

Victoria Village COVID-19 Policy

COVID-19 Policy #001: Visiting Policy

Date Created: September 9, 2020

Date Revised: April 27th, 2022

POLICY:

Victoria Village is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all residents and staff during COVID-19. An important part of this approach is having a visitor policy that ensures the safety of residents and staff, and also recognizes the needs of residents and families to have equitable access to each other in a meaningful way.

The aim of managing visitors is to balance the need to mitigate risks to residents, staff and visitors with the mental, physical and spiritual needs of residents for their quality of life.

Victoria Village Manor follows all guidelines as set out by the Covid-19 Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act 2021.

PRINCIPLES:

Safety: Meets Health and Safety requirements of residents, staff and visitors and ensures risks are mitigated.

Emotional Well-being: Supports the emotional well-being of the residents and their families and friends by reducing potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

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

Flexibility: the physical infrastructure characteristics of the home, its staffing availability and the current status of the home with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) levels for staff and residents.

Equality – Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, residents or their substitute decision makers, as applicable, have the authority to designate caregivers.

REQUIREMENTS:

The home must NOT currently be in outbreak

The home has developed procedures for visits and a process for communicating these procedures with residents, families, visitors and staff.

The home will share an information package with visitors on operational procedures, safety, PPE education and ensuring visitors comply.

The home will create and maintain a list of visitors. The list will be available for relevant, appropriate staff members to access.

DEFINITIONS

Essential visitors

Include a person performing essential support services (e.g., food delivery, inspector, maintenance, or health services (e.g., phlebotomy) or a person visiting a very ill or palliative resident. Essential visitors also include “essential caregivers” as defined by MLTC and MSAA/RHRA policies, as appropriate.

Essential Caregivers

Is a type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision maker and is 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).

*There are a maximum of 4 caregivers designated per resident

*The designation should be made in writing to the home

*Examples of caregivers include family members who provide meaningful connection, a privately hired caregiver, paid companions, and translators

General Visitors

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting:

- a) To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision maker; and /or
- b) For social reasons (e.g., family members or friends) that the resident or their substitute decision – maker assess as different from direct care, including care related to cognitive stimulation, meaningful connection, and relational continuity.

Essential Visitors / General Visitors

Must show proof of Covid-19 vaccinations to front desk screener (minimum 2 doses)

Must perform hand hygiene and don a well fitted surgical mask (provided by the home) prior to entry.

You must continue to wear the well-fitted surgical mask at all times. NO CONSUMING OF FOOD OR DRINK!

All visitors are to be actively screened upon arrival and **must receive a negative Rapid Antigen Test for each visit before going to the floor.**

Children aged 3-5 years are able to enter the long-term care home with proof a negative Rapid Antigen Test. Children 2 years or younger can accompany visitors upstairs without a test.

Visiting/Clinic times are: Monday – Friday **8am – 7pm** – Saturday & Sunday **8-5pm**

3 visitors permitted at a time per resident.

Essential visitors/Caregivers are the only type of visitors allowed when there is an outbreak in a home or area of a home or when a resident has failed screening, is symptomatic or on isolation.

Medical exemptions: There are very few medical reasons why a person cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19. The only valid reasons for medical exemption are:

- A severe reaction or anaphylaxis to a component of a COVID-19 vaccine, or following a COVID-19 vaccine and that allergy was documented and evaluation by an allergist/immunologist and the allergist/immunologist has determined that the individual is unable to receive any COVID-19 vaccine;
- myocarditis prior to initiating an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, if between the ages of 12-17;
- myocarditis or pericarditis following a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine; or
- serious adverse event following COVID-19 immunization, if relevant specialist has determined the individual is unable to receive any COVID-19 vaccine; or
- actively receiving monoclonal antibody therapy or convalescent plasma therapy for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19 (time-limited exemption).

Proof must be provided by either a physician or a nurse practitioner (note: A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse who holds an extended certificate of registration under the Nursing Act, 1991). The exemption must clearly indicate the medical reason why they cannot be vaccinated against COVID-19 and the effective time period for that reason.

