

Section Number: Pandemics	Policy Number: IC - 7 - 009
Category: Essential Visitors During COVID-19 Pandemic - Retirement	Implementation Date: November 23, 2020
Page: 1 of 6	Authorized Signature: Refer to Policy Index

ESSENTIAL VISITORS (RETIREMENT)

Purpose

This policy supports essential visitors to resident home areas while adhering to the current directives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care, RHRA and Public Health Ontario Guidelines.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to the virus in determining whether visiting a Retirement home is appropriate.

The Elliott Community recognizes that being able to connect with friends and family is essential to resident's emotional health and well-being so our visits are guided by the following principles:

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: Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

Equitable Access: All individuals seeking to visit a resident must be given equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

Flexibility: The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the Retirement home, its staffing availability, and the current status of the home with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies.

As the pandemic situation evolves in Ontario, the direction regarding visits in Long-Term Care/Retirement homes will be adjusted as necessary, keeping the safety and emotional well-being of residents and staff at the forefront.

Co-Located Retirement Communities and Long-Term Care Homes

The Elliott Community is required to adopt the Long-term care home's visitation policies as physically and operationally we are connected.

UPDATE: October 15, 2020

With the risk of acquiring COVID-19 infections increasing in our community all Long-Term Care Homes received a letter from Dr. Mercer requesting the following:

- Restrict essential care givers and general visitors to a maximum of one (1) person per resident, at a time;
- Discontinue short-term and temporary absences. Residents can leave the Home only for essential purposes (i.e. medical appointments) and discontinue all other absences, except for medical or compassionate reasons;
- Discontinue in-person tours and replace with virtual tours; and
- Social activities should not be permitted unless the facility can always maintain resident safety through: (i) physical distancing, of at least two (2) metres, at all times; (ii) adhering to IPAC measures; (iii) ensuring enhanced environmental cleaning; and (iv) the use/wearing of face coverings/masks (if tolerated).

UPDATE: November 14, 2020

In accordance with the Ministry of Long-Term Care COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open, effective Monday, November 16, 12:01 AM, public health regions moving into Orange – Restrict, Red-Control and Grey- Lockdown levels of the COVID-19 response framework the following will be in effect:

- General visitors are not allowed.
- Essential visitors, one care giver at a time per resident may visit homes in these regions.

UPDATE: November 19, 2020

- All staff, external care givers and support workers are required to be tested for COVID-19 weekly and show proof of negative results at screening.
- All essential visitors must show proof of negative COVID -19 test within the past 7 days of visit.

These restrictions will be in place until further notice.

1.0 Definitions of Visitors

Visitor	Definition
Essential Visitor	- Person performing essential support services (food delivery, general contractors or health care

	<p>services (lab, x-ray)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government inspectors, however they are not subject to this policy - A person visiting a very ill or a resident at end of life - A maximum of 2 visitors at one time - Support workers (person visiting to perform essential services for home or resident like physicians, nurse practitioners) - When a resident is self-isolating, symptomatic or during a confirmed and/or suspected outbreak, visits will be granted at the direction of Public Health
Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor - The designation should be made in writing to the home (the decision is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their SDM and not the home) - Visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g. supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision making) - A caregiver could be a family member, a paid caregiver or companion or a translator - Must be 18 years of age or older - A maximum of 2 caregivers may be designated per resident. - Visits do not need to be scheduled and there are no restrictions on length of visit - When a resident is self-isolating, symptomatic or during a confirmed and/or suspected outbreak, visits will be granted at the direction of Public Health - A process for documenting caregiver designation will be in place by the home - The Resident of SDM may change caregiver in response to the residents care needs (as reflected in the plan of care) or based on the availability of the designated caregiver - A caregiver may not visit any other resident
Support Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor - Performing essential services in the Home (ie. physician, maintenance, person delivering food etc.) - Visitor is allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the home is in outbreak but a maximum of 1 caregiver only
General Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is NOT an essential visitor - Individuals visiting to provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the resident and/or SDM - Individuals visiting for social reasons.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visiting in a designated area (in resident room) - Must be accompanied by an adult if under the age of 14 years - A minimum of 2 visitors at one time - Individuals are not allowed to visit when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the home is in confirmed and/or suspect outbreak - Only allowed to visit during visiting hours
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Where the Home finds that the number of visitors compromises the safety of residents and staff; the number of essential visitors and/or caregivers may be reduced to one. Factors that will be considered in making that decision will include the size and layout of the Home, the needs of residents and the total number of visitors.

