

Nithview Community Long-term Care and Retirement Visiting Policy

Revised October 25, 2022

The goal of this policy is to communicate the requirements as set out in the *Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes under the Fixing Long Term Care Act 2021, effective April 27, 2022; COVID-19 Guidance: Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units*. The Minister's Directive requires that homes comply with the provisions contained in the *COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long Term Care Homes in Ontario*.

This policy reflects the following guiding principles:

- Safety
- Emotional wellbeing
- Equitable access
- Flexibility
- Equality

In the Policy, LTCH refers to Long Term Care Home, Retirement Home, and Tower Apartment Residents as they are co-located.

1. Visiting -

A. Definitions

Essential visitors are persons performing essential support services. Essential visitors include, but are not limited to the following:

A support worker is a type of essential visitor who is visiting to perform essential support services for the home or for a resident at the home.

A caregiver is a type of essential visitor who is at least 18 years of age and is designated by the resident or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident.

Essential Visitor (Caregiver) Designation:

- The designation for a caregiver must be submitted in writing to: Retirement: Candi McGraw and Long Term Care: Sasha Craig
- The decision to designate someone as a caregiver is entirely remitting of the resident or the Substitute Decision Maker.

A General Visitor: A General Visitor is a person who is not an Essential Visitor and visits:

- For social reasons (e.g., family members and friends of resident);
- To provide non-essential services (may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker); and/or
- As a prospective resident taking a tour of the home.

LTC – General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is advised by local Public Health Unit to stop general visits (e.g., during an outbreak).

- General visitors under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult
- If a resident is in isolation, general visitors will not be permitted.

Retirement Home – General Visitors are permitted unless a resident is isolating and on Droplet and Contact Precautions, or the home is advised by local Public Health Unit to stop general visits (e.g., during an outbreak).

- General visitors under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult
- If a resident is in isolation, general visitors will not be permitted.

B. Visiting Requirements

TCMH strongly encourages all visitors to be fully vaccinated and remain up to date with COVID-19 Vaccinations.

Fully vaccinated individuals must have received all required doses (e.g., 2 doses in a 2-dose series); the 14 days post-final dose to be considered fully immunized does not apply

Up to date vaccinations means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.

[Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.gov.on.ca)

Prior to visiting any resident for the first time, all Essential Visitors and General Visitors, must attest to having reviewed the Nithview Visiting Policy and visitor education that is available on the Tri County Mennonite Homes Website; <http://tcmhomes.com/>.

If a visitor arrives who cannot attest to having completed the education, a tablet will be available, and the front door staff will assist the visitor to complete the process.

C. Visiting Hours

Visits are to take place **Monday to Sunday**. Visiting hours are from 6:00 AM to 8:00PM. There is no limit to frequency or length of visit within the visiting hours.

2. Active Screening & Testing Requirements

(For Essential Caregivers, General visitors, Contractors, and Volunteers)

A. Indoor Visits

All visitors will be required to participate in Active Screening and Surveillance Rapid Antigen testing upon entry to be permitted entry to the home. Testing will take place at the testing clinic. Visitors are required to keep receipt of their tests if they wish to return on the same calendar day.

All individuals who previously had a confirmed COVID-19 infection must resume Rapid Antigen Testing 90 days from their COVID-19 infection (based on the date of their confirmed positive). Individuals must show proof of a positive PCR test result in the last 90 days to be exempt from the testing.

B. Outdoor Visits

All outdoor visitors must complete active screening prior to a visit. Rapid Antigen Testing is not required.

C. Minors (ages 5-18)

All individuals entering the home ages 5-18 must complete active screening and have a surveillance rapid antigen test upon entry. **Parental consent is required** for minors (individuals under 18 years of age) that undergo testing. If consent is not given and/or testing is refused, the individual is not permitted to enter the home.

**** Non-Adherence to these guidelines and avoiding being tested (indoors) will result in your visits being prohibited. A visitor who fails active screening and/or rapid antigen testing must not be allowed entry to Nithview Community, and will be advised to go home immediately to self isolate, and encouraged to follow Public health Guidelines. Visitors for palliative residents must be screened prior to entry. If they fail screening they will be permitted entry and will be provided a medical mask, eye protection, gown and maintain physical distance from other residents and staff.****

D. First Responders

First responders are permitted without screening in emergency situations.