Palliative Care/End of Life

Visitors must be able to safely maintain physical distancing and follow public health guidelines in the resident's room. We recommend no more than four (4) visitors at a time. A request for more than four visitors will be reviewed on a case to case basis by administration. All visitors will be actively screened and they will be required to have a negative Rapid Antigen Test before going to the floor. If the visit is at a time where the nurses are not available to complete a Rapid Antigen Test, visitors will be required to wear full PPE; mask, gown, and goggles.

Absences

All residents returning from an absence must be actively screened at entry upon their return.

There are four types of absences:

- a. **Medical absences** are absences to seek medical and/or health care. ♣ Outpatient medical visits and a single visit (less than or equal to 24 hours in duration) to the Emergency Department do not require testing or self isolation upon return. ♣ All other medical visits (e.g., admissions/transfers to other health care facilities, multi-night stays in the Emergency Department) require testing and isolation for a period of 72 hours.

b. **Compassionate/palliative absences** include, but are not limited to, absences for the purposes of visiting a dying loved one. LTCHs must assess these situations on a case-by-case basis.

c. **Short term (day) absences** are absences that are less than or equal to 24 hours in duration.

There are two types of short term (day) absences: ♣ **Essential absences** include absences for reasons of groceries, pharmacies, and outdoor physical activity that are permitted when a Stay At-Home Order is in effect as per O. Reg 265/21. All individuals, regardless of their immunization status, can participate in essential absences, unless the resident is in isolation and on Droplet and Contact Precautions or as directed by the local public health unit. ♣ **Social absences** include absences for all reasons not listed under medical, compassionate/palliative, and/or essential absences that do not include an overnight stay.

d. **Temporary absences** include absences involving two or more days and one or more nights for non-medical reasons.

NOTE:

Isolation and testing requirements for residents when returning from absences

The following are the testing and isolation requirements for residents who go on day and overnight absences. Please note that residents are exempt from these requirements if they are within 90 days from a COVID-19 infection that occurred since December 20, 2021, assuming they do not have symptoms.

Day absences (medical, compassionate, or short term):

- Rapid antigen test and PCR test on day 5 following the absence. No isolation is required unless a positive result is received or symptoms begin.
- Residents that go on absences on a daily or frequent basis are to have a laboratory-based PCR test and rapid antigen test, on the same day, two times per week (for example, PCR and rapid test on Tuesday; and PCR and rapid antigen test on Friday).
- If a resident has a known exposure to a case while on their absence, they must be treated as a high-risk contact as per the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units, which would require: Monitoring of resident for 10 days for symptoms, and no isolation requirement if resident up to date on their Covid-19 vaccination. Residents who are not vaccinated or do not have their third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine are to isolate until a negative PCR test on day 5 is received. Resident's will be monitored for symptoms for a period of 10 days.
- Overnight absences (temporary, medical or compassionate): Overnight absences should be treated the same as an admission, and homes should follow the requirements as outlined in the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Guidance Document.

Walks/Park Visits

Please continue to use the back elevator and commercial area down to the pharmacy to the sidewalks and park access for your safety and convenience.

Programs

Off-site excursions (e.g. Shopping, attractions, groups, trips etc.) **Permitted where co-horting possible.**

Activities involving singing and dancing **Permitted where co-horting possible**

Tours **Permitted**

Outdoor/Window Visits

Outdoor/window visits can be arranged during times when recreation staff is able to assist. All visitors are actively screened for symptoms and exposure history for Covid-19 prior to an outdoor visit. Medical masks must be worn for the duration of the visit.

Medical Appointments

- All medical appointments to be booked with/shared with the nurse on the floor
- Nurse to share appointments dates and times with the screener
- Essential Caregivers/General Visitors accompanying the resident to appointments must be actively screened and receive a Rapid Antigen Test prior to going upstairs to unit.

Non-Adherence by Visitors:

- In the event of a visitor breaching the health and safety protocols, Victoria Village will endeavor to work with the visitor to provide re-training and further education to ensure that the resident and visitor can continue to have meaningful visits and or caregiver sessions in a safe manner
- Victoria Village retains the discretion to temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and flagrant non- adherence with the home's visitor policy
- Any visit may be terminated immediately if a visitor is not following the health and safety visitor protocols