



January 4, 2022

Dear Family Member,

In response to recent trends that show an alarming increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, announced yesterday that it is temporarily moving the province into Step Two of its Roadmap to Reopen with some modifications. These time-limited measures will help blunt transmission and prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed as the province continues to accelerate its booster dose rollout.

### [LTC Homes COVID-19 Status](#)

Over the past two weeks, there has been a surge in COVID-19 cases across the province and our homes have experienced a rising number of high-risk exposures as well as probable and confirmed cases. A number of Resident Home Areas (RHAs) across the division are either in precautionary isolation or in isolation due to confirmed COVID-19 cases. Because the situation is evolving rapidly, our focus will be on communicating with individual families directly if there is a change in circumstance that affects the resident, and we will update the website at [www.durham.ca/ltcupdates](http://www.durham.ca/ltcupdates). RAVE messages will only be sent out if there is a significant change in outbreak status.

### [COVID-19 Immunization Policy](#)

On December 31, 2021 the Minister updated the LTC COVID-19 immunization policy as it pertains to staff, students, volunteers, support workers, caregivers and general visitors. As such, all staff, students, volunteers, support workers and caregivers who are eligible (i.e., 3 months after receiving their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose) will be required to show proof of their third dose to come into or work within the home, unless they have a valid medical exemption. Note that there is currently a pause on all general visits.

Those who are eligible on or before December 31<sup>st</sup> must provide proof of having received their 3<sup>rd</sup> dose by January 28, 2022. The remainder of caregivers will have until May 23, 2022 to show proof of their third dose, recognizing caregivers were recently provided until February 21, 2022 to become fully vaccinated.

Booking for booster dose appointments can be done through Durham's COVID-19 vaccination portal <https://www.durhamvaccinebooking.ca/> or by phoning 1-888-444-5113, through Indigenous-led vaccination clinics, select pharmacies, or through your primary care physician. If

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you have any questions about where to obtain the vaccination or any other questions regarding vaccines, please go to [www.durham.ca/vaccines](http://www.durham.ca/vaccines).

Note that the requirement to be vaccinated does not apply with respect to a general visitor or caregiver that is attending the home to visit a resident receiving palliative or end-of-life care.

### [Provision of Fourth Doses to LTC Residents](#)

Residents of LTC homes will be eligible for a fourth dose of mRNA vaccine if at least 3 months have passed since their third dose. We are working with our local public health unit and we expect to have more information to share about this shortly as to how we will make these vaccines available to our residents.

### [Testing upon Entry](#)

Registered essential caregivers will be tested with a rapid antigen test upon entry into the home daily. The test takes approximately 15 minutes to process. Caregivers are asked to wait until the designated lobby area until the test results can be read.

### [Vaccination Proof – QR Code – January 4 2022](#)

**Starting on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021**, all individuals will be required to use the QR code as proof of vaccination. The QR code can be used digitally or by printing a paper copy. Those without a phone or a computer may get their QR code at their local library, Service Ontario Centre, or call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 to have their QR Code vaccine certificate mailed to them. Until that time, homes can continue accepting vaccination proof by QR code or using the receipt provided at the time of vaccination.

This year has been filled with a multitude of challenges and we know there will be many challenges ahead.

Please continue to be vigilant both when visiting in the home and at all other times, ensuring you wash your hands frequently, wear a mask and socially distance as much as possible.

If you have any questions about anything in this update, please do not hesitate to reach out to me, or to a member of the management team at the long-term care home.

Thank you for your ongoing support and on behalf of the LTC team, I wish you a safe, healthy and happy 2022.

*Laura MacDermaid*