem services
- Emergency services (e.g., such as those provided by first responders)
- Maintenance services such as those required to ensure the structural integrity of the Centre and the functionality of the Centre's HVAC mechanical, electrical, plumbing systems, and services related to exterior grounds and winter property maintenance
- Food/nutrition and water/drink delivery
- Canada Post mail services and other courier services
- Election officials/workers.

Support Person who helps people with a disability perform daily tasks (e.g., help with communication, mobility or personal care):

- A visitor may require a support person to help them visit the Centre. The support person for any visitor must adhere to the Centre's Visitor policy, follow the same screening and PPE requirements as visitors to the Centre.

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- A support person for any visitor does not count towards the maximum number of visitors.
- A support person for a designated caregiver does not need to be designated.
- Visitors who need a support person should inform the Centre in advance so that the Centre can prepare accordingly.

**A caregiver is an individual who:**

- Is a family member or friend of a Resident or a person of importance to a Resident.
- Is able to comply with all applicable laws including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or a medical officer of health appointed under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
- Provides one or more forms of support or assistance to meet the needs of the Resident including providing direct physical support such as activities of daily living or providing social, spiritual or emotional support, whether on a paid or unpaid basis.
- Is designated by the Resident or the Resident's SDM with authority to give that designation, if any. Note: the designation of a caregiver should be made in writing to the Centre, and this written record will be kept by the Centre.
- In the case of an individual under 16 years of age, has approval from a parent or legal guardian to be designated as a caregiver. (Note: parental or legal guardian consent for designated caregivers under 16 years of age will be documented in the Resident's EHR).

**Caregiver criteria:**

- The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the decision of the Resident and/or their SDM and not the Centre. The Centre will document caregiver designations on the Resident's Electronic Health Record (EHR). A Resident and/or their substitute decision-maker may not continuously change a designation in order to increase the number of people able to enter the Centre.
- A Resident and/or their SDM may change the designation in response to a change in the:
  - Resident's care needs that are reflected in the plan of care.
  - Availability of a designated caregiver, either temporary (e.g., illness) or permanent.
- The Centre may not require scheduling or restrict the length or frequency of visits by caregivers. However, in the case where a Resident resides in an area of the Centre in

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outbreak, is symptomatic or isolating under additional precautions, only one caregiver may visit at a time.

- A caregiver may not visit any other LTC Home for 10 days after visiting:
  - An individual with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - An individual experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Recognizing there are caregivers who want to volunteer to support more than one Resident, in the event of an outbreak, caregivers may support up to two Residents who are COVID-19 positive, provided the Centre obtains consent from all involved Residents/SDMs. Caregivers may also support more than one Resident in non-outbreak situations, with the same expectation regarding Resident consent.
  - Resident and/or SDM must complete a [Caregiver Support Form](#) to communicate the designation of the caregiver and submit to the Administrator/DOC/designate.
  - Additional forms, education and procedures, as outlined in Policy [LTC1-05.40](#) - External Service and/or Care Provider and Visiting Companions must be followed for Privately Hired Caregivers (hired and paid for by the Resident/SDM). Please see policy or speak to the Centre Administrator/DOC/designate for assistance.
- Prior to visiting any Resident for the first time, caregivers must attest to Centre staff that they have read the Centre's Visitor policy/Visitors information package. The policy and information package must also be reviewed when changes are made and annually thereafter.
- Physical distancing (a minimum of 2 metres/6 feet) must be practiced by all individuals at all times except for the purposes of providing direct care to a Resident or when following exceptions apply:
  - When providing direct care to a Resident;
  - Between Residents and their visitors
  - Between Residents in one-on-one or in small group settings
  - For the purposes of a compassionate or end of life visits;
  - During the provision of personal care services (e.g., haircutting)
  - Between staff and Clients of Adult Day Programs that take place on the site of a LTC Home.
- Review Public Health Ontario resources to support IPAC and PPE education and training as made available by the Centre:
  - Guidance documents: Recommended Steps: Putting On Full PPE



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- Video: Putting On Full PPE
- Video: Taking off Full PPE
- Video: [How to Handwash](#) and [How to Hand Rub](#).

**General Visitors:**

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services (including sales representative) related to the operations of the Centre or a particular Resident or group of Residents.

There are two broad categories of general visitors:

1. Visitors providing non-essential services which include but not limited to:
  - Personal care service providers (e.g., hairdressers, barbers, manicurists, etc.)
  - Entertainers (e.g., singers, musicians, etc.)
  - Recreational service providers
  - Animal handlers (for example, as part of therapy animal program)
  - Individuals who are touring the Centre to inform decisions regarding application for admission.
2. Persons visiting for social reasons (e.g., family members or friends) that the Resident or their substitute decision-maker assess as different from direct care, including care related to cognitive stimulation, meaningful connection, and relational continuity.

General visitors will have access to the Centre's Visitor policy and must understand the IPAC measures at the outset of their visits.