To support safe visiting, the following screening requirements must be met. If an essential visitor enters or exits the facility outside of screening hours between 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, they must be screened by the nurse on the resident home area.

Type of Visitor	Screening Requirements			
	Active Screening*, including temperature check	Proof of COVID test within 14 days from date tested.	Training on homes visitor policy, donning and doffing PPE, handwashing and other Infection control practices prior to first visit and monthly thereafter.	Attestation that visitor has read the Homes’ visiting policy prior to first visit and monthly thereafter.
Essential Visitor/Caregiver	Yes	Yes – Except for an emergency situation / end of life.	Yes	Yes
Support Worker	Yes	Yes – Except in an emergency situation / end of life.	Yes	Yes
General Visitor - Indoor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Education Requirements for Essential Visitors

Prior to the first visit, the Home will provide training to essential visitors on how to safely provide direct care, including donning and doffing PPE and hand hygiene.

Prior to the first visit and monthly thereafter, the Home will ask all essential visitors to read the homes visiting policy and online training and verbally attest that they have done so.

Training will include the following resources:

Guidance document entitled [Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#).

Video entitled [Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment](#).

Video entitled [Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment](#).

Video entitled [How to Hand Wash](#).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

Visitors are required to wear PPE as directed by the MLTC Directive #3

Essential/Caregivers	Must wear a surgical mask and shield, provided by the Home. Gloves, gown, mask and shield is required when visiting a resident in isolation.
Support Workers	Must wear a surgical mask and shield; provided by the Home. Gloves, gown, mask and shield is required when visiting a resident in isolation or when directed.
General Visitor - Indoor	Must wear a surgical mask and shield; provided by the Home when visiting at all times.

Process for Designating Caregivers:

- The designation should be made in writing to the Home (the decision is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their SDM and not the home)
 - The written request is to be submitted to the Director of Care or Associate Director of Care and a meeting will be set prior to the first visit to go over particulars of the visits:
 - o Paula Lannutti, DOC – plannutti@elliottcommunity.org for **168 Metcalfe St (The Ellington)**
 - o Stefanie Moreira, ADOC – smoreira@elliottcommunity.org for **170 Metcalfe St (Nottingham/Retirement Plus)**
 - **An appointment is booked with the DOC or ADOC**
 - An information package will be sent to all designated caregivers. They are required to complete training and show proof of negative COVID test before the first visit.
 - A visitor is to sign a declaration prior to first visit. This declaration will be kept on file.
 - Proof of negative COVID test results is required every 14 days from date of test, **NOT** from the date the results were received.
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- All Essential Care Givers will be given an identification badge that is to be worn at all times during your visit.
- Following the first visit, visits are not required to be scheduled.
- Participate in screening at the beginning and end of each visit. If failed screening visit will not be accommodated.
- There is no restrictions on visiting hours although for screening purposes we do ask that your visits be between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM whenever possible to minimize the increased workload on our registered staff for screening upon entry and exit.
- If your visit is outside of reception hours, we ask that you arrive and leave before and after meal times to minimize interruptions during the medication passes.
- A mask and shield will be provide by the home and is to be worn at all times.
- Limit visit to resident room. If assisting with feeding your loved one their meal a tray will be provided to the room. Please inform the staff if you require tray service.
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- No food or drinks are permitted for consumption during your visit as you are required to keep your mask and shield on at all times.
- No pet visits allowed.
- Use washrooms in resident suites if needed.

