

<b>Section Number: Pandemics</b>	<b>Policy Number: IC - 7 - 013</b>
<b>Category: Visitors</b>	<b>Implementation Date: November 23, 2020</b>
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### **VISITOR POLICY – RETIREMENT**

#### **Purpose**

This policy supports visitors 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 LTC/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, absences, and activities must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks of infection are mitigated.
- **Mental Health and Emotional Well-being:** Allowing visitors, absences, and activities is intended to support the overall physical, 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 and participate in activities consistent with their preferences and within restrictions that safeguard residents, staff and visitors.
- **Flexibility:** The physical characteristics/infrastructure of the home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in an outbreak or in an area of widespread community transmission, and the current status of the home with respect to infection prevention and control (IPAC) including personal protective equipment (PPE) are all variables to consider when administering home-specific policies for visiting, absences, and activities.
- **Autonomy:** Residents have the right to choose their visitors. Residents also have the right to designate their caregivers. If a resident is unable to do so, substitute decision-maker(s) may designate caregivers.
- **Visitor Responsibility:** Visitors have a crucial role to play in reducing risk of infection for the safety of residents and staff by adhering to requirements related to screening, IPAC, PPE, and any precautions described in this policy or the visitor policy of the home.
- **Immunization:** Allowances for absences and activities reflect both the high rates of COVID-19 immunization as well as the protective effect that immunizations have had on the number of COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in retirement homes. This update reflects the evidence available so far across Canada and abroad and requirements are subject to change as the knowledge of COVID-19 vaccines evolves.

**As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, direction on visits will be adjusted as necessary, keeping the safety and well-being of residents and staff at the forefront.**

### Definitions of Visitors

Visitor	Definition
Essential Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Person performing essential support services (food delivery, inspectors, funeral directors, general contractors or health care services (lab, x-ray) or a person visiting a very ill or end of life resident.</li> <li>- A “Rapid Antigen Test” is required upon entry and must wait for results before leaving the clinic area. Visitors visiting a very ill or end of life resident can proceed to the home area directly following their test.</li> <li>- If entering more than once on the same day another test is not required. A passport can be obtained from the testing clinicians to be shown to the screener upon next visit.</li> <li>- Government inspectors, however they are not subject to this policy</li> <li>- Visiting in a designated area (resident room for end of life) or for a specific purpose (area of home that is in need of repair)</li> <li>- 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</li> </ul>
Essential Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A type of essential visitor.</li> <li>- 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)</li> <li>- A caregiver could be a family member, a paid caregiver or companion or a translator</li> <li>- Must be 18 years of age or older</li> <li>- A maximum of <b>2</b> caregivers may be designated per resident; only <b>1</b> caregiver can visit at any given time.</li> <li>- Visits do not need to be scheduled and there are no restrictions on length of visit</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- A process for documenting caregiver designation is in place by the Home (see process below).</li> <li>- The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and not the home.</li> <li>- The Resident or 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. (Changing a caregiver must be discussed with the Director of Care or designate).</li> <li>- A caregiver may not visit any other resident</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visits must be in a designated area of the Home, physical distanced from others (resident room or courtyard). In RET, if assisting with a meal, a tray will be delivered to the resident's room</li> </ul>
Support Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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:</li> <li>- Regulated health care professionals under the <i>Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991</i> (e.g., physicians, nurses); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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);</li> <li>- Authorized third parties who accommodate the needs of a resident with a disability;</li> <li>- Health and safety workers, including IPAC specialists;</li> <li>- Maintenance workers;</li> <li>- Private housekeepers;</li> <li>- Inspectors; and</li> <li>- Food delivery.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Visitor is allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in outbreak.</li> </ul>
General Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is NOT an essential visitor</li> <li>- <b><i>Individuals visiting to provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the resident and/or SDM</i></b></li> <li>- <b><i>Individuals visiting for social reasons.</i></b></li> <li>- <b><i>As a prospective resident taking a tour of the home</i></b></li> <li>- General Visitors may visit a resident <b>outdoors in our designated area</b>. The number of individuals in a group must not exceed provincial limits for outdoor gatherings.</li> <li>- General Visitors may visit a resident <b>in their suite, only</b> if the resident is unable to have the visit in a designated area <b>outside</b> (e.g., due to mobility issues/bedridden). Visits in suites must be limited to no more than 3-5 individuals (including the resident(s)) <b>if the room allows for physical distancing among individuals from different households in the suite</b>. (Group limits do not include children 2 years or under)</li> <li>- Booking an <b>indoor</b> visit must be approved, and booked in advance, by emailing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paula Lannutti at <a href="mailto:plannutti@elliottcommunity.org">plannutti@elliottcommunity.org</a> or</li> <li>- Stefanie Moreira at <a href="mailto:smoreira@elliottcommunity.org">smoreira@elliottcommunity.org</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Outdoor</b> visits must be scheduled in advance using The Elliott online booking site. Only allowed to visit during hours set out within the online booking site.</li> <li>- Each visit can be 60 minutes long.</li> <li>- A maximum of 5 visitors at one time (following provincial guidelines) (children under the age of 2 are</li> </ul>

