

# COVID-19 Family Visits Resource Package

September 24, 2021

# Overview

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# Introduction

This Family Visits Resource Package outlines Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) requirements for congregate settings within the context of Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen.

Bethesda's indoor/outdoor visits, short stay absences, and overnight absences will be guided by the following principles:

- ✓ **Safety:** Visiting inside a congregate care setting should consider the health and safety needs of all residents, staff, and visitors, and support the mitigation of identified risks.
- ✓ **Emotional Well-Being:** Visits are intended to support the emotional well-being of residents and their families/friends by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation.
- ✓ **Equitable Access:** Visits should be conducted equitably and be consistent with resident preference, within reasonable restrictions that safeguard all residents and staff.

Even as guidance becomes more flexible, where visitors or individuals are immunocompromised or at high-risk of severe disease from COVID-19 virtual visits should be considered, if possible.

Bethesda has implemented a COVID-19 vaccination policy and the requirements of this will be communicated to all stakeholders, as appropriate. The policy is available upon request.

# Visitors

Visitor Type	Indoor	Outdoor
<p><b>Essential</b></p> <p>An essential visitor is generally a person who:</p> <p>Performs essential services to support the ongoing operation of a service agency (including a contractor); and/or considered necessary to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights, of a congregate living resident. An essential visitor may include but is not limited to the following:</p> <p>A parent/guardian Social service workers (e.g. child welfare workers, day program operators etc.) Health care providers (e.g. doctor, nurse, personal)</p>	<p>Permitted</p> <p>Unscheduled Unsupervised Active screening completed prior to entry Surgical/procedure mask required Brief physical contact permitted (e.g. a hug)</p> <p>Maximum capacity will be based on ability to physically distance within a designated area.</p>	<p>Permitted</p> <p>Unscheduled Unsupervised Active screening completed prior to entry Brief physical contact permitted (e.g. a hug) Choice not to mask + physical distance outdoors if all parties are fully immunized</p> <p>Maximum capacity will be based on ability to physically distance within a designated area.</p>
<p><b>Non-essential</b></p> <p>A non-essential visitor is generally a person who:</p> <p>Provides non-essential services, who may or may not be hired by the site or the resident and/or their substitute decision maker; and/or for social reasons (e.g. family members or friends).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> there are no longer separate parameters for a 'designated' visitor type.</p>	<p>Permitted</p> <p>Scheduled (with the Residential Manager or designate) Supervised (by the Residential Manager or designate) Active screening completed prior to entry Surgical/procedure mask Physical distancing required Brief physical contact permitted (e.g. a hug) Maximum number of visitors in line with social gathering limits in Roadmap to Reopen (dependent on the Step)</p>	<p>Permitted</p> <p>Scheduled (with the Residential Manager or designate) Supervised (with the Residential Manager or designate) Active screening completed prior to entry Brief physical contact permitted (e.g. a hug) Choice not to mask + physical distance outdoors if all parties are fully immunized Maximum number of visitors in line with social gathering limits in Roadmap to Reopen (dependent on the Step)</p>

## VIRTUAL VISITS

Virtual visits will be strongly encouraged and facilitated wherever possible.

# Visitor Requirements

## VISITOR REQUIREMENTS:

For each visit, all essential and non-essential visitors must:

- Pass an active screening questionnaire that screens for COVID-19 signs and symptoms.
- Read and agree to the parameters of the visit set out by the service provider in compliance with this document and Public Health direction.
- Share their contact information, which will be made available to relevant staff and for Local Public Health Units contact tracing activity, as needed.
- Remain within designated spaces as identified by Bethesda.

# Screening and PPE Requirements

## SCREENING

Active screening of all visitors will be completed by Bethesda staff upon arrival

## MASKING REQUIREMENTS

A medical (surgical/procedure) mask must be worn by all essential and non-essential visitors at all times during indoor visits.

Masking is **not a substitute** for other important infection prevention and control practices, including active symptom screening, hand hygiene, and physical distancing.

Medical (surgical/procedure) masks will be supplied by Bethesda.

## EYE PROTECTION

Eye protection (i.e. face shield, goggles, safety glasses) must be worn by essential visitors when providing direct care to an individual (i.e. care provided within 2 metres) indoors, or in an enclosed space. Eye protection will be provided by Bethesda.

# Resident Absences

Absence Type	
<p><b>Short Stay (Same day)</b></p> <p>This includes essential absences (e.g., work, school, medical appointment, physical exercise) and recreational outings (activities for pleasure, visits to a friend's home).</p>	<p>Permitted in line with activities and social gathering parameters in Roadmap to Reopen.</p> <p>To be scheduled with the Residential Manager or designate.</p>
<p><b>Overnight or Longer (Essential)</b></p> <p>Considered necessary to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights, of a resident.</p>	<p>Permitted</p> <p><b>Partially vaccinated or unvaccinated</b> residents must follow additional precautions (see below) until they receive a negative COVID-19 PCR test. The test should be taken 5 – 7 days following their return. If the resident chooses not to take the PCR test, or is unable to, additional precautions must be in place for 14 days from their return.</p> <p>These precautions include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing monitoring for symptoms</li> <li>- Avoid using common areas; however, if a common area cannot be avoided, the resident must use a surgical/procedure mask, if tolerated</li> <li>- Limit contact with others</li> <li>- Only participate in group activities if physical distancing is maintained (i.e. 2 metres) and a surgical/procedure mask is used for the duration of the activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fully vaccinated</b> (&gt; 2 weeks post second dose) residents have no additional precautions, if they pass the active screener.</p> <p>To be scheduled with the Residential Manager or designate.</p>
<p><b>Overnight or Longer (General)</b></p> <p>Any non-essential overnight absence.</p>	<p>Permitted in line with social gathering parameters in Roadmap to Reopen.</p> <p><b>Partially vaccinated or unvaccinated</b> residents must follow additional precautions (see below) until they receive a negative COVID-19 PCR test. The test should be taken 5 – 7 days following their return. If the resident chooses not to take the PCR test, or is unable to, additional precautions must be in place for 14 days from their return.</p> <p>These precautions include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing monitoring for symptoms</li> <li>- Avoid using common areas; however, if a common area cannot be avoided, the resident must use a surgical/procedure mask, if tolerated</li> <li>- Limit contact with others</li> <li>- Only participate in group activities if physical distancing is maintained (i.e. 2 metres) and a surgical/procedure mask is used for the duration of the activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fully vaccinated</b> (&gt; 2 weeks post second dose) residents have no additional precautions, if they pass the active screener.</p> <p>To be scheduled with the Residential Manager or designate.</p>

# Contact Us

Should you have any questions, comments or concerns, we invite you to contact us directly.

**For general questions:** [questions@bethesdaservices.com](mailto:questions@bethesdaservices.com)

**For questions specific to your loved one:**

Shelley Mercer: [smercerc@bethesdaservices.com](mailto:smercerc@bethesdaservices.com) or

Joyce Fretz: [jfretz@bethesdaservices.com](mailto:jfretz@bethesdaservices.com)

**To speak to a Niagara Public Health Professional** regarding COVID-19 concerns, Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:15 pm  
905.688.8248 or 1.888.505.6074, press 7.

