



...by authority of the Board of Directors

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		<i>POLICY #:</i>	PANP_5_1
<i>TITLE/SUBJECT:</i>		Guidelines for Visitors: Screening and Visiting at BWRH	
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POLICY:

Purpose

- This policy supports visitors while adhering to the current directives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Long-Term Care and Public Health Ontario Guidelines.
- Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to viruses in determining whether visiting a LTC home is appropriate.
- All visitors are required to monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 and any other respiratory or enteric symptoms and asked NOT to visit if symptoms develop.

Blue Water Rest Home recognizes that being able to connect with friends and family is essential to resident’s emotional health and well-being, so our visits are guided by the following principles:

Safety: Any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated.

Emotional Well-being: Allowing visitors is intended to support the emotional well-being of residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.

Equitable Access: All individuals seeking to visit a resident must be given equitable visitation access, consistent with resident preference and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents.

Flexibility: The physical/infrastructure characteristics of the long-term care home, its staffing availability, and the current status of the home with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are all variables to take into account when setting home-specific policies.

PROCEDURE:

Definitions of Visitors

Visitor	Definition
Essential Visitor	- Person performing essential support services (food delivery, inspectors, funeral directors, general contractors, or health care services (lab, x-ray) or a person visiting a very ill or end of life resident.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government inspectors, however, they are not subject to this policy
Essential Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor who is designated by the resident or the resident’s substitute decision-maker with authority to give that designation. - 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) - A caregiver could be a family member, a friend, a person of importance to the resident, a paid caregiver or companion or a translator. - A caregiver must be able to comply with all applicable laws including any applicable directives, orders, guidance, advice, or recommendations issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health or a Medical Officer of Health appointed under the <i>Health Protection and Promotion Act</i>. - 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. - Visits do not need to be scheduled and there are no restrictions on length of visit. - When a resident is self-isolating, symptomatic or during a confirmed and/or suspected outbreak, visits will be granted at the direction of Public Health regarding the number of visitors, but essential visitors will continue to have access to the home.
Support Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A type of essential visitor - Performing essential services in the Home or for a resident in the home. (i.e., physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) - Visitor is allowed when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in outbreak.
General Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is NOT an essential visitor. - Individuals visiting to provide non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the resident and/or SDM. - Individuals visiting for social reasons. - Individuals are not allowed to visit when a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, or the Home is in confirmed and/or suspect outbreak



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Essential Visitor

- Essential visitors are required to be tested at each visit, wear a surgical mask, and wait for their test results.
- If they are providing an essential service and have been to another home in outbreak, they must wear surgical mask **and** eye protection, be tested upon entry, **and** wait for their results.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test, or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 60 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.

Essential Caregivers (ECGs)

- ECGs must be vaccinated, with their primary COVID 19 series and must show proof of vaccination.
- They require an antigen test upon entering BWRH, they must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear eye protection. They must wait for their test results prior to entering.
- Masks are recommended but not required when visiting outdoors.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test, or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 60 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- It is strongly encouraged that all ECGs be up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses. At this time, being up to date would mean having a 4th vaccine if you are 60 years of age or older.
- A process for documenting caregiver designation is in place by the Home (see process below).
- The decision to designate an individual as a caregiver is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their substitute decision-maker and not the home.
- The Resident or SDM may change caregiver in response to the resident’s care needs (as reflected in the



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plan of care) or based on the availability of the designated caregiver. (Changing a caregiver must be discussed with the Director of Care or designate).

General Visitor (GV's)

- All general visitors (GVs), including children under the age of 5, can visit the home. Visitors (including caregivers), with the exception of children under the age of 5, need to follow our vaccination policy.
- Those who have **their primary series of 2 COVID vaccine doses** are required to be complete a Rapid Antigen Test on each visit, must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear a eye protection. They must wait for their test results prior to entering.
- Masks are recommended but are not required when visiting outdoors.
- All GV's 5 years and older must provide proof of vaccination.
- Masks are required for children under 2 years of age.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test, or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days.
- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 60 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- It is strongly encouraged that all GV's be up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses.

Support Worker

- It is strongly encouraged that all support workers be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccine meaning they must have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.
- Those who have their primary series of **2 COVID vaccine doses** are required to be antigen tested daily upon entry, must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear eye protection. They must wait for test results.
- Those who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Those who receive a positive rapid test, or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive**



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and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days.