	<p>not counted as a visitor).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individuals are not allowed to visit when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in confirmed and/or suspect outbreak</li> <li>- General Visitors must pass screening requirements and be reminded to follow applicable public health measures while visiting the home. <b>Outdoor visits do not</b> require a Rapid Antigen Test but <b>indoor visits do</b> require each visitor to have a Rapid Antigen Test and wait for the results.</li> <li>- General Visitors may not visit a resident who is self-isolation and on Droplet and Contact</li> </ul>
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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 7:30 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	Rapid Antigen Test required on entry.	Training on homes visitor policy, donning and doffing PPE, handwashing.	Attestation that visitor has read the Homes' visiting policy prior to first visit and monthly thereafter.
Essential Caregiver	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support Worker	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Contractors / Lab and X-ray / other contracted workers that must enter the home to delivery their service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (brochure)
General Visitor – Outdoors	Yes, no temperature check.	No	Yes	Yes (brochure)
General Visitor - Indoors	Yes	Yes	Yes (brochure)	Yes (brochure)

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

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

<b>Essential Caregivers / Essential Visitor (visit during end of life)</b>	Must wear a surgical mask and shield provided by the Home.  Gloves, gown, mask and shield is required when visiting a resident in isolation.  Essential care givers with a green badge (indicating immunization partial or fully) can remove their shield when outdoors.
<b>Support Workers / Contractors</b>	Must wear a surgical mask and shield (provided by the home) at all times during the visit.  Gloves, gown, mask and shield is required when visiting a resident in isolation or when directed.
<b>General Visitor</b>	Must wear a surgical mask (provided by the Home) at all times during the visit.  A shield is not required for an outdoor visit as physical distancing (6 feet) must be maintained throughout the visit, but a shield is required for all indoor visits.

### Process for Designated Essential 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. In their absence contact the ADOC:

- Paula Lannutti, DOC – [plannutti@elliottcommunity.org](mailto:plannutti@elliottcommunity.org)
- Stefanie Moreira, ADOC – [smoreira@elliottcommunity.org](mailto:smoreira@elliottcommunity.org)

An appointment is booked with the DOC or designate.

An information package will be sent to all designated caregivers.

A visitor is to sign a declaration. This declaration will be kept on file.

All Essential Caregivers will be given an identification badge that is to be worn and visible at all times during the visit.

If unvaccinated, your badge will be orange.

If partially or fully vaccinated your badge will be green.

Following the first visit, visits are not required to be scheduled.

