

## **VISITOR COVID-19 PROTOCOLS**

The presence of family and friends is important to the emotional wellbeing of residents, and we recognize the importance of in-person visits. The health and safety of residents, families, team members, and visitors remains our top priority. The following protocols will support safe, equitable access, flexibility, equality, and opportunities for residents to have visitors to promote their overall wellbeing.

**What you need to know:** the chart below clarifies visitor definitions and highlights some key requirements in addition to protocols that are in place.

**Note:** Communities in outbreak or located in areas of higher community spread of infections may be subject to additional visitor restrictions and per Public Health Unit direction.

Vaccination remains the best defence against COVID-19, and combined with other measures and actions, high vaccination rates can help prevent and limit the spread of this virus in long-term care communities. All individuals entering our communities are strongly encouraged to stay up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses and obtain their COVID-19 booster doses when eligible. See the Government of Canada Vaccines for COVID-19 website: [Vaccines for COVID-19 - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/vaccines-immunization/covid-19-vaccines.html).

### **Masking Requirement**

A mask throughout this document refers to a medical/surgical mask. It is strongly recommended that visitors and caregivers wear a mask in resident areas indoors, except when with the resident in the resident's room or when eating or drinking with a resident in communal spaces. In addition, if a resident in a shared room is uncomfortable with others removing their mask, the Infection Prevention & Control Lead or designate will work with the roommate and visitor to find a designated space to enable visits without masking. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required based on a point of care risk assessment, if the resident is on additional precautions or as directed by the community's Infection Prevention & Control Lead and Public Health.

**Non-compliance with the community's visiting policy and guidelines could result in discontinuation of visits for the non-compliant visitor. Where the community has previously ended a visit, or temporarily prohibited a visitor, additional education/training must be provided to the visitor before visitation can be resumed. If a caregiver is temporarily prohibited, the resident/substitute decision maker may designate an alternative individual as the caregiver to help meet resident care needs.**

### **Visitor Requirements**

Visitor Sign-In and Passive Screening requirements to be followed:

- Read the passive screening questions on visitor signage found upon the entry doors of the community and do not enter the community if you are experiencing any respiratory symptoms or feeling unwell.
- Sign in using the screening sign in app/Visitor Sign-In Sheet
- In non-outbreak conditions: conduct passive screening
- In outbreak conditions: additional surveillance testing and screening requirements may be required

- Can participate in recreation activities, both indoor and outdoor, unless otherwise directed by Public Health.
- Must adhere to personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements in place at the community.
- Mask are not required for indoor or outdoor visits, but are encouraged.

**Visitor Types and Requirements**

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
<b>Essential Visitors</b>	<b>Caregiver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated in writing by the resident/substitute decision maker</li> <li>• Can be a friend/family member or person of importance</li> <li>• Provide one or more forms of support or assistance to meet resident care needs including providing direct physical support e.g. activities of daily living, social, spiritual or emotional support, whether the individual is paid or unpaid</li> <li>• Must be 16 years of age or older</li> <li>• The approval of a parent or legal guardian is required to permit individuals under the age of 16 years to be designated as a caregiver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign in upon entry to the community</li> <li>• Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19</li> <li>• Masking strongly recommended</li> <li>• No limit to the number of visitors when the community is not in outbreak</li> <li>• Additional IPAC training &amp; education required prior to visit</li> <li>• Should not visit any other long-term care home for 10 days after visiting a resident who is self-isolating including those experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are being assessed and if a home or area of a home is affected by an outbreak</li> <li>• Caregiver designated can be changed based on resident care needs</li> <li>• Additional PPE required based on isolation precautions and point of care risk assessment (non-outbreak)</li> </ul>
	<b>Support Workers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support to the critical operations of the community or to provide essential services to residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19</li> <li>• Medical mask required</li> <li>• Scheduling not required</li> <li>• Location of visit can be designated by site</li> <li>• No limit on the number of visitors</li> </ul>
	<b>Compassionate Reasons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person visiting the very ill for compassionate reasons including but not limited to hospice services or end of life care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undergo passive screening</li> <li>• No restrictions on number of visitors</li> <li>• Masking strongly recommended</li> </ul>
	<b>Government Inspector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a statutory right to enter a long-term care home to carry out their duties</li> </ul>	

