# COVID-19: Long-term Care and Registered Assisted Living Visitor Appeal and Review Process

	Scope:	
Site:	<ul> <li>Audience: Clinical visitor decision makers, Site</li></ul>	
• Environment	Administrators, LTC/AL Residents,	
• Long-term Care (LTC) Island Wide	Visitors/potential Visitors of LTC/AL resident <li>Indications: Complaints process and mechanism</li>	
• Registered Assisted Living (AL) Island	for appealing decisions regarding essential and	
Wide	social visitors <li>Exceptions:</li>	

# Need to know:

- To ensure fair and consistent decision making regarding the complaints and appeal process for essential and social visitors
- To comply with <u>Ministry of Health Overview of Visitors in Long-Term Care and Seniors' Assisted Living</u> initially released February 25, 2021
- Visitor restrictions apply to all licensed long-term care and registered seniors' assisted living settings in BC
- Visitor restrictions are grounded in the Regional/Provincial Health Orders under section <u>32(2)(b)(ii) of</u> <u>the Public Health Act.</u>
- Island Health has developed policies to inform safe visiting within the criteria above
  - <u>Essential Visitor Determination Guideline: LTCF</u> (intranet link)
  - <u>Social Visiting: LTCF</u> (intranet link)
  - o <u>Palliative and End of Life Care: Essential Visits Across ALL Care Settings</u> (intranet link)
  - Public site link: <u>https://www.islandhealth.ca/our-services/assisted-living-long-term-care-services/long-term-care-and-assisted-living-social-visiting-information</u>

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- Visit decisions whether approved or denied are documented as part of the resident care record along with supporting evidence. Island Health has tools for this purpose:
  - o Essential Visitor Plan
  - o <u>Visitor Review and Appeal for Non-Visit Decision</u>
- Island Health Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO) receives all concerns if not resolved on-site regarding visitor restrictions and facilitates resolution within 7 days through referral to the Island Health LTC program contact as designated.
  - Public Website: <u>https://www.islandhealth.ca/patients-visitors/patient-care-quality-office</u>
  - o Toll-free Number 1-877-977-5797
  - O Email: patientcarequalityoffice@viha.ca

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# **Overview of Visiting**

This table is intended to summarize key information from Island Health visiting guidelines. For full details refer to specific guidelines as linked above

Criteria	Social	Essential	Palliative End of life
Definition	Visit not involved with residents	Linked with essential	Caring for individuals whose
	health-care or support needs,	need that could not be	condition is considered end-of-
	purpose is social	met in the absence of	life and death is anticipated as
		essential visit	imminent as determined by
			physician or nurse practitioner
Appointment	Yes	Depends on essential	No
required		need being met and site	
Number of	Maximum 2 adults and 1 child	One visitor per resident	1-2 visitors at bedside (does
visitors	per resident in facility at one	in facility at one time	not limit number of visitors in a
	time (does not limit number of		day)
	visitors or visits in a day)		
	Outdoor visits subject to current		
	public health guidance on		
	gatherings		
Visitor Screening	Yes	Yes	Yes
and Contact			
Tracing			
Infection	Hand hygiene	Hand hygiene	Hand hygiene
Prevention and	Respiratory Etiquette	Respiratory Etiquette	Respiratory Etiquette
Control Criteria	Physical distancing	Physical distancing	Physical distancing
	Medical grade mask	Medical grade mask	Medical grade mask
Time limit	Minimum 60 minutes offered	May vary depending on	Extended visits or vigil in
	No limit to frequency or	essential need being met	consultation with care team
	duration of visits	per Essential Visitor Plan	
Location of visit	Resident room	Resident room	Resident room
	Designated indoor or outdoor	Designated indoor or	Designated indoor or outdoor
	location	outdoor location	location
Outbreak	Visits suspended	May be permitted under	May be permitted under
declared		guidance from local	guidance from local MHO
		МНО	

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### **Visitor Appeal and Review Process**

Reviews of decisions will proceed according to the process outlined in the algorithm below.



