



# Visitor Policy

RC-02-01-06

LAST UPDATED: December 2023

## APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1 – Caregiver Designation: Parental/Guardian Approval (request if needed)
  - Appendix 2 – Visitor Guidelines (Ontario)
  - Appendix 3 – IPAC Visitor Education Package (request if needed)
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## RELATED AND SUPPLEMENTAL POLICIES:

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- 02.11, Visitor Policy, Occupational Health and Safety
  - RC-02-01-01, Zero Tolerance of Resident Abuse and Neglect Program, Resident Care Manual
  - RC-02-01-04, Commitment to Resident-Centred Care and Resident Rights
  - RC-02-01-05, Supervised Visitation, Resident Care Manual
  - RV-03-01-04, Pets In the Home, Recreation and Volunteer Services Manual
  - IC-04-01-03, Managing An Outbreak, Infection Prevention and Control Manual
  - IC-05-01-07, Acute Respiratory Illness, Infection Prevention and Control Manual
  - IC-05-01-13, Coronavirus (COVID-19), Infection Prevention and Control Manual

## POLICY

Homes will ensure visitors have access to residents that respects resident rights. Visit access will be subject to applicable legislation, imposed limitations due to any emergency situation, or other identified health and safety risks.

Homes will follow province-specific directives and implement risk mitigation strategies to ensure a safe and secure home which includes the management of visitors. Risk mitigation strategies are intended to address and balance the following:

- The protection and safety of residents, visitors and staff;
- The well-being of residents when allowing visitations from families/friends to reduce any potential negative impacts related to social isolation; and
- Equitable access whereby all individuals seeking to visit a resident will be given, where possible, equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and with reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

**Note:** Any provincial or jurisdictional directives or resources, including Public Health directives, that exceed the requirements set out in this manual shall supersede the respective content of this manual.

# Visitor Policy

## BACKGROUND

The Visitor Policy is meant to protect the health and safety of residents, staff and visitors, while supporting residents in receiving the support they need and maintaining their physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing and their quality of life.

## PROCEDURES

ADMINISTRATOR  
/ DESIGNATE

1. Follow any provincial and/or jurisdictional specific directives and guidelines related to managing visitations.
2. Ensure staff are aware of and follow any provincial and/or jurisdictional directives and guidelines as well as any policies on the management of visits, such as Supervised Visitation, Outbreak Management, etc.
3. Consider the following when providing visitor access:
  - a. Areas where visits can be held, including indoor and outdoor areas;
  - b. Assigning an escort for visitors, when indicated;
  - c. Directional signage to the entrance(s) and exits of the outdoor spaces, and indoor visit areas, as applicable;
  - d. Access to chairs, where required;
  - e. Access to shade (umbrellas) in the outdoor areas, as required; and
  - f. Any required cleaning/disinfecting.
4. Ensure visits are documented using the process and Resident Visitor Sign-In Form identified in the Occupational Health and Safety Manual.
5. Allow caregivers to visit residents in outbreak and non-break situations following any provincially mandated restrictions, such as limiting number of visitors allowed at a time, visiting room/area, etc. In outbreak situations, refer to policy, *Managing an Outbreak* in the Infection Prevention and Control Manual.
6. Allow unrestricted access for visits to a resident who is at end-of-life or for other extraneous circumstances, and as determined by provincial directives.
7. Ensure visitors adhere to infection, prevention and control (IPAC) protocols, including required PPE and hand hygiene.
8. Follow province-specific directives on the provision and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for visitors.
9. Ensure processes are in place to screen (active and/or passive) visitors when provincially directed to do so.