Visitor Type	Category	Definition	Requirements
Other Visitors	General visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides non-essential services or visits for social reasons.</li> <li>Individuals providing personal care/ services such as hairdressing, barbers, manicurist, entertainers, recreational handlers as part of animal program, people entering for tours.</li> <li>Infants under the age of 2 are not considered visitors and are excluded from testing and masking requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct passive screening for infections including COVID-19</li> <li>Masking strongly recommended</li> <li>General visitors under the age of 14 years must be accompanied by an adult and must follow all applicable public health measures that are in place at the community</li> <li>No limit on number of visitors indoors and outdoors; however, number of visitors permitted will be based on available space at the community</li> <li>Not permitted to visit during a community wide outbreak</li> <li>Only permitted if resident home area / neighbourhood is not part of the outbreak and resident is not currently symptomatic/on isolation</li> </ul>

**Additional Visitor Information**

- All individuals 2 years of age and older will align with additional PPE requirements based on point of care risk assessment and as required by IPAC Lead/Public Health when visiting.
- The resident/Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) will determine who may visit. Resident/SDM will communicate individuals who are designated caregivers to the RN/Administration or Designate.
- Designated Caregivers who want to volunteer to support more than one resident during outbreak (caring for COVID-19 positive residents) and non-outbreak situations provided the community obtains consent from all involved residents (or their substitute decision makers).
- Education on the community’s infection prevention and control measures, including hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be available in varied training formats i.e. posters, videos, training sessions when the resident is on additional precautions, during an outbreak, and at any other times set out by the community.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will accessible and provided during the visits as required. Additional PPE may be required by designated caregivers based on point of care risk assessment.
- Animals may accompany visitors during a visit upon approval by the community Resident Services Supervisor/designate (note, service dogs will always be permitted and do not require approval).

**Visitors, please review the following education and training resources.**

- Recommended Steps: Putting on Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps>
- Video link: Putting on Full Personal Protective Equipment <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-on>
- Video link: Taking off Full Personal Protective Equipment <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-fullppe-off>
- Video link: How to Wash Your Hands

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-handwash>

**Additional References:**

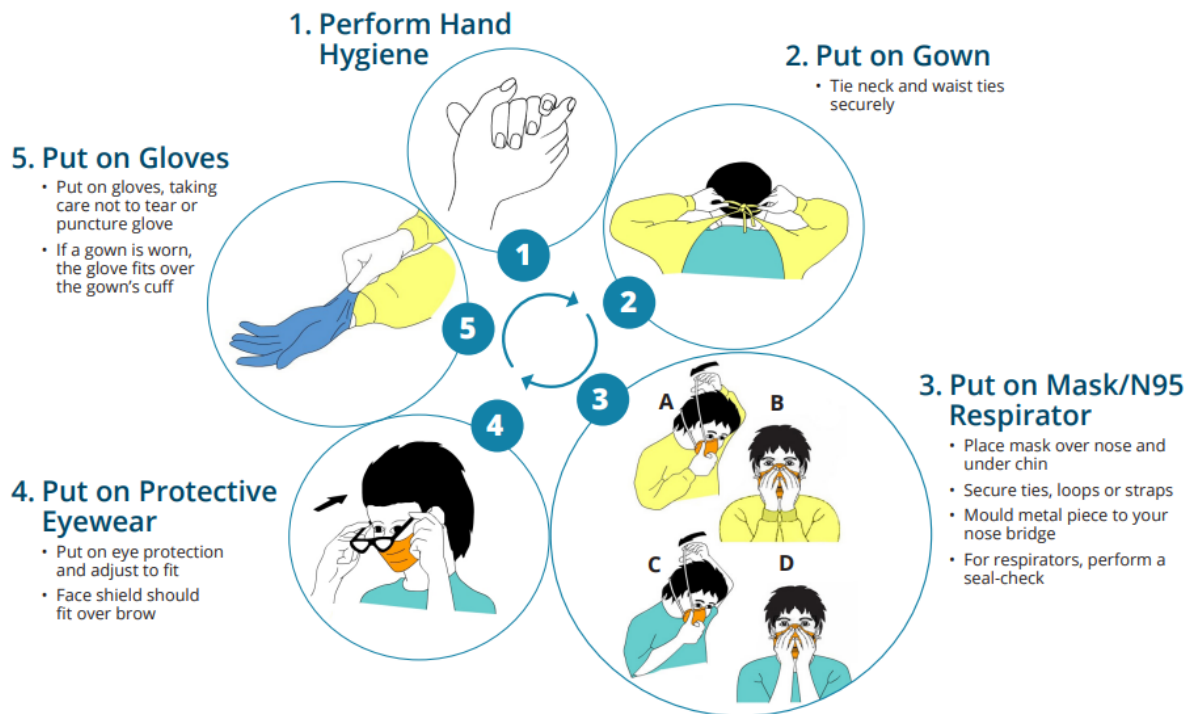
[COVID-19 guidance document for long-term care homes in Ontario | ontario.ca](#)