Individual (e.g., resident, staff, family, friend) makes a verbal or written request to a member of the resident's care team or clinical leadership at the site for essential or social visitor status.

Timeline: Response and decision within 24 hours.

Response and decision is communicated to the individual making the request. If visitation is denied, the individual making the request is given written reasons, and notified of option to contact the site administrator for a review of the decision. Clinical leadership in partnership with the resident (or substitute decision-maker) and the care team consider the request and determine whether the request is in alignment with established criteria as required by PHO Order & Visitor Guidance.

Request and reasons for approval/denial of visitation are documented in record (e.g., log book, resident's chart or file) along with supporting evidence (e.g., multidisciplinary team notes, charting, care plan, Cornell Depression Scale, Dietician recommendations, OT recommendations).

#### Step 2: Review by Site Administrator

Individual has ongoing concerns related to visits or visitor status, or is not satisfied with initial decision regarding visitation.

**Timeline:** Upon request for review, decision in 24 hours to be followed by written rationale within 48 hours. Individual with concerns contacts site administrator designated to review visitor concerns, and – in person, by telephone, or by email – expresses concerns related to visits or visitor status, or seeks review of a decision denying visitor status or revoking visitation privileges. Site administrator consults the initial decision-maker, and conducts a review of the request and all relevant documentation/ evidence (e.g., resident's file) to assess whether the request is in alignment with established criteriaas required by PHO Order & Visitor Guidance.

Site administrator designated to review visitor concerns provides a written decision. If the initial decision is upheld, information regarding pursuing further review through the regional health authority's Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO) should be provided.

Documentation related to review and decision stored in resident's file including a copy of the written response.

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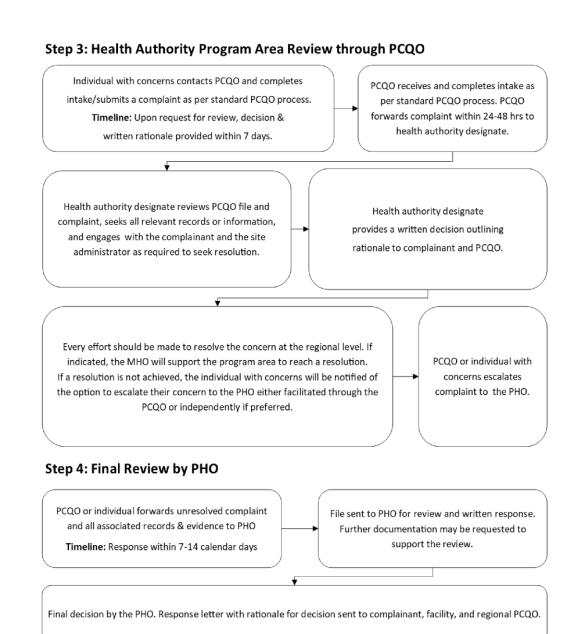
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The PHO is the final avenue for appeal regarding decisions on visitor status. Please note that this process does not preclude individuals from contacting the PCQRB if they have a concern related to the quality of the process in place, or the Ombudsperson if they have concerns regarding administrative fairness.

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#### Persons/Groups Consulted:

- Island Health Long-term Care Visitor Advisory Committee
- Island Health Long-term Care Practice Council
- Island Health Long-term Care Quality Council

## Resources

- <u>Ministry of Health Overview of Visitors in Long-Term Care and Seniors' Assisted Living</u> February 25, 2021
- Provincial Health Order: Visitation and Visitor Appeal and Review February 5, 2021
- Social Visiting: LTCF (<u>https://intranet.viha.ca/pnp/pnpdocs/social-visiting-long-term-care-facility.pdf</u>)
- LTC and AL Essential Visitor Determination Guideline (<u>https://intranet.viha.ca/pnp/pnpdocs/ltc-assisted-living-essential-visitor-determination.pdf</u>)
- Palliative and End of Life Care: Essential Visits Across ALL Care Settings (<u>https://intranet.viha.ca/covid-19/Documents/palliative-end-life-care-essential-visits-all-care-settings.pdf</u>)

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