



Victoria Village Manor - Visitor Policy

COVID-19 Policy #001: Visiting Policy

Date Created: September 9, 2020

Date Revised: June 30, 2023

POLICY:

Victoria Village is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all residents and staff. 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, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of residents for their quality of life.

Victoria Village Manor accepts guidance from the Ministry of Long Term Care Homes “Fixing Long Term Care Act 2021”, as well as from our Local Public Health Unit.

COVID-19 guidance changes rapidly due to the continually evolving experience of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This document will be updated in accordance with guidance released by the Ministry of Long-Term Care, Ontario Health, and Public Health. When rapid practice changes are necessary to ensure the safety of residents, visitors and staff this document may not reflect the updated guidance.

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.

DEFINITIONS

Essential visitors

Essential visitors 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 in isolation.

As per O. Reg. 246/22 under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, there are four types of essential visitors:

- a caregiver, as defined under section 4 of O. Reg. 246/22
- a support worker who visits a home to provide support to the critical operations of the home or to provide essential services to residents
- a person visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, hospice services or end-of-life care
- a government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties

Recognizing there are caregivers who want to volunteer to support more than one resident, in the event of an outbreak, caregivers may support up to two residents who are COVID-19 positive, provided the home obtains consent from all involved residents (or their substitute decision makers). Caregivers may also support more than one resident in non-outbreak situations, with the same expectation regarding resident consent.

All those who wish to be classified as an Essential Caregiver can contact Jolene Morrow, Director of Resident & Family Services at j.morrow@victoriavillage.ca or 705-728-3456 ext. 752 for further information.

General Visitor

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide nonessential 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.

General visitors will not be permitted if the resident, or resident home area is on isolation precautions.

Masking

Visitors are recommended, but not required to wear a mask within the home.

Visitors must adhere to posted Additional Precaution signage including the use of masks where identified. In addition, if the facility goes into outbreak or heightened activity of seasonal respiratory viruses or COVID-19 is present in the community; VVM may implement changes on direction received from Public health or the ministry of Long-Term Care, such as universal masking for visitors.

VISITOR EXPECTATIONS

All visitors are to be actively screened upon arrival. Voluntary COVID-19 RAT tests as well as masks will be available for visitors to utilize at their discretion.

Symptomatic/positive visitors will not be allowed to visit for 10 days from:

- onset of symptoms/positive test date
- after visiting another home with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- after visiting an individual experiencing COVID-19 symptoms

4 visitors permitted at a time per resident in the resident room. Rooms with a larger capacity for larger visitor groups can be booked provided they are available through Jolene Morrow, Director of Resident and Family Services at j.morrow@victoriavillage.ca or by calling 705-728-3456 ext 752. Visiting Policy protocols will remain in effect for these gatherings.

Palliative Care/End of Life

Symptomatic/Positive visitors must be able to follow public health guidelines in the resident's room. Further guidance on PPE requirements will be consistent on direction from our Local Public Health Unit if the floor is on outbreak precautions.

Outbreaks

If the facility is in Outbreak, Victoria Village Manor will follow direction from Public Health and depending on the identified organism, staff and visitors may be required to wear a medical mask and/or eye protection when present on the affected neighbourhood.

Exceptions to the masking requirements during an outbreak are:

- children who are younger than two years of age
- any individual (staff, visitor, volunteer, support worker, caregiver or resident) who is being accommodated in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 or the Ontario Human Rights Code

Recreation/Dining

Food and Beverages may now be consumed by visitors and caregivers in the presence of residents during events and in the dining room. We do ask that visitors remain mindful of people that may choose to continue wearing a mask and choosing not to participate in certain activities. Requests for shared dining with residents and caregivers will be accommodated where possible as determined by space on the unit.

IPAC practices will continue to be followed in communal spaces to promote safety and well-being.

Absences

Visitors must inform the nurse on unit of resident absence, as well as document in the yellow sign in/out binder located at the nursing station on every floor.

Residents are to be offered a medical mask, as well as the Victoria Village Manor IPAC pamphlet at the time of departure from the facility if they wish to have these.

There are four types of absences:

1. **medical absences** are absences to seek medical or health care and include:
 - outpatient medical visits and a single visit (less than or equal to 24 hours in duration) to the emergency department
 - all other medical visits (for example, admissions or transfers to other health care facilities, multi-night stays in the emergency department)
2. **compassionate and palliative absences** include, but are not limited to, absences for the purposes of visiting a dying loved one
3. **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
 - social absences include absences for all reasons not listed under medical, compassionate or palliative, or essential absences that do not include an overnight stay
4. **temporary absences** include absences involving two or more days and one or more nights for non-medical reasons

Medical Appointments

- All medical appointments to be booked with/shared with the nurse on the floor
- Nurse to share appointments dates and times with reception
- Essential Visitors/General Visitors accompanying the resident to appointments must be actively screened prior to going upstairs to unit.
- When a resident who is self-isolating or on additional precautions is required to leave the home for a medical absence, staff are to notify the health care facility so that care can be provided to the resident with the appropriate Additional Precautions in place.

Testing requirements for residents when returning from absences

• Symptomatic residents (and their roommates if applicable) will be tested for COVID-19 and placed on Enhanced Droplet/Contact precautions and isolated to their rooms

Outdoor Visits

If visitors do not wish to enter the facility, outdoor 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.

If a unit is on outbreak precautions, residents and families may still access the outdoor balconies on unit – provided proper IPAC procedures are followed.

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.

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.

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

Links to PHO Resources:

[Recommended Steps: Putting On And Taking Off Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)
\(publichealthontario.ca\)](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/publichealth/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/PPE/PPESteps.aspx)

[Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment | Public Health Ontario](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/publichealth/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/PPE/FullPPE.aspx)

[Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment | Public Health Ontario](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/publichealth/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/PPE/FullPPE.aspx)

[How to Hand Wash | Public Health Ontario](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/publichealth/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/PPE/HandWash.aspx)

[How to Hand Rub | Public Health Ontario](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/publichealth/PersonalProtectiveEquipment/PPE/HandRub.aspx)