The Centre has the discretion to require general visitors to:

- Schedule their visits in advance. **Note:** the Centre will prioritize the mental and emotional well-being of Residents and strive to be as accommodating as possible when scheduling visits for general visitors with consideration to maximizing physical space and human resources to assist Residents (where needed).
- Visit during specific hours.

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## **E. PROCEDURE:**

### **Managing safe visits:**

#### **Supervising Visits:**

- The Centre is not required to supervise visitors.
- The Centre has the discretion to supervise visits in order to manage health and safety during visits (e.g., monitoring the flow of visitors to ensure sufficient physical distancing can be maintained, supporting Residents during the visit, etc.).
- Where supervised visits are needed, the supervision should be implemented in a manner that respects the Resident's right to communicate in confidence, receive visitors of their choice and consult in private with any person without interference under paragraph 14 of subsection 3(1) of the FLTCA.

#### **Access to Home Areas:**

- The Centre will create safe opportunities for caregivers to spend time with Residents in areas outside the Resident's room including lounges, walks in hallways (without going outdoors) and outdoor gardens and patios (if available).

#### **Use of Centre's Washroom:**

- Essential/general visitors are allowed to use the Centre's washroom provided they have met the required active screening and testing requirements. They must follow the Centre's IPAC practices and direction on which washroom to use. Visitors are required to clean the space before and after each use.

### **Non-compliance with the Centre's Visitor Policy:**

Non-compliance with this policy could result in discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor. Considerations and response for non-adherence:

- Consult with the Residents' and Family Councils on procedures for addressing non-compliance by visitors.
- Provide strategies for supporting visitors in understanding and adhering to the Centre's Visitor policy.

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- Recognize visits are critical to supporting Resident's care needs and emotional well-being.
- Consider the impact of discontinuing visits on the Resident's clinical and emotional well-being.
- Implement training/education to support visitors in understanding and adhering to the Centre's Visitor policy.
- Ensure the response to discontinue visits is reasonable in comparison to the severity of the non-adherence to the policy and IPAC measures.

**Note:** Centres will consult with Residents' and Family Councils on the procedures for addressing non-compliance by visitors.

### Ending a visit

The Centre has the discretion to end a visit by any visitor repeatedly fails to adhere to the Centre's Visitor policy, provided that:

- The Centre has explained the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor.
- The visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s) (e.g., there is sufficient space to physically distance, the Centre has supplied the PPE and demonstrated how to correctly put on PPE, etc.); and
- The visitor has been given sufficient time to adhere to the requirement(s).
- The steps taken are documented in the Resident's electronic health record (EHR).

### Temporarily prohibiting a visitor

The Centre has the discretion to temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and flagrant non-adherence with the Centre's Visitor policy. In exercising this discretion, the Centre should consider whether the non-adherence:

- Can be resolved successfully by explaining and demonstrating how the visitor can adhere to the requirements.
- Is with requirements that align with instruction in Minster's Directive and guidance in this policy.
- Negatively impacts the health and safety of Residents, staff and other visitors in the Centre.

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- Is demonstrated continuously by the visitor over multiple visits.
- Is by a visitor whose previous visits have been ended by the Centre.

Any decision to temporarily prohibit a visitor should be made only after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits have been exhausted and the following steps have been followed:

- The Centre Administrator/designate have had multiple conversations (i.e., three times) with visitors regarding non-compliance.
- Visitor was provided with and is aware of the Visitor policy, training materials, and General Visitor Information Package.
- Visitor has been reminded of the risk of transmission of the virus to Centre Residents and staff.
- Visitor was provided with sufficient time and information to comply with the policy.
- Visitor was informed of potential impact of their non-compliance on the health and safety of Residents, staff and other visitors.
- Visitor continues to be in non-compliance after reminders were provided from the Centre Leadership Team (minimum 3 times) and [IDF-108](#) – Non-Compliance Letter is provided to the visitor.
- Stipulate a reasonable length of the prohibition.
- Clearly identify what requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed (e.g., reviewing the Centre’s Visitor policy, reviewing specific Public Health Ontario resources, etc.); and,
- Be documented and retained by the Centre.

**Note:** Where the Centre has temporarily prohibited a caregiver, the Resident and/or their SDM may need to designate an alternate individual as caregiver to help meet the Resident’s care needs.

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[Ontario Regulation, 246/22: General.](#)

[MOH Minister's Directives - COVID-19 Response Measures for LTC Homes, August 30, 2022.pdf.](#)

[MLTC COVID-19 Guidance Document for LTC - December 23, 2022.](#)

[MLTC ADM Memo -LTC Pandemic Response Update - December 23, 2022.pdf.](#)

[MLTC Pandemic Response FAQs - December 23, 2022.pdf.](#)

[MLTC Influenza Testing Program - November - March 31, 2023.pdf.](#)

[MOH COVID-19 Guidance, LTC Homes for PHU, October 6, 2022v.8.](#)

[MOH, What residents can expect - October 6, 2022.pdf.](#)

[MOH Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes, August 31, 2022 v.13.pdf.](#)

[MOH Management of Cases and Contact of COVID-19 in Ontario, August 31, 2022 v.15.pdf.](#)

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