

Nithview Community Long-term Care and Retirement Visiting Policy **Revised March 28, 2023**

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.

General visitors are not permitted:

- When a home or area of a home is in outbreak
- To visit an isolating resident
- When the local public health unit so directs

B. Visiting Requirements

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

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

[COVID-19 vaccines | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.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 the Home goes into an outbreak or there are changes to the Guidance as set out by the Minister, care service providers will be notified, and education will be provided.

2. Passive Screening

All visitors must complete screening survey questions on the iPad, located at the front entrance, and review the signage at entrances.

This will include:

- The name and contact information of the visitor
- Time and date of the visit
- The purpose of the visit

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 A for Retirement and/or LTC requirements for absences**

4. Personal Protective Equipment

Masks

Visitors must wear a medical mask, 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 mealtimes), and when receiving a visitor.

All TCMH staff will continue to wear a mask while outdoors and in close proximity to a resident.

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.

Dining:

Communal dining is an important part of many homes' social environment. All long-term care homes may provide communal dining with the following precautions:

- When not eating or drinking, residents should be encouraged to wear a mask where possible or tolerated.
- Caregivers and general visitors may accompany a resident for meals to assist them with eating; however, caregivers or general visitors must remain masked at all times and not join in the meal.
- Frequent hand hygiene of residents and staff, general visitors, caregivers and volunteers assisting residents with eating must be undertaken.

Activities:

Homes are to provide opportunities for residents to gather for group activities including:

- social purposes
- physical activities

Social group activities may consist of larger groups (more than 10). IPAC measures should continue to be followed by staff, residents and visitors to promote safety and wellbeing (for example, masking, good ventilation). General visitors and caregivers may join residents during the activities in all homes, both indoors and outdoors, unless otherwise directed by the local public health unit.

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. • Any resident who is symptomatic upon return from absence will be isolated on additional precautions and tested for COVID-19.
<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.
<p>Medical/ Palliative and Compassionate Absence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes cannot restrict or deny absences at any time including when a resident is in isolation or when the home is in outbreak

- **Any resident who is symptomatic upon return from absence will be isolated on additional precautions and tested for COVID-19**

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* , Effective March 31, 2023. [COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario](#)
- Ministry of Health *COVID-19 Guidance: Long Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes, and other Congregate Living Settings for Public Health Units Version 9*, January 18, 2023 [COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes and other Congregate Living Settings for Public Health Units](#)
- Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility *COVID-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario Version 3 – March 29, 2023* [Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario](#)
- Ministry of Long-Term Care, *COVID-19 Policies: What Resident Can Expect in their Long-Term Care Home*. March 31, 2023 [What Residents Can Expect \(EN\)](#)