



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

<b>Title: Absence during Pandemic</b>	
<b>Policy #: PAN-09-05</b>	
<b>Reviewed:</b>	
<b>Revised: Sept 17, 2020, Oct 13, 2020, Oct 16, 2020</b>	
<b>Peer Group Approval:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Also reviewed by: (another peer group)</b>	
<b>Senior Leadership Approval:</b> <i>Laura MacDermaid</i>	<b>Date: October 28, 2020</b>

## 1. Policy

Effective October 27, 2020 Resident Absences will be as follows:

All non-medical absences will be cancelled due to the increased community transmission rates.

Homes cannot deny a Resident's/SDM request to leave the home for medical absence unless the request has been thoroughly reviewed and for reasons pertaining to resident safety, a decision to deny has been determined by the Administrator.

The home will not be responsible for the care, safety and well-being of the resident during the absence and the resident or the resident's Substitute Decision Maker SDM (as appropriate) assumes full responsibility for the care, safety and well-being of the resident during the absence.

This policy is specifically referencing absence guidelines during a declared pandemic.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Medical Absence

Leaving the home's property medical reasons (i.e. outpatient visit, medical appointment, single night emergency room visit). Emergency room visits that take place over a single night (e.g., assessment and discharge from the emergency department spans one overnight period) are considered equivalent to an outpatient medical visit that does not require testing or self-isolation upon return.

### **3. Procedures**

#### **3.1 Medical Absence**

3.1.1 The Resident/SDM will inform the home of a medical appointment.

3.1.2 The Home will not deny the request for a medical absence unless the request has been thoroughly reviewed and for reasons pertaining to resident safety, a decision to deny has been determined by the Administrator

3.1.3 The Resident medical absence including the time leaving and expected back are documented in the Electronic Health Record.

3.1.4 Any person picking up the resident for a medical absence must report to the screening desk and be actively screened before the resident leaves the home.

3.1.5 Any person in contact with the resident during the absence must always be wearing a mask and follow Public health guidelines (physical distancing, wearing a mask, proper hand hygiene).

3.1.6 Upon return residents must be actively screened. Screening will include questions and a temperature check.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Residents (SDM) will:**

4.1.1 Ensure that the home is aware that the resident has a medical appointment/absence.

4.1.2 Wear a mask at all times (if capable) during the Absence

4.1.3 Will read the information given regarding Absences

4.1.4 Will sign out at the reception (screening) desk.

4.1.5 Be screened upon arrival back to the home. Screening will consist of questions and a temperature check. The Resident (SDM) will also be required to sign in.

4.1.6 Be isolated for a period of 14 days if the absence is deemed a temporary absence if screening is not passed for a short stay visit.

#### **4.2 Nursing will**

##### **For all Absences:**

4.2.1 Receive the request from the Resident/SDM for an absence/appointment.

4.2.2 Reviews all request for Medical appointments and ensures that the request is documented in the resident chart

4.2.3 Refer any medical request which may compromise a resident's safety to the Administrator.

4.2.4 Ensures that the resident is ready for the absence.

4.2.5 Document the absence in the Resident Health Record

- 4.2.6 Health and Infection control precautions will be reinforced with the resident prior to departure.
- 4.2.7 Ensure the Resident is taken to the reception area prior to exiting the building
- 4.2.8 Ensure the resident has enough medical surgical masks or other required PPE for the duration of their visit.

#### **4.4 Infection Control Practitioner/designate will:**

#### **4.3 Screener will:**

- 4.3.1 Gives the Resident/SDM information regarding absences.
- 4.3.2 Ensures that the resident/SDM attests to reading the information and signs out when leaving the building.
- 4.3.3 Ensures that anyone picking up the resident for the absence is actively screened.
- 4.3.4 Ensure residents returning from a medical absence answer the screening questions. Screening will include a temperature check and hand sanitizing. The resident/SM will have to sign in to attest to the screening.
- 4.3.5 Ensures that upon arrival, arrangements are made to take the resident back to the Resident Home Area.

#### **4.4 Administrator**

- 4.4.1 Make the final decision regarding the request for medical absence, if there is any reason to believe that a resident's safety will be compromised.

## **5. References**

- 7.1 Update on Directive #3, Absences, released by Ministry of Long-Term Care – October 14, 2020, 2020
- 7.2 ADM -01-03-22 Leaves of Absences
- 7.3 Long Term Care Home Act and Regulations, 2007