



October 16, 2020

To: Operators of Long Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities
From: Dr. Albert de Villiers, Chief Medical Health Officer

Re: Infection Control Practices Order - Classes of Visitors and Essential Visitor Criteria

In consultation with the Interior Health Long Term Care Services, Medical Health Officers, and Licensees of Long-term Care Facilities (LTCF), Interior Health has decided that **Essential Visitors** will no longer be approved through an MHO Exemption process, but managed at the LTCF level.

Licensees of LTCF will be responsible for assessing and approving the requests for essential visitor(s) for persons in care so long as the LTCF implements a written request and approval process, and that the proposed essential visits meet specific criteria as outlined in Appendix A of the [Class Order – COVID19 Infection Control Practices in Long-Term Care Facilities \(LTCF\)](#). This Order repeals and replaces the Chief Medical Officer Order of May 8, 2020 with respect to Infection Control Practices in Long-term Care Facilities.

Appendix A is also included here:

Appendix A – Criteria for Essential Visitor Approvals

The LTCF must ensure the following criteria is met and a process for documenting each aspect in writing for each requested/approved essential visitor(s) is in place prior to visitations taking place:

1. In order for the visitor request to be considered by the LTCF, they must meet the definition of an Essential Visitor: *“Visitor is considered paramount to the health and well-being of the person in care to ensure care is provided as set out in a person in care’s care plan”*.
2. The LTCF has considered how to provide this support virtually or with the staffing model in place; and has assessed that the need for the essential visitor(s) is still required and congruent with the care plan of the person in care.
3. The LTCF supports the request for the specific named Essential Visitor(s) and proposed plan for visitation. In addition, the person in care, their family or representative, the Most Responsible Physician (MRP), the health care team or any persons who contributed to the person in care’s care plan are also supportive of the proposed essential visits.

4. The Essential Visitor/Visitation plan describes how:
 - The LTCF will screen the essential visitor(s) each time of entry using the greeter's script. If the essential visitor(s) does not pass the screening questions in the greeter's script, the LTCF will not allow admission to the LTCF.
 - The LTCF will provide education and training on infection control processes, and applicable policies and procedures.
 - The essential visitor(s) will meet the expectations for the provision of required PPE.
 - The LTCF will assess the essential visitor's comprehension and implementation of infection control measures, PPE use, and all facility policies.
 - The LTCF will monitor the essential visitor's adherence with the infection control measures and all expectations as set out in policy.
 - The plan includes a plan should the essential visitor(s) fail/refuse to abide by the expectations set out in the request for visitation.
 - The operator will escort the essential visitor(s) to and from the specified room and ensure that the essential visitor(s) is confined to that area that ensures social distancing or avoids contact with other persons in care, and does not engage in activities outside of the specified room.
 - The essential visitor(s) has access only to a prescribed person in care in the specified room at the time of the visit.
 - The plan includes specific days and times for the essential visitor(s) attending the LTCF.

If an LTCF has an outbreak of COVID-19 or Influenza declared by an Interior Health MHO, all visitations should be temporarily postponed from the LTCF for the duration of the outbreak. The LTCF must have a communication plan in place on how they will inform any and all visitors seeking to visit persons in care of this prohibition and also when the visitations can re-commence.

If you have any questions regarding this order and the different classes of visitation please call Licensing Direct at 1.877.980.5118 or email at LicensingDirect@interiorhealth.ca.