- Those returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 60 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- If they are providing an essential service (i.e., X-Ray tech, oxygen company) and have been to another home in outbreak they must wear a surgical mask **and** eye protection, be tested upon entry, **and** wait for their results.

Contractors

It is recommended that all contractors be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccine meaning they must have received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible, **and** must show proof of vaccination.

- Contractors with their primary series of **2 COVID vaccine doses** are required to be tested daily upon entry and must wear a surgical mask but are not required to wear eye protection. They must wait for test results prior to entry.
- Contractors who have been deemed **high-risk contact** must be denied entry and cannot visit for 10 days post-exposure.
- Contractors who receive a positive rapid test or they develop symptoms at home are deemed to be **COVID Positive** and must leave the facility and cannot visit for 10 days.
- Contractors returning from having Covid-19 may resume testing after 60 days from their symptom onset or positive specimen collection.
- In the event of an emergency, unvaccinated contractors may enter BWRH, following active screening, antigen testing and are required to wait for the results prior to entering. A mask and eye protection are required.

Palliative Visitors

- BWRH will not prohibit visitors for palliative or end of life residents.
- Palliative visitors must actively screen on entry but are not required to participate in Rapid Antigen Testing.
- If a palliative visitor fails screening, they will still be allowed to enter BWRH to visit the palliative resident.
- Palliative visitors who fail screening must wear a medical mask and maintain physical distance from other residents and staff.



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Visitor Logs

Visitor screening logs will be maintained for a minimum of 30 days and will include the following information:

- the name and contact information of the visitor.
- the date and time of the visit.
- the name of the resident visited.

Distribution of the Visitor Policy

- a copy of the visitor policy will be given upon admission to the home within the admission package.
- updated versions of the policy will be distributed to resident and family council at the next scheduled meeting after the revisions have taken place.

Upon arrival to Blue Water Rest Home:

- ✚ Practice hand hygiene upon entering the building, before exiting and frequently throughout the visit.
- ✚ Active screening is required for all individuals entering the facility.
- ✚ Temperature is recorded and they must be actively screened in by the screener at the desk.
- ✚ The screener must ask each individual all screening questions.
- ✚ They must pass all screening questions. If they do not, they are denied entry.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

- Visitors are required to wear PPE as directed by the “COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario” and Blue Water Rest Home Policy.
- Medical masks are to be worn in the appropriate manner, covering nose, mouth and chin at all times.

Process to become an Essential Caregiver:

- ECGs must be vaccinated with their primary series of 2 doses of COVID vaccine **and** must show proof of vaccination.
- A verbal or written request (email) for designation should be made to the Director of Care in the Home (the decision is entirely the remit of the resident and/or their SDM and not the Home).
- An information package will be provided to all designated caregivers.



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Education Requirements for Essential Caregivers:

- Prior to the first visit, ECG’s will be provided with a training package developed to provide learning on IPAC basics, including donning and doffing PPE, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.

How We Will Respond to Non-Compliance of Visiting Policy

Blue Water Rest Home recognizes that connecting with family is essential to the emotional wellbeing of the residents. As such, the Home will strive to resolve issues or concerns that may arise from non-compliance with the visiting policy by ensuring:

- Efforts have been made to ensure that the visitor understands the policy.
- It is recognized that visits are critical to residents’ emotional well-being and the impact to the resident in discontinuing visits is considered;
- The consequences of the action reflect the severity of the concern; and
- Where visits have been suspended the Home will identify the training that would be needed before the visitor could return to the Home.

Ending a Visit:

The Home will end a visit with a visitor if they fail to adhere to the Homes policy. The Home will consider this when:

- The Home has explained the policy and its requirements to the visitor.
- The Visitor has the resources to meet the requirements of the policy (i.e., there is enough space, the Home has provided PPE and training on its use); and
- The Visitor has been given time to adhere to the requirements.

When a visit is ended due to non-adherence, the Home will document the concern and the actions taken.

Positive Rapid Tests - ECGs, GVs, Volunteers, and Externals:

- If a rapid antigen test is positive, they will be denied entry to the home and asked to follow Public Health Guidelines for isolation at home.



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REFERENCES / RELATED DOCUMENTS:

COVID-19 Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes
Ontario Regulations 246/22 – Section 267
Ministry of Long-Term Care; Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care, September 2, 2020
COVID-19: Visiting long-term care homes May 22, 2021
Minister’s Directive: COVID-19 Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes.

KEYWORDS:

Visitors
Essential Care givers
Support Workers