

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Visiting long-term care homes during COVID-19: what you need to know

To protect the health and well-being of residents, staff and visitors in long-term care homes, Ontario has set requirements around visiting and testing.

Who can visit

Ontario's long-term care visitor policy aligns with the province's COVID-19 response framework:

- All visitors, including general visitors, staff, students, volunteers, caregivers and support workers are welcome at homes in public health regions in the green (prevent) and yellow (protect) levels.
- General visitors are not allowed at homes that are in outbreak or are located in regions in the orange (restrict), red (control) or grey (lockdown) levels, or if a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic.
- Only [essential visitors](#), including up to one caregiver per resident, may visit homes in the orange, red or grey regions, or where the home is in an outbreak.
- If a resident is self-isolating or symptomatic, only one caregiver may visit that resident at a time.
- Caregivers are essential visitors who are designated by a resident or their substitute decision maker and who provide direct care to residents, such as helping with feeding, mobility, hygiene, or cognitive stimulation. They can be family members or friends, privately hired caregivers, paid companions and/or translators.

People planning a visit to a long-term care home are advised to contact the home in advance to make sure the home is free of outbreaks, and to get information on the home's visitor policy and any other restrictions.

For more information:

- [Find out what level of the COVID-19 response framework your region is in.](#)
- Read Ontario's COVID-19 policy on [visiting long-term care homes](#).

Testing requirements

The Minister of Long-Term Care has issued a [directive](#) on testing that requires long-term care homes to:

- Ensure staff, students and volunteers working in the home regularly take a COVID-19 test (according to the table below).
- Ensure all caregivers, support workers and any general visitors have a negative test result for COVID-19 (according to the table below), and verbally attest to not subsequently having tested positive. **Exceptions will be made for caregivers, support workers, and general visitors who require immediate access in an emergency or a palliative situation**, subject to any restrictions contained in [Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes](#) issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- Exceptions will be made for individuals who have previously had laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 and were cleared by the local public health unit.

Testing requirements in long-term care homes

Type of Visitor	LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT LEVEL				
	Green- Prevent	Yellow- Protect	Orange- Restrict	Red- Control	Grey- Lockdown
Staff Students Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested every two weeks 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested weekly 		
Caregivers Support Workers	<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 		
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. 		

Questions? Email LTC.Info@ontario.ca