

# Snapshot of Long-Term Care Facility Visitation Policies Across Canadian Province and Territories

This document contains a quick summary scan of visitation policies among long-term care (LTC) facilities from each of the Canadian provinces and territories (P/T). A summary table is provided, followed by more detailed information about each jurisdiction's policies. It is important to note that each P/T's information would be expected to vary depending on the epidemiological context and the outbreak situation in that jurisdiction. This document was prepared by the Public Health Physicians of Canada, the national specialty society for Public Health and Preventive Medicine Specialists and public health physicians.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Long-Term Care Facility Visitation Policies Across Canadian Provinces and Territories

Province/Territory	Visiting Policy	Number of Visitors
<b>British Columbia</b>	Essential visits only <sup>1</sup>	One visitor per resident at a time
<b>Alberta</b>	Essential visits only <sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated Essential Visitors may enter the facility.</li> <li>An additional visitor may accompany the Essential Visitor for outdoor visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A resident may have only one Essential Visitor designated</li> <li>An additional visitor may accompany the Essential Visitor for outdoor visits.</li> </ul>
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	Indoor: Essential visits only <sup>1</sup> Outdoor: Visitation permitted	Indoor: Case by case basis Outdoor: Multiple visitors permitted, provided that two-meter physical distancing with the resident is possible to maintain
<b>Manitoba</b>	Essential visits only <sup>1</sup>	Case by case basis
<b>Ontario</b>	Outdoor visitation permitted	One visitor per resident per week at minimum permitted
<b>Quebec</b>	Essential visits <sup>1</sup> permitted as well as visitation by a significant caregiver who provides support to the resident <sup>2</sup>	Maximum two visitors at one time
<b>New Brunswick</b>	Indoor and outdoor visitation permitted	Indoor: one visitor at a time <sup>3</sup> Outdoor: two visitors at a time
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	Outdoor visitation permitted	Maximum two visitors per visit
<b>PEI</b>	Indoor: Essential visits only <sup>1</sup> Outdoor: Visitation permitted	Indoor: maximum 6 designated visitors; only two may visit at a time Outdoor: Maximum two designated visitors
<b>Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</b>	Facilities may choose from in-home, window, or outdoor visiting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exceptions made on case-by-case basis for End of Life</li> </ul>	In-home: One designated visitor permitted Window and outdoor: multiple visitors permitted
<b>Nunavut</b>	No visitation permitted <sup>4</sup>	N/A
<b>Northwest Territories</b>	No visitation permitted	N/A
<b>Yukon</b>	Outdoor visitation permitted	One visitor per visit <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Further information on each jurisdiction's definition of an essential visit can be found below

<sup>2</sup>The resident must have been receiving support from their significant caregiver prior to visiting restrictions being put in place due to COVID-19

<sup>3</sup>If the visitor required support they are permitted to be accompanied by one other person

<sup>4</sup>No visitation was permitted during time of publication, however, it has been announced that Nunavut's LTC facilities will begin accepting visitors beginning June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## LINK

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/covid-19-infection-prevention-control.pdf>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Restricted to essential visits only
  - o Defined as:
    - Visits for compassionate care, including critical illness, palliative care, hospice care, end of life, and Medical Assistance in Dying.
    - Visits paramount to the patient/client's physical care and mental well-being, including:
      - Assistance with feeding
      - Assistance with mobility
      - Assistance with personal care
      - Communication assistance for persons with hearing, visual, speech, cognitive, intellectual or memory impairments
      - Assistance by designated representatives for persons with disabilities, including provision of emotional support
      - Visits for supported decision making
      - Visits for pediatric care, labour and delivery
    - Existing registered volunteers providing the services described above
    - Visits required to move belongings in or out of a client's room
    - Police, correctional officers and peace officers accompanying a patient/client for security reasons.
  - o Health authority staff determine if a visit is essential.
- Visits can occur with COVID + patients.
- Visitor policy shall be clