



<b>POLICY NO.</b>  1-CO-10	<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>  COVID - 19 PANDEMIC - LTC Visiting Policy
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**Disclaimer:** Any PRINTED version of this document is only accurate up to the date of printing. Always refer to the Policies, Procedures and Processes on the Shared drive for the most current versions of the documents in effect.

### 1.0 PURPOSE:

To have in place directions for visitors within the LTC facility during non-outbreak and outbreak of a communicable disease or an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, such as an epidemic or pandemic.

### 2.0 POLICY:

St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre Brantford, (SJLCB) will follow the directives set out by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care, and public health regarding visitors to the facility during non-outbreak and outbreak status.

SJLCB recognizes the importance of visitors (family and friends) to the residents. Safety of residents, staff and visitors must be maintained during this social aspect.

The following principles apply with allowing visitors into the facility:

- ❖ **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 home, its workforce/human resources availability, whether the home is in an outbreak and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ❖ **equality** – residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents and/or their substitute decision-makers, as applicable, have the authority to designate caregivers

All persons entering the LTC facility except for children under the age of 5 will be required to have at least 2 doses of the COVID vaccine or completion of the recommended series of vaccine per the Manufacturer's directions. It is encouraged that all persons be up to date with their vaccination status to assist with a safe and secure home for the residents.

Any visitor to the facility will have the following documented:

- their name and contact information
- the date and time of the visit
- the name of the resident visited
- be screened, show proof of vaccination (unless for palliative visit), antigen testing as required

For the purposes of this policy the following will apply regarding definition of visitors.

**Essential visitors** include:

- a care giver
- a support worker who visits the LTC facility to provide essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health services (e.g., phlebotomy))
- a person visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons
- a government inspector with statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties

Essential visitors are permitted to visit a resident who:

- Is in isolation on Droplet and Contact Precautions.
- Resides in an outbreak area of the home.

**General visitors** include all other types of visitors who do not meet the definition of an essential visitor as defined above, including social visitors.

General visitors must have a minimum of 2 vaccine doses to enter the facility – if not only outdoor visits are permitted.

General visitors are **not permitted** to visit a resident who:

- Is in isolation on Droplet and Contact Precautions.
- Resides in an outbreak area of the home.

## **Procedure for an essential caregiver**

### **Application**

- A resident is permitted four (4) essential caregivers as listed in their file – resident to determine who they want listed as a caregiver if able to do so
- Application must be made by the proposed caregiver to a member of the facilities leadership team where protocols will be reviewed
- Must be 16 years of age
- Once approved the caregiver form will be taken to the front reception screening area so screeners have a record of approved caregivers
- Caregiver is to remain as the dedicated caregiver for the resident to limit outside exposure from people to the resident. If a caregiver needs to be replaced for any reason, they are to notify a member of the leadership team to seek approval for a “replacement” caregiver – an example would be if a caregiver is having surgery and unable to visit for an extended period of time, or if the caregiver was moving out of the area. If the caregiver becomes deceased, application can be made for another caregiver.

### **Screening**

- Caregiver/visitor will enter the LTC facility via the main reception entrance
- Caregiver/visitor will be asked the COVID-19 screening questions – if they pass the care giver/visitor will be given a surgical face mask
- Caregiver/visitor will be directed to the antigen testing clinic to have a rapid antigen test done – caregiver will need to wait for the 15 minutes while the test is being performed – they will be directed to sit in the waiting area until the test is completed
- Caregiver/visitor will be given a tracking card so that testing can be done as per the directive
- If negative, care giver/visitor can proceed to see the resident
- **If positive**, the care giver/visitor will be informed that the test result was positive, and they will be unable to visit – they will be instructed to have a PCR test at an assessment centre and will need to be insolation until results are received – remind the care giver that the rapid test is not a diagnostic test – only a screening tool but isolation should be initiated to help reduce possible transmission of Covid-19
- IPAC campus manager is to be notified of positive rapid test so follow up can be done with care giver/visitor for PCR test results
- Care giver/visitors must wear a medical mask when indoors.

## **Visiting**

### **Essential Caregivers**

- Essential care givers can visit at any time without making any prior arrangements –can have up to 4 (four) essential care givers listed. Residents are to only have 4 visitors (of any type) at a time unless in outbreak and then only 1 essential care giver may visit at a time.
- It continues to be important that residents and visitors continue to adhere to public health measures in the home, including good hand hygiene, appropriate masking, and social distancing.
- precautionary PPE as requested by the facility or required PPE if resident/unit/facility is in outbreak.

### **General visitors**

- ❖ General visitors are permitted indoors if double vaccinated.
- ❖ Screening and surveillance testing is required for general visitors – General visitors must undergo active screening upon arrival at the home.

### **PPE requirements**

- All persons entering the LTC facility shall wear a surgical face mask which will be provided by the facility.
- Screening will be conducted – if a pass status is given, the person shall perform hand hygiene, don a surgical mask, and then proceed to testing.
- If the resident is in isolation the required PPE will be given to the person at the screening desk to ensure proper precautions are in place prior to visit – PPE will be removed upon exiting the resident’s room to avoid cross contamination
- Once a pass is given from testing, the visitor may proceed with their visit with the resident
- Wearing of face shields may be requested at times to enhance safety precautions if a unit is under increased monitoring
- For outdoor visits masking is not required but highly recommended and encouraged where tolerated, as an added layer of protection when in close proximity to others.
- Education will be provided on hand hygiene – hand wash and hand rub – see links in references
- Education will be provided on how to put on PPE and how to remove PPE – see links in references

**Any changes regarding essential care giver visitation or general visitation will be communicated during an outbreak**

**End-of-Life visits**

SJLCB will allow end-of-life visits for family members who are not vaccinated. These visits will be limited to the resident’s end of life and imminent passing.

Non-vaccinated visitors will be required to complete screening, have a rapid antigen test – receive negative results, and wear full PPE for the entire duration of the visit. If the test result is positive then the Manager/Manager On Call is contacted as special visitation procedures need to be implemented (secure private visit – person is escorted to and from the room, cleaning of elevator pre/post usage, cleaning of resident environment)

**Resources**

Ministry of Health Guidance Document

Ministry of Long-Term Care Directive #3 – dated April 25, 2022

Advantage Ontario -Executive report dated April 25, 2022

**Education Materials**

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handwash>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handrub>

<b>APPROVED:</b> June 16, 2021	<b>REV./REVIEWED:</b> August 4, 2022	<b>AUTHORIZED BY:</b> Operational Leadership Team
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