## **Education Requirements for Essential Caregivers:**

- 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.
- Visiting policies are on the website – [www.elliottcommunity.org](http://www.elliottcommunity.org)

## **Training will include the following resources:**

- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>
- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>
- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en>

## **Upon arrival between the Hours of 7:30 AM and 7:00 PM (with the exception of general visitors):**

- All visitors are to enter at the back entrance door off the parking lot.
- To gain entrance into the building please ring the doorbell.
- A mask must be worn upon entry into the Home.
- Upon entering the screening area, please sanitize your hands.
- Remove your mask and apply a medical mask and shield.
- Visitors are required to wear a shield that is supplied by The Elliott. Personal shield are not allowed at this time as they need to be “Health Canada” approved.
- Visitor’s temperature will be taken using our automated thermal guard technology. Lift shield prior to having temperature taken. DO NOT remove your mask.
- Visitor will be actively screened by a screener.
- Following active screening, proceed to the “Rapid Antigen Testing Clinic” for a rapid test.
- You are to remain outside the clinic in the waiting area until you receive your test results wearing your mask and shield at all times.
- Visits are limited to the resident room and the back courtyard, while maintaining physical distancing from other residents and visitors.
- If assisting with feeding your loved one, a tray will be provided to the room. Please inform the staff if you require tray service.
- Visitors may enter the court yard through the Anne Flowers Lounge but must practice physical distancing from others and wear mask and shield at all times.
- For essential caregivers who have a green badge are able to remove their shield when outdoors.

- 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.
- If a visitor does not pass the screening or does not comply with the Homes protocols, the visit will be cancelled.
- A caregiver cannot visit if within the last 14 days they have visited another individual who is self-isolating or symptomatic and/or visited another home that was in outbreak and they were in the area of the home affected by an outbreak.
- All goods or items that are brought in by the visitor can be brought directly to the resident's room.
- Visitors in Retirement can use the resident washrooms.
- 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.
- The shield is to be returned at the screening 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 working on your loved ones home area to inform them of your arrival.
- A mask must be worn upon entry to the home.
- The nurse will meet you at the back entrance door off the parking lot to give you access into the building.
- Upon entering the screening area sanitize your hands.
- Remove your mask and apply a medical mask and shield.
- Visitors are required to wear a shield that is supplied by The Elliott. Personal shield are not allowed at this time as they need to be "Health Canada" approved.
- Visitor's temperature will be taken using our automated thermal guard technology. Lift shield prior to having temperature taken. DO NOT remove your mask.
- Visitors must have a "Rapid Antigen Test" conducted upon entry and wait 15 minutes for results. This does not pertain to end of life visits.
- Prior to leaving the home, the visitor is required to check in with the registered staff to be actively screened out.

### **Process for General Visitors:**

- General visits must be scheduled online in advance using The Elliott website under the green tab, top left "BOOK A FAMILY VISIT". Hours are 9:30 - 11:30 am and 1:30 – 4:30 pm Mondays through Sundays.
- Please read our Home's "Visitor Policy" posted online when you book your appointment time. If you require assistance with booking an appointment, please feel free to contact Reception @ ext. 2221.

- A maximum of 5 general visitors per resident (following the provincial guidelines) (children under the age of 2 are not counted as a visitor) may visit **outdoors** at a time.
- General visitors who visit **outdoors** do not require a rapid antigen test.
- General visitors who visit indoors must have a rapid antigen test and wait 15 mins for the results.
- Visitors must be actively screened for symptoms and exposure history for COVID-19 and wear a medical mask.
- Visits will be held in the covered garage, to the left of our main Reception entrance on 170 Metcalfe Street. Please park on Metcalfe Street.
- Upon arrival enter the parking garage and seat yourself. Visitors will be screened by the porter who will be escorting your loved one for the visit.
- Please maintain physical distancing of 2 metres or 6 feet at all times.
- Each visit is max 60 minutes.
- In order to accommodate all residents, we ask that each resident receive only 1 visit per week.
- We do not have washroom facilities outside and are not able to have general visitors into the home – please keep this in mind when planning your visit.
- Respecting the variations in our weather patterns, understand that staff will not bring residents out if the weather is not suitable, visits can be cancelled.

### **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.

When a visit is ended due to non-adherence, the Home will document the concern and the actions taken.