

Section Number: Nursing Unit Management	Policy Number: F-015
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VISITOR POLICY – LONG-TERM CARE and RETIREMENT

Purpose

- This policy supports visitors while adhering to the current directives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care, Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) and Public Health Ontario Guidelines.
- Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to viruses in determining whether visiting a LTC/Retirement home is appropriate.
- All visitors are required to monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 and any other respiratory or enteric symptoms and asked NOT to visit if symptoms develop

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 long-term care 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.

Definitions of Visitors

Visitor	Definition
Essential Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - Government inspectors, however they are not subject to this policy
Essential Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident or the resident's substitute decision-maker with authority to give that designation. - 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 friend, a person of importance to the resident, a paid caregiver or companion or a translator

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A caregiver must be 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 <i>Health Protection and Promotion Act</i>. - 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 - 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 regarding the number of visitors but essential visitors will continue to have access to the home.
Support Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor - Performing essential services in the Home or for a resident in the home. (i.e. physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) - Visitor is allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in outbreak.
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. - Individuals are not allowed to visit when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in confirmed and/or suspect outbreak

Essential Visitor

- Essential Visitors returning from travel outside Canada do not require a pre-entry test. All essential visitors, regardless of vaccination status are required to be tested upon arrival for their first visit and wait for their results.
- Those who are up to date with the recommended vaccine are required to be tested twice a week, must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a shield.
- If they are providing an essential service and have been to another home in outbreak they must wear surgical mask **and** shield, be tested upon entry, **and** wait for their results.
- Those who have only **2 vaccines** are required to be tested at each visit, wear a surgical mask and a shield, and wait for their test results.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days as long as you are symptom free.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 90 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.

Essential Caregivers (ECGs)

- ECGs must be up to date with their vaccines (2 vaccines + booster + 14 days past third vaccine) **and** must show proof of vaccination.
- They require an antigen test at least two times per week, on separate days, minimum 48 hours apart and they must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a shield.
- Masks are not required when visiting in the back courtyard or patio.
- If returning from travel outside Canada they do not require a pre-entry test but are required to be tested upon arrival for their first visit and wait for their results.

- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** (close contact with an individual who have tested **Positive** for COVID 19, can visit and are required to wear a KN95 mask (provided by the home) and a shield for 10 days post exposure.
- During the 10 days from a **high-risk contact**, if at any time symptoms develop refrain from visiting until symptoms subside.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days as long as you are symptom free.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 90 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- A process for documenting caregiver designation is in place by the Home (see process below).
- 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.
- 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).
- While visiting with the resident, wearing a mask in the residents room is recommended but no longer required. Visitors are asked to re-apply their mask when a staff or another resident enters the room.
- Visitors can have a snack or meal with the resident. Visitors are asked to re-apply their mask when a staff member or another resident enters the room.

General Visitor (GV's)

- All general visitors (GVs), including children under the age of 5, can visit the home. Visitors (including caregivers), with the exception of children under the age of 5, need to follow our vaccination policy.
- Those who have **2 vaccines plus a booster** are required to be tested twice a week and must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a shield.
- Those who have only **2 vaccines** are required to be tested at each visit, wear a mask and a shield, and wait for their test results.
- Masks are not required when visiting in the back courtyard or patio.
- All GV's 5 years and older must provide proof of vaccination.
- Masks are required for children; children under 2 years of age are NOT required to wear masks.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days as long as you are symptom free.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 90 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- While visiting with the resident, wearing a mask in the residents room is recommended but no longer required. Visitors are asked to re-apply their mask when a staff or another resident enters the room.
- Visitors can have a snack or meal with the resident. Visitors are asked to re-apply their mask when a staff member or another resident enters the room.

Fob Access

- ECGs and GV's who have a fob can now access the screening entrance between 9:30 am – 7:30 pm.
- Visitors visiting outside of these hours must follow the process below.

Support Worker

- It is strongly encouraged that all support workers be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccine meaning they must have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.
- Those who have **2 vaccines plus a booster** are required to be tested twice a week, must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a shield.
- Those who have only **2 vaccines** are required to be tested at each visit, wear an N95 or KN95 mask that has been provided by their company and a shield, and wait for their test results.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days as long as you are symptom free.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 90 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- If they are providing an essential service (i.e. X-Ray tech, oxygen company) and have been to another home in outbreak they must wear a surgical mask **and** shield, be tested upon entry, **and** wait for their results.

Contractors (include moving companies)

- It is recommended that all contractors be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccine meaning they must have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible, **and** must show proof of having their booster.
- Contractors with **2 vaccines plus a booster** are required to be tested twice a week, and must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a shield.
- Those who have only **2 vaccines** are required to be tested at each visit, wear a mask and a shield, and wait for their test results.
- Contractors who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Contractors who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days as long as you are symptom free.
- Contractors returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 90 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.

Visitor Logs

Visitor screening logs will be maintained for a minimum of 30 days and will include the following information:

- the name and contact information of the visitor
- the date and time of the visit
- the name of the resident visited

Distribution of the Visitor Policy

- a copy of the visitor policy will be given upon admission to the home within the admission package
- updated versions of the policy will be distributed to resident and family council at the next scheduled meeting after the revisions have taken place

Upon arrival between the Hours of 9:30 AM and 7:00 PM

- ✚ Practice hand hygiene upon entering the building, before exiting and frequently throughout the visit.
- ✚ Active screening is required for all individuals entering the facility.
- ✚ Temperature is recorded and they must be actively screened in by the screener at the desk.
- ✚ In the event of Thermal Guard failure, temperature will be recorded using a handheld thermometer.
- ✚ Screener must ask each individual all screening questions.

- ✚ They must pass all screening questions. If they do not, they are denied entry.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

- Visitors are required to wear PPE as directed by the “COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario” and The Elliott Community Policy.
- Medical masks are to be worn in the appropriate manner, covering nose, mouth and chin while in common areas (i.e. home area lounges, hallways, dining rooms, elevators).
- Medical masks can be removed in the residents rooms. If a staff member or another resident enters the room, medical masks must be re-applied.

Process to become an Essential Caregiver:

ECGs must be up to date with their vaccines (i.e. 2 vaccines + booster +14 days past booster) **and** must show proof of vaccination.

A verbal or written request (email) for designation to become an ECG should be made to the Director of Care or Associate Director of Care in the Home (the decision is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their SDM and not the Home).

- Heather Van Cauwenberghe, DOC – hvancauwenberghe@elliottcommunity.org
- Chris Pagnan, ADOC – cpagnan@elliottcommunity.org
- Paula Lannutti, DOC Retirement – plannutti@elliottcommunity.org
- Stefanie Moreira, ADOC Retirement – smoreira@elliottcommunity.org

The DOC or designate will connect with the individual to discuss the process and to provide a copy of the visitor policy that includes links to mandatory training requirements and a self-declaration. The self-declaration will be kept on file at the home.

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

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

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 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 (if required).
- Visitors who are required to wear a shield will be supplied with one. The requirement for wearing a face shield will be dependent on the Directives as well as the visitors vaccination status
- Personal face shields are not permitted 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 the nurse. The visitor will be required to provide their name, their contact information and who they are visiting. The time and date of their visit will also be captured.
- Following active screening, a Rapid Antigen Test may be required. This will be dependent on when the visitor last had a Rapid Antigen Test completed and their vaccine status.
- Visitors who have not had their third vaccine dose, 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.

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.

Situation Specific Rules:

- All types of visitors are required to show proof of vaccination.
- Badges that identify ECG’s and GV’s as well as vaccination status are to be clearly visible to staff at all times throughout the visit.
- Pets are allowed but you must adhere to the criteria outlined in our pet policy. Up to date vaccinations, on a leash at all times, pet to be sitting on a lap blanket if resident is holding them, pets are not allowed if the home is in outbreak.
- Consumption of food or beverages at any time during your visit is permitted in the residents room. Food or beverages can be brought in from outside the home for consumption by the resident only.
- Use the washroom before visiting. If necessary, use the designated visitor washroom on the main floor or if visiting a retirement resident, you may use the washroom in resident suite if needed.
- Maintain physical distance of two metres (six feet) between yourself and residents who you are not visiting as well as staff.

Positive Rapid Tests - ECGs, GVs, Volunteers, and Externals:

- After receiving a positive first test, must be instructed to wait 15 minutes for the result of their 2nd test.
- If the 2nd test is positive, the individual must leave the premises, and the DOC of the resident they were visiting must be notified.
- The individual will be required to book an appointment for a PCR test as soon as possible.
- The individual must also be instructed to isolate and inform that they cannot enter the home for 10 days.

References:

COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario, October 6, 2022



Self-Declaration

Expectations for Visiting the Elliott Community as an Essential Care Giver

I, _____, hereby declare that (please check all boxes):

- ✓ I have read The Elliott Community's "Visitor Policy" and I agree to adhere to the requirements within it.
- ✓ I will review the policy monthly.
- ✓ I have completed the required training prior to my first visit.

I understand that failure to adhere to the "Visitor Policy" may result in having my visit ended and may affect my ability to visit in the future.

Name: _____

Contact Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date of Declaration: _____