3. Absences- see Appendix A

Definitions

There are four types of absences. The definitions/conditions for resident absences are as follows:

Medical absences are absences to seek medical and/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 (e.g., admissions/transfers to other health care facilities, multi-night stays in the Emergency Department)

Compassionate/palliative absences are absences that include but are not limited to absences for the purposes of visiting a dying loved one.

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/palliative, and/or essential absences that do not include an overnight stay.

Overnight Temporary absences include absences involving two or more days and one or more nights for non-medical/social reasons.

Please see Appendix B for Retirement and/or LTC requirements for absences

4. Personal Protective Equipment

Masks

Visitors must wear a medical mask, provided by the home, at all times when moving throughout the building, and in common/shared areas of the LTC Home, and when not in a 1:1 setting.

Visitors may remove their mask when they are alone with a resident in their room. For residents living in shared rooms, visitors may utilize the Visiting Rooms, located by our reception area, to enable residents who would like to interact with their visitors without masks. Visitors are not required to wear masks for visits outdoors.

Residents must be encouraged and assisted to wear a medical mask or non-medical mask, as tolerated, when receiving direct care from staff, when in common areas with other residents (with the exception of meal times), and when receiving a visitor.

Exceptions to the masking requirements are as follows:

- Children who are younger than 2 years of age;
- Any individual (visitor or resident) who is being accommodated in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; and/or
- any individual (visitor or resident) who is being reasonably accommodated in accordance with the Human Rights Code.
- Have a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing (a minimum of 2 meters or 6 feet) is encouraged, as much as possible, by every individual in the LTCH to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Testing Process for Visitors, please see Appendix B

Appendix A - Retirement Home and LTC Absence Requirements

Absences	Requirements
<p>Short Term (Day) Absence Essential outing and Social outing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes must allow short term absences regardless of the reason unless the resident is in isolation on additional precautions. If self isolation must be broken, the Home will seek the advice of Local Public Health Unit • Residents must follow public health measures during the absence. • Active screening is required on return. • Testing is not required for residents upon return from a short term (day) absence, unless they have been in close contact to a known COVID-19 case.
<p>Temporary (Overnight) Absence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes must allow overnight absences regardless of reason. Public health units may direct restrictions on absences for residents in isolation and on droplet and contact precautions. • Residents must follow public health measures during the absence. • Active screening on return. • Testing is not required for residents upon return from a short term (day) absence, unless they have been in close contact to a known COVID-19 case.

- **Residents will be tested if they present with signs and/or symptoms, or have been identified as a high-risk exposure**

Appendix B – Testing Process for Visitors

ALL VISITORS, including Essential Caregivers, General visitors, Contractors, and Volunteers

- Surveillance Rapid Antigen Testing will take place at the Nithview Community Clinic after Active Screening is passed at the front entrance. All visitors will be tested at the testing clinic.
- Building Aides will be completing the testing process for all visitors. Once the Rapid Test is performed, the visitor will wait 15 minutes in the waiting area, to ensure their result is negative. If the Rapid test is positive, the visitor will be asked to exit the building immediately, and to contact Public Health for further direction.
- A receipt will be provided following the Rapid Test if requested. Visitors are to keep a copy of their receipt. Test results will be valid for 1 calendar day.

References

- Minister's Directive: *COVID-19: Long-term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes*, Effective: August 30, 2022. [Minister's Directive COVID-19 Response Measures for LTC Homes](#)
- Ministry of Health, Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses, Version 2.0 – May 2, 2022(amended May 24) [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses \(gov.on.ca\)](#)
- Ministry of Long-Term Care, *COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario version 6*, Effective June 11, 2022. [Covid-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario](#)
- Ministry of Health *COVID-19 Guidance: Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units Version 8*, October 6, 2022 [COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care homes, Retirement Homes and other Congregate Settings for Public Health Units](#)
- Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility *COVID-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario Version 2 – October 6, 2022* [COVID-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario](#)