

May 21, 2021

MEMO TO: Long-Term Care Home Licensees

FROM: Erin Hannah
Associate Deputy Minister

SUBJECT: Changes for General Visitors

As you will have heard, yesterday the government released its [Roadmap to Reopen](#), a three-step plan to safely and cautiously reopen the province and gradually lift public health measures.

In addition, responding to improvements in key public health indicators, changes are also being made to reopen outdoor recreational amenities and to permit organized public events and social gatherings outdoors with a maximum of five people, including members from different households. These changes come into effect at 12:01am on Saturday, May 22, 2021.

To align with these changes, we are expediting the ability for family members and friends to visit their loved ones who live in long-term care homes across the province. ***This means that effective tomorrow, general visitors can come to LTC homes to see their loved ones for an outdoor visit.***

To enable this change, homes will need to rapidly reintroduce their plans and processes to support outdoor visits. This should include communication to your home communities about how to book a visit, a reminder of the active screening questions general visitors will need to answer upon arrival, and the public health measures that need to be followed to keep everyone safe.

I know you have been planning for this already with the onset of spring and the warmer weather and the impassioned calls from residents and their families to enable them to see one another outside. For our part, we are actively working with our colleagues at the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (OCMOH) to update Directive #3, as well the ministry's visitor policy and guidance document which will set out the following:

- Maximum of two general visitors at a time per resident in addition to essential caregiver(s).
- Children under the age of two years do not count towards the general visitor maximum.

- General visitors need to be actively screened upon arrival and should not proceed beyond entry points / areas in homes.
- General visitors do not need to undergo a rapid antigen test as their visit will be outdoors.
- General visitors need to maintain physical distancing and wear masks and every effort should be made to ensure different groups of visitors are also physically distanced.
- Recognizing that not all homes have suitable outdoor space, these visits may also take place in the general vicinity of the home.

This is a truly important step for residents and their families, and I know despite the rapid notice, our home partners supported outdoor visits last summer and will be adept at making this a success.

Attached is an updated set of Questions and Answers (updates are highlighted) to support your quick action to enable visitors starting tomorrow. As always, we are available to support homes directly should they have any questions related to this change. The team can be reached by emailing MLTCPandemicResponse@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Erin Hannah

Attachments: Updated FAQs Directive #3 and MLTC Guidance

c: Richard Steele, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC)
 Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health (MOH)
 Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
 Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health
 Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Pandemic Response and Recovery Division, MOH
 Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Capacity Planning and Analytics Division, MOH/MLTC
 Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario
 Donna Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Long Term Care Association
 Monika Turner, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
 Michael Jacek, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
 Colleen Geiger, President and CEO (Acting), Public Health Ontario
 Jeff Butler, Assistant Deputy Minister, LTC Pandemic Response, MLTC
 Sheila Bristo, Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations, MLTC