Training Posters

Donning and Doffing PPE:

Recommended Steps:

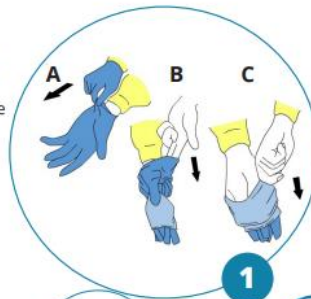
Putting On Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



## Recommended Steps: Taking Off Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

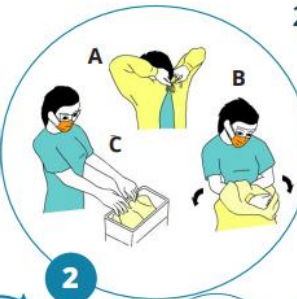
### 1. Remove Gloves

- Remove gloves using a glove-to-glove / skin-to-skin technique
- Grasp outside edge near the wrist and peel away, rolling the glove inside-out
- Reach under the second glove and peel away
- Discard immediately into waste receptacle



### 2. Remove Gown

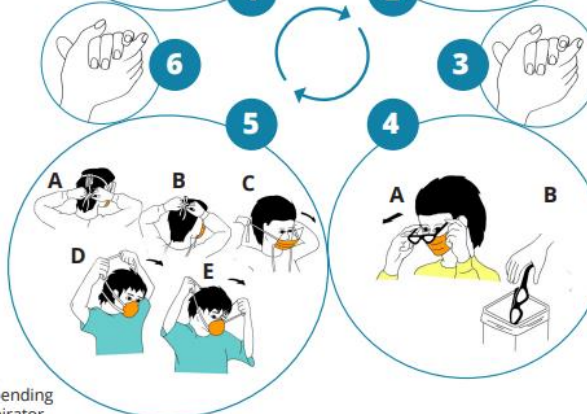
- Remove gown in a manner that prevents contamination of clothing or skin
- Starting with waist ties, then neck ties, pull the gown forward from the neck ties and roll it so that the contaminated outside of the gown is to the inside. Roll off the arms into a bundle, then discarded immediately in a manner that minimizes air disturbance.



### 6. Perform Hand Hygiene

### 5. Remove Mask/ N95 Respirator

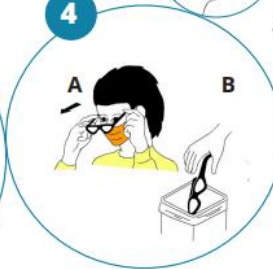
- Ties/ear loops/straps are considered 'clean' and may be touched with hands
- The front of the mask/respirator is considered to be contaminated
- Untie bottom tie then top tie, or grasp straps or ear loops
- Pull forward off the head, bending forward to allow mask/respirator to fall away from the face
- Discard immediately into waste receptacle



### 3. Perform Hand Hygiene

### 4. Remove Eye Protection

- Arms of goggles and headband of face shields are considered to be 'clean' and may be touched with the hands
- The front of goggles/face shield is considered to be contaminated
- Remove eye protection by handling ear loops, sides or back only
- Discard into waste receptacle or into appropriate container to be sent for reprocessing
- Personally-owned eyewear may be cleaned by the individual after each use



**Hand Hygiene:**

To clean hands properly, rub all parts of the hands and wrists with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. Pay special attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs.

