

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Office of the Deputy Minister
400 University Ave, 6th Fl
Toronto ON M5G 1S5
Telephone: (416) 325-6200

Ministère des Soins de longue durée

Bureau du sous-ministre
400, av University, 6e étage
Toronto ON M5G 1S5
Téléphone: (416) 325-6200



November 22, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Long-Term Care Home Licensees

FROM: Richard Steele
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Long-Term Care

SUBJECT: **Updated Long-Term Care Sector Surveillance Testing Strategy**

Further to my memo dated November 19, 2020, I am writing to inform you that the Minister of Long-Term Care has issued a Minister's Directive: COVID-19: Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing And Access to Homes, effective November 23, 2020.

The Minister's Directive requires long-term care home licensees to:

- Ensure staff, students and volunteers working in the home regularly take a COVID-19 test at the intervals as outlined in the Directive.
- For long-term care homes in public health unit regions in Orange-Restrict, Red-Control or Grey-Lockdown levels, ensure that support workers and caregivers demonstrate that they have received a negative COVID-19 test result in the past week, and verbally attest to not subsequently having tested positive (unless the support worker requires immediate access in an emergency situation).
- For long-term care homes in public health unit regions in Green-Prevent or Yellow-Protect levels, ensure all caregivers, all support workers and any general visitors demonstrate that they have received a negative COVID-19 test result and verbally attest to having received a negative COVID-19 test result in the past two weeks and not subsequently tested positive prior to visiting (unless the support worker requires immediate access in an emergency situation).

The Ministry is also releasing an updated COVID-19 Visiting Policy, effective November 23, 2020.

See Table 1 below for an overview of the testing approach.

Table 1

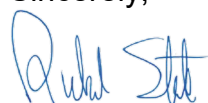
	LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT LEVEL				
	Green-Prevent	Yellow-Protect	Orange-Restrict	Red-Control	Grey-Lockdown
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tested every two weeks 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tested weekly 		
Students					
Volunteers					
Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past two weeks Verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive* 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past week Verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive* 		
Support workers					
General Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past two weeks Verbally attest to not subsequently testing positive* 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not applicable; visits not permitted. 		
*Unless the support worker or visitor requires immediate access in an emergency or palliative situation.					

The Minister’s Directive will be effective on Monday, November 23, 2020. Long-term care homes should work to implement the requirements for testing immediately and must not allow anyone into a home who has not met the requirements as of November 30, 2020.

Surveillance testing, active screening, infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices, hand hygiene, physical distancing and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) are important measures that will help reduce the risk of COVID-19 in long-term care homes.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic together.

Sincerely,



Richard Steele
Deputy Minister

c:

Donna Duncan, CEO, Ontario Long-Term Care Home Association
Brent Gingerich, Chair, Board of Directors, Ontario Long-Term Care Home Association
Lisa Levin, CEO, AdvantAge Ontario
Jane Sinclair, Chair, Board of Directors, AdvantAge Ontario
Brian Pollard, Assistant Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Capital Development Division
Sheila Bristo, Assistant Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Operations Division
Janet Hope, Assistant Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Policy Division
Janice Crawford, Director, Legal Services Branch
William Hatanaka, Board Chair, Ontario Health
Matthew Anderson, CEO, Ontario Health

Attachments:

Minister's Directive: COVID-19: Long-Term Care Home Surveillance Testing and Access to Homes
Staff, Student and Volunteer COVID-19 Testing in LTC Homes FAQs
COVID-19 Visiting Policy
COVID-19 Visiting Policy FAQs