




Visitor restrictions in place at Island Health facilities



Visiting Someone in Hospital

Visitor restrictions are now in place at all Island Health facilities/outpatient clinics

To support the Provincial Health Officer's directions for physical distancing, and to protect Island Health patients, staff and visitors from the transmission of **COVID-19**, the B.C. Ministry of Health has made the difficult decision to allow only essential visits to all B.C. healthcare facilities.

You can learn more about essential visits by reading our updated  **Essential Visitor Policy**.

Wearing a mask within our facilities

BC's Provincial Health Officer has encouraged people to wear masks in indoor public places where physical distancing isn't possible, whether in a store, on public transit, or in the community. Island Health has taken steps within our facilities to reduce the risk of transmission with physical barriers and signs to promote physical distancing. You can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by wearing a clean non-medical face mask or covering when you are not able to distance yourself from others in Island Health facilities.

Long Term Care and Assisted Living Social Visiting Information

Information for families of those living in Long-Term Care and Assisted Living sites

We understand that visitor restrictions because of COVID-19 have been difficult for families and friends.

Please read below for information about social visits at Long-Term Care and Assisted Living sites.

You can also refer to Island Health's [📄 Long-Term Care Social Visiting Policy](#) and the BCCDC's [📄 Social Visiting Guidelines for Long-Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities resource](#) [↗](#) to help you get ready for your visit.

When will I be able to visit with my family member or friend who lives in a Long-Term Care home or seniors' Assisted Living site?

What can I expect at a social visit?

What safety measures are in place?

What about essential visits? How will these change?

Facilities will continue to support visitors for essential visits. Long-term care facility leadership and the clinical team will determine if a visit is essential. Essential visits shall be limited to one visitor per patient/client within the facility at a time (except in the case of palliative/end-of-life care).

Read more about [📄 essential visitor policy](#).


What if I have concerns about visitor policy decisions or feel that my care, or my loved one's care, has been impacted?

What if I am not comfortable talking to a staff member or unhappy about how my concerns were handled?

What if I still have concerns after contacting the The Patient Care Quality Office?

Essential Visitors Call Centre

Unsure whether your visit is considered essential? Call to speak with an Access Ambassador: **Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. toll-free 1.833.348.4787.**

Our Ambassadors provide general information about visitation to Island Health facilities during COVID-19 and assistance in interpreting the  **Essential Visitor Policy**. The Ambassadors do not have the authority to decide if a caller qualifies as an Essential Visitor. Individuals who, after reviewing the Essential Visitor Policy, feel they should qualify as an Essential Visitor must make this request by calling the relevant unit and speaking directly with unit staff.

Staying connected to family can support health and healing. If you cannot visit your loved one in person, or if you want to visit with them more often, we suggest: talking on the phone (cell phone or tablets [e.g., iPad]) or using a video chat app (e.g., FaceTime, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger).

Other Visits to Island Health Facilities

In addition to essential visits, the following visitor restrictions apply:

- Labour and delivery patients, can have two designated birth support people in labour rooms during labour;
- In-patients can have one designated support person, who requires specific on-going supports as deemed necessary by their care team;
- People who require emergency care, plus one (1) support person (for example, a child, a patient with mobility challenges, or someone who cannot self-advocate);
- One person can drop-off laboratory samples.

Tips for Visiting an Island Health Facility

Island Health is committed to keeping you, our patients, and our staff, safe. These tips will help you prepare for a successful visit to one of our facilities. For frequently asked questions and detailed safety information for before, during and after your visit, please review the FAQs below.

- Arrive early for pre-booked appointments or visits.
- Look for signs posted indicating designated entrance points.
- Practice proper hand hygiene and maintain social distance.
- Be prepared to participate in a mandatory screening process.
- Stay home if you are unwell.

Frequently Asked Questions and Detailed Visitor Information

What should I expect when I arrive at an Island Health facility?

How can I keep myself and others safe when visiting an Island Health facility?

What safety measures should I be aware of when I visit?

My loved one is palliative (receiving end-of-life care). Will I be able to visit?

How many support people are allowed to support a patient in labour/delivery/NICU?

I am receiving chemotherapy or another hospital-administered medication. Will I be able to enter a facility for treatment?

Can I phone the hospital and speak to my loved one who is admitted?

How will I know if my previously scheduled appointment has been cancelled?

I am worried that I have COVID-19; why can't I come to the hospital?

Can I bring my loved one their personal belongings or food?

What happens if I need to drop off and/or pick up someone who has a scheduled appointment?

Who can I talk to if I have questions or concerns?

EMERGENCIES

If you are in urgent need of medical care, please call 911. If you require health care advice for a non-urgent concern, call HealthLink BC at 811.

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before Canada and BC were formed, Indigenous peoples lived in balance and interconnectedness with the land and water in which the necessities of life are provided. Health disparities persist, which are due to the impacts of colonization and Indigenous-specific racism. Healthy lands, healthy people. Island Health acknowledges and recognizes these homelands and the stewardship of Indigenous peoples of this land; it is with humility we continue to work toward building our relationship.

Thank you for printing this page from IslandHealth.ca. You might find this additional information useful.

Contact Island Health

Phone: (250) 370-8699 Toll-free: 1 (877) 370-8699

Compliments & Complaints

Phone: (250) 370-8323 Toll-free: 1 (877) 977-5797

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