

Homes Procedural Manual

Number: Label

Date Approved: April 2022

Date Revised: July 2022

DEPARTMENT: Corporate Services & Long Term Care
DIVISION: Pioneer Ridge
SECTION: Visitors

Risk Management

SUBJECT: Essential Caregiver and General Visitor Policy

STATEMENT:

Pioneer Ridge understands the needs and the rights of residents related to visitation, social interaction and emotional support.

All visitors guidelines and protocols for visitation, including visiting hours will be reviewed and revised as needed referring to any current or new Ministry directives, guidance documents or any other relevant resources and best practices.

Non-compliance with the home's policies could result in a discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor. (see protocol *Responding to non-adherence by visitors in the home*)

****This policy is subject to change or override based on directives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long Term Care or Public Health****

Visiting Hours

Visiting hours for General Visitors are between 8:00am and 8:00pm daily.
Essential Visitors, including Caregivers may visit outside of these hours.

Types of Visitors

LTC home staff, volunteers and students are not considered visitors as their access to the home is determined by the licensee.

General Visitors

A **general visitor** is a person who is not an essential caregiver and is visiting:

- a) To provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the home or the resident and/or their substitute decision maker (ie. contractor, phone or cable installation, etc.)
- b) For social reasons (e.g., family members or friends) including cognitive stimulation, meaningful connection and relational continuity but not involving any direct care

Essential Visitors

A **caregiver** is a person who is designated by the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and is visiting to provide direct care to the resident (e.g., supporting feeding, mobility, personal hygiene, cognitive stimulation, communication, meaningful connection, relational continuity and assistance in decision-making). This can be a family member or friend, or a paid support worker (i.e. dental hygiene, foot care, etc.)

*Note: Any individual younger than 16 years of age must receive approval from a parent or legal guardian to be designated as a caregiver.

Other **essential visitors** include support workers, government inspectors or any person who is visiting a resident who is very ill or end-of-life.

PROCEDURE:

Visitation Guidelines

A maximum of **4 visitors** per resident may visit at a time, provided the home is not in an outbreak and the resident is not self-isolating or symptomatic. This can be a combination of general visitors and caregivers.

Essential Caregivers

Essential Caregivers are required to provide proof of full immunization for COVID (or other communicable diseases as may be required) Full immunization for COVID requires the primary series doses (1 or 2 depending on type) and a third dose (booster) as authorized by Health Canada.

Essential Caregivers are required to complete an educational in-service on proper Infection Control practices and PPE use and must follow all applicable infection prevention and control (IPAC) precautions that are in place at the home. (Masking, screening, testing, PPE etc.)

The in-service can be scheduled with the IPAC Coordinator

Essential Caregivers will be permitted to visit if the home is in an outbreak or the resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, with the following stipulations:

- a maximum of 2 caregiver per resident may visit at a time; and
- a caregiver may not visit any other resident or home for 14 days after visiting a resident who is self-isolating or symptomatic; and/or a home in an outbreak.

General Visitors

General visitors who choose to provide proof of immunization for COVID will be considered fully immunized as long as they have received the primary series doses (1 or 2 depending on type). Booster doses are highly recommended.

General visitors are NOT required to provide proof of immunization for COVID (or other communicable diseases as may be required), however if proof of immunization is not provided, the visit will be restricted to the resident's room OR outside locations as long as 6 feet of distance is maintained from others.

General visitors younger than 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult

General visitors must follow all applicable infection prevention and control (IPAC) precautions that are in place at the home. (Masking, screening, testing, PPE etc.)

If a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the home is in an outbreak general visitors are NOT permitted

****Exceptions may apply to contractors (general visitors) if it is determined by the home that the service provided is essential to the operation of the home or the benefit of the resident.**

Non –adherence to rules / ENDING or Suspending visits

Pioneer Ridge has the discretion to end a visit by any visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the home's visitor policy. In the event of repeated and flagrant non-adherence with the home's visitor policy, we maintain the discretion to temporarily prohibit a visitor (suspend the visits).

If an employee notices a visitor not following the requirements, they should provide a friendly and respectful reminder to the visitor. If the visitor is not wearing PPE appropriately, the employee should offer to demonstrate or assist. If the non-adherence to rules becomes more frequent, and the visitor has already received coaching or reminders on multiple occasions, the employee shall report this information to the Director of Nursing or designate.

Prior to ending or suspending visits, the Director of Nursing or designate will follow the home's protocol "*Responding to non-adherence by visitors in the home*" which provides strategies for supporting visitors in understanding and adhering to the home's visitor policy.

Recognizing that visits are critical to supporting a resident's care needs and emotional well-being, any decisions to end or suspend visitation will be made by the Director of Nursing or designate after careful consideration the impact of discontinuing visits on the resident's clinical and emotional well-being and only after exhausting other options.

Resources:

* Ontario COVID-19 Guidance Document for long-term care homes

* FLTCA, 2022.