# Visitor Policy

## ONTARIO

1. Establish and implement a home specific written visitor policy which includes:
  - a) the process for visitor access during non-outbreak and during an outbreak of a communicable disease or an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic.
2. Ensure that all visitors have access to the home's visitor policy.  
**Note:** The QR Code Access Poster may be displayed as an option to provide visitors virtual access to the IPAC Visitor Education Package.
3. Ensure a home specific process is in place for documenting and keeping a written record of:
  - a) the designation of a caregiver and
  - b) the approval from a parent or legal guardian to permit persons under 16 years of age to be designated as a caregiver if applicable. Refer to form, Caregiver Designation: Parental/Guardian Approval, Appendix 1.
4. Complies with all applicable laws including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or Medical Officer of Health appointed under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.
5. Ensure that essential visitors continue to have access to the long-term care home during an outbreak of a communicable disease, an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic or a pandemic subject to any applicable laws.
6. Ensure that a copy of the current version of the visitor policy is provided to the Residents Council and Family Council.

# Visitor Policy

## PROCEDURES

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- STAFF
1. Provide visitors and residents the IPAC Visitor Education Package, as required. Refer to *IPAC Visitor Education package, Appendix 3*.

### ONTARIO

1. Provide visitors the Visitor Guidelines, as required. Refer to *Visitor Guidelines (Ontario), Appendix 2*.



- Homes will need to accommodate for visitors who are unable to put on or remove PPE without assistance from another person.
- Homes have the discretion to end a visit or prohibit a visitor (including caregivers) from visiting in response to repeated and flagrant non-compliance with Extencicare's policies and/or provincial guidelines and where a visitor's behaviour may impact the home's ability to ensure a safe and secure home.



### ESSENTIAL VISITOR

In Ontario, Essential Visitor means:

- a. a caregiver,
- b. a support worker who visits a home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to residents,
- c. a person visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, hospice services or end-of-life care, or
- d. a government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties.

### CAREGIVER

In Ontario, Caregiver means an individual who,

- a. is a family member or friend of a resident or a person of importance to a resident,
- b. 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,

## Visitor Policy

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- c. 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,
- d. is designated by the resident or the resident's substitute decision-maker with authority to give that designation, if any, and
- e. 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.

### **GENERAL VISITOR**

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the home or a particular resident or group of residents. General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home. Homes should prioritize the mental and emotional well-being of residents and strive to be as accommodating as possible when scheduling visits with general visitors.

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# Visitor Guidelines (Ontario)

## APPENDIX 2

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### ALL VISITORS

- Visitors are asked to reflect upon the importance of visits. Remember:
  - a. Visits are critical to supporting a resident’s care needs and emotional well-being; and
  - b. It is the visitor’s responsibility to comply with home’s policies that provide measures that protect the health and safety of residents, staff and other visitors.
- Follow infection prevention and control practices such as hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements, and/or physical distancing when indicated (i.e., mask, gown, gloves, etc.).
- Visitors are encouraged to read the Visitor policy and ask questions if any clarity is required.

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### SCREENING

- Visitors must self-screen to not be experiencing any of the typical and/or atypical symptoms before visiting the home.

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### MONITORING VISITS

- Where a home may need to monitor visits, the monitoring will 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.

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### VISITING A PALLIATIVE OR CRITICALLY ILL RESIDENT

- Visitors will have unrestricted access to a resident who is at end-of-life or for other extraneous circumstances, unless otherwise determined by provincial directives (i.e., limiting the number of visitors during a pandemic situation).

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### DESIGNATED CAREGIVER

- Residents and/or their substitute decision-maker may designate individuals to help meet the resident’s care needs:

In Ontario, “Caregiver” means an individual who,

  - a. is a family member or friend of a resident or a person of importance to a resident,
  - b. 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,

## Visitor Guidelines (Ontario)

- c. 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,
  - d. is designated by the resident or the resident's substitute decision-maker with authority to give that designation, if any, and
  - e. 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**. *Speak to a staff for a Caregiver Designation: Parental/Guardian Approval form.*
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- If feeling unwell, visitors should reschedule their visit.
- Accommodation will be provided for visitors who are unable to put on or remove any required PPE without assistance from another person.