



# POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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HOME:	Caressant Care Nursing & Retirement Homes Ltd.	Policy ID:	LTC-IPAC-S10-90.1
SUBJECT: Retirement Home (RH) Visiting Policy		ISSUING AUTHORITY:	
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 20, 2026	SUPERCEDES: June 26, 2023	REVIEWED DATE: March 20, 2026	

## **PURPOSE:**

To support the emotional wellbeing and care of our residents and to provide guidelines for visiting to ensure the safety of residents and team members.

Caressant Care recognizes the valuable role that families, friends, and visitors play in providing caregiving and emotional support that adds to the quality of life of our Residents.

## **Definitions:**

### **1. Essential Visitors**

- Caregiver, who may be a family, friend or person of importance to the resident or provides direct or emotional support.
- A Support Worker or care provider who visits to provide essential services to residents or provide support to the critical operations of the home.
- A Person visiting a very ill or palliative resident for compassionate reasons, including but not limited to hospice services or end of life care.
- A government inspector with a statutory right to enter a home to carry out their duties.

2. **General Visitors:** a person providing non-essential services to the home or residents, such as personal care, entertainment, taking a tour or visiting for social reasons.

## **Guidelines for Designating an Essential Caregiver**

1. Residents and their SDM may designate individuals as caregivers at their discretion.
2. Essential caregivers may be documented in the chart.
3. The number of caregivers designated by a resident/SDM cannot be limited. However, scheduling or access to caregivers during outbreaks may be managed in accordance with Public Health or Ministry directives.
4. Caregivers under the age of 16 must have consent of their parent or guardian.

## **PROCEDURE:**

1. All visitors and caregivers that enter the Home must undergo passive screening. Any visitor that feels unwell or fails the screening should not enter the Home unless visiting a Resident receiving end-of-life care.



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2. Visitors will be asked to sign in by using the visitor log for each visit that includes:
  - the name and contact information of the visitor.
  - the time and date of the visit; and
  - the name of the resident visited/purpose of the visit.

\*Homes shall maintain visitor logs for a minimum of 30 days and make available to the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) or Public Health upon request.

3. Visitors may visit at any time, however during the evening visitors may need to use the intercom system to access the home for safety purposes or if the doors are locked.
4. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to participate in various events in the homes unless restricted by an outbreak or emergency. Any restrictions to visiting will be communicated to residents and families, including notice of when visiting may resume as per normal operations.
5. During an outbreak or emergency, access may be limited to essential visitors only and restrictions may apply based on directives provided by Public Health. Communication will be provided to residents and visitors regarding any changes to visitor access.
6. All visitors must respect the Resident Bill of Rights, not visit when feeling ill, comply with the homes infection prevention and control (IPAC) protocols including proper use of personal protective equipment as required, and perform hand hygiene. Visitors will be offered masks to wear during their visit. While they are encouraged, there are situations where they may be required (i.e., as directed by Public Health/Ministry guidance).
7. Visitor responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
  - Acknowledging and respecting rights and needs of residents, families, team members and volunteers and others to live and work in an environment free from violence and harassment.
  - Conduct themselves respectfully and respect the privacy and confidentiality of others by not sharing any information seen or heard during visits and not entering rooms without consent.
  - Report any safety or care concerns to team members.
  - Follow all policies and procedures of the home, including fire safety, smoking policies, and other emergency requirements.
  - Respect the roles of team members and not hinder them from performing their job duties.
  - Practice IPAC, performing hand hygiene before and after visits, follow respiratory etiquette by covering coughs and sneezes, and wear applicable personal protective equipment as directed and staying home if



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unwell.

8. Homes should provide education/training and/or resources to all visitors about respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, and proper use of PPE from Public Health Ontario:
9. The visitor policy will be well communicated and is provided to Resident Council; it will be posted in the home and on the Homes' website and provided upon move-in.
10. Pets are allowed to visit. Visitors must keep the pet on a leash and only allow the resident they are visiting to be in contact with the pet. Visitors must adhere to all pet visiting policies.
11. Tours of the Home: In person tours for prospective Residents are always permitted, including during an outbreak, however outbreak areas of the Home should be avoided. Proper PPE is required. Tours may be halted at the direction of local PHU.
12. Gifts and Food: all items (including food) that visitors wish to give Residents must be clearly labeled with the Resident's name on the container.

### **Non-Adherence to Policy:**

Any response to visitor non-adherence will be reasonable, proportionate, documented, and only as restrictive as necessary to protect residents, team members and visitors.

1. Any non-adherence to this policy may be the basis for discontinuation of visits or caregiving. The Home will:
  - Make every effort to educate visitors regarding their non-adherence and to help understand the visiting policy and provide efforts to maintain safety.
  - Recognize that visits and caregiving are critical in supporting a resident's care needs and emotional well-being.
  - Consider the impact of discontinuing visits on the Resident and
  - Make every reasonable effort to ensure that any disruption to visiting/caregiving is reflective and proportionate to the severity of the non-adherence.
  - Protect Residents, team members, and other visitors in the home with regards to health and safety and IPAC concerns
2. The Home may temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and serious non-adherence with the Home's visiting policy.
  - The Home Retirement Home Manager (RHM) will make the final decision to discontinue visiting and will advise the visitor of this finding in writing. This decision should only be made after all other reasonable efforts to



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maintain safety during visits have been exhausted.

- The Home will stipulate a reasonable length of time in which the visitor is not permitted to visit the Home.
  - Prior to reinstating a visitor, the Home will clearly identify what requirements the visitors must meet before visits may be resumed (e.g., reviewing the home visiting policy, reviewing Public Health Ontario resources etc.)
  - Records will be kept of all incidents and when all incidents resulted in the discontinuation of visiting.
  - Where the Home has prohibited an essential caregiver from coming into the Home, the Resident/SDM may need to designate an alternative individual as a caregiver to assist with the needs of the Resident.
3. If a visitor demonstrates repeated incidents of non-adherence where the Home has provided the visitor with education explaining the necessary requirements and has ensured that the visitors are provided with sufficient time and resources to adhere to the requirements and the RHM has made themselves available to discuss any parts of this policy with visitors as required (dates and times of session should be recorded), the RHM or designate will ask the visitor to speak in a private area. The visitor will be informed that their visit is ending and why. The visitor will be asked to leave the home immediately and the Home will document the ending of the visit due to non-adherence.
4. While the Home is not required to supervise visits, they have the discretion to do so to manage the health and safety of Residents, team members, and visitors (e.g., monitoring the flow of visitors to ensure sufficient physical distancing is maintained, supporting residents during their visits, etc.). If the Home's RHM determines that supervision is required, supervision will be conducted in a manner that:
- Respects the Resident's right to communicate confidentially.
  - Receive visitors of their choice and
  - Consult in private with any person without interference.

### See Also:

Outbreak Management Policy  
Responsibilities – Visitors – P and P  
Visitor Log