



**Regional Municipality of Durham**  
 Social Services Department  
 Long Term Care (LTC) and Services for Seniors

<b>Title: Visitation to Long-Term Care</b>	
<b>Policy #: IC-05-13-04</b>	
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<b>Peer Group Approval:</b> <i>Nitha Reno</i>	<b>Date: November 5, 2024</b>
<b>Also reviewed by:</b>	
<b>Senior Leadership Approval:</b> <i>Laura MacDermaid</i>	<b>Date: December 3, 2024</b>

## 1. Policy

- 1.1. The Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors (LTC and SS) Division will provide an organized process to allow for safe and secure visits to our Homes.
- 1.2. All visitors will have access to information and education through the Home's Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Practitioner about physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, and proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Visitors can ask for this information at reception.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. To ensure there is a safe and organized process for those who visit Residents in our Homes.
- 2.2. To provide meaningful, equitable, flexible, and safe visits for all Residents and to support their emotional wellbeing.

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1. General Visitor

- A. A person who is visiting a Resident within the Home:
  - (1) To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the Home or the Resident and/or the Substitute Decision Maker (SDM).
  - (2) Visiting for social reasons.

### 3.2. Essential Visitor

#### A. A Caregiver:

- (1) Family member, friend, or person of importance to a Resident,
- (2) 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 social, spiritual, or emotional support, whether on a paid or unpaid basis,
- (3) Is designated by the Resident or the Resident's SDM with authority to give that designation, if any, and
- (4) 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.

- B. A Support Worker who visits the 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 LTCH to carry out their duties.

### 3.3. **Non-Visitor**

- A. LTCH staff, volunteers, and placement students are not considered visitors. Access to the Home will be determined by the Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors (LTC and SS) Division.

## 4. **Procedure**

### 4.1. **Visitors**

- A. There will be no limits on the number of individuals permitted for indoor visits. The Home may restrict the number of visitors per Resident based on the available indoor space.
- B. No General Visitors are permitted to visit in any of the following situations:
  - (1) As per direction set out by the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) or Durham Region Public Health (DRPH).
  - (2) The Home is in outbreak. If only a portion of the Home is in outbreak, Residents in areas unaffected by that outbreak may still have visitors both indoors and outdoors.
  - (3) The Resident is self-isolating or symptomatic.
- C. Essential Visitors will be permitted in the Home during a Home wide outbreak. There is no limit on the number of Essential Visitors a Resident may have.
- D. All Visitors will:
  - (1) When requested, be provided with information on IPAC practices.
  - (2) Adhere to the Visitor Code of Conduct (see Appendix 2).
  - (3) Adhere to the [IC-05-13-08 Mask Use](#) Policy
- E. Pets will be allowed to visit a RHA that is not in outbreak if registered with the Home.
- F. Homes will maintain a visitor log which must be kept for 30 days.

### 4.2. **Outdoor Visits**

- A. There will be no limits on the number of individuals permitted at outdoor visits.
- B. Visitors are not required to wear masks when visiting outdoors.

### 4.3. **Education and Information**

- A. All visitors and staff will have access to the following information and education. Information on how to access it is provided at reception or from Infection Control.
  - (1) [Recommended steps to putting on personal protective equipment guidance](#)
  - (2) [Putting on personal protective equipment video](#)
  - (3) [Taking off personal protective equipment video](#)
  - (4) How to [hand wash](#) and [hand rub](#).

### 4.4. **Non-Compliance with Visitor Guidelines (See Appendix 1)**

- A. Staff will refer any visitor who does not comply with the visitor guidelines to a manager/supervisor and follow the process outlined.
- B. Assist the visitor to understand the importance of complying with the visiting guidelines.
- C. If a visitor has been temporarily prohibited from visiting, clearly identify the reasons why and identify the requirements that the visitor would have to meet for visits to be resumed.

## 5. **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 5.1. **Nursing will:**

- A. Ensure that all visitors are following current masking guidance as outlined in the [IC-05-13-08 Mask Use](#) Policy.

### 5.2. **IPAC Practitioner will:**

- A. Ensure the IPAC information is available for all visitors.
- B. Ensure that each visitor has access to IPAC information.

- C. Maintain a daily list of General Visitors and contact information.

**5.3. Environmental Services Will:**

- A. Ensure there is enough hand sanitizer and disinfectant available in the indoor visiting area.
- B. Ensure there are masks available at the entrance for all visitors, if applicable.
- C. Ensure the designated public indoor washrooms have an enhanced cleaning schedule.

**5.4. Administrator/designate will:**

- A. Ensure that visitors are following the outlined rules and following the visitor code of conduct.
- B. Ensure there is outdoor and indoor space designated for visiting.
- C. Ensure there is regular communication with residents and families regarding any changes to the visitor policy.

**6. References**

- 6.1. Fixing Long Term Care Act and Regulations, 2021, O Reg 246/22 s 102
- 6.2. Update to COVID-19 guidance on visiting Long Term Care homes, June 26, 2023
- 6.3. IC-05-13-07 Management of COVID -19 Immunization

**7. Attachments/Appendices**

- 7.1. Appendix 1 – Visitor Compliance Escalation Process
- 7.2. Appendix 2 – [Visitor Code of Conduct](#)

Appendix 1 – Visitor Compliance Escalation Process