Upon arrival: between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM

- All visitors are to enter at the back entrance door off the parking lot.
 - To gain entrance into the building please ring the doorbell.
 - Upon entering the screening area visitors are required to sanitize hands and don a mask/shield.
 - Visitors may choose to bring their own personal shield but must ensure it is disinfected before entering the home.
 - Visitor's temperature will be taken using our automated thermal guard technology.
 - Visitors must show proof of a COVID-19 negative test result taken within 2 weeks of the visit from date test was taken (this is subject to change).
 - Visitors who are unable to print a hard copy of their test results please bring your Health Card so staff can assist you in accessing your results.
 - Visitor will be actively screened by a screener.
 - Visitors may bring the resident to the gardens through the Anne Flowers Lounge but must practice physical distancing from others and wear mask and shield at all times.
 - Visitors and residents are encouraged to practice physical distancing for the duration of their visit. However, visitors can engage in close physical contact (i.e. less than 2 metres) with a resident to support their emotional well-being provided the visitor hand sanitizes and wears a medical mask and shield at all times.
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- If a visitor does not pass the screening or does not comply with the Homes protocols, the visit will be cancelled.
- All goods or items that are brought in by the visitor can be brought directly to the resident's room.
- Visitors must use the main floor washrooms by Reception and not the resident washrooms.
- The shield is to be returned at the Reception area upon exiting the home.
- Please sanitize your hands upon leaving the Home.

Upon Arrival: Outside of Screening Hours

When visiting outside of Screening hours, the visitor will follow the following steps:

- Call the nurse on your loved ones home area to inform them of your arrival.
- The nurse will meet you at the back entrance door off the parking lot to give you access into the building.
- Visitor will be actively screened by the registered staff.
- Upon entering the screening area sanitize hands and don a mask/shield.
- Visitor's temperature will be taken using our automated thermal guard technology.
- Visitors must show proof of a COVID-19 negative test result taken within 2 weeks of the visit from date test was taken **(this is subject to change)**.
- Visitors who are unable to print a hard copy of their test results please bring your Health Card so staff can assist you in accessing your results.
- Prior to leaving the visitor is required to check in with the registered staff to be actively screened out.

How We Will Respond to Non-Compliance of Visiting Policy

The Elliott Community recognizes that connecting with family is essential to the emotional wellbeing of the residents. As such, the Home will strive to resolve issues or concerns that may arise from non-compliance with the visiting policy by ensuring:

- Efforts have been made to ensure that the visitor understands the policy;
- It is recognized that visits are critical to residents emotional well-being and the impact to the resident in discontinuing visits is considered;
- The consequences of the action reflect the severity of the concern; and
- Where visits have been suspended the Home will identify the training that would be needed before the visitor could return to the Home.

Ending a Visit

The Home will end a visit with a visitor if they fail to adhere to the Homes policy. The Home will consider this when:

- The Home has explained the policy and its requirements to the visitor;
 - The Visitor has the resources to meet the requirements of the policy (i.e. there is enough space, the Home has provided PPE and training on its use); and
 - The Visitor has been given time to adhere to the requirements.
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When a visit is ended due to non-adherence, the Home will document the concern and the actions taken.

Temporarily Prohibiting a Visitor

The Elliott Community will temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to flagrant or repeated non-adherence with this policy. The home will consider this when:

- The concern negatively impacts the health and safety of residents, staff and other visitors in the Home;
- It is demonstrated on more than one occasion; and
- It is a visitor that has previously had visits ended.

Any decision to prohibit a visitor will:

- Be made after all efforts have been exhausted;
- A reasonable length of prohibition has been stipulated;
- The requirements to resume visits have been identified; and
- When a visit is ended due to non-adherence, the Home will document the concern and the actions taken.

When visits are temporarily prohibited, the Home will document the concern and the actions taken.

References:

COVID-19 Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007
Ministry of Long-Term Care; Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care, September 2, 2020
Public Health Memo – Dr. Nicola Mercer, October 15, 2020
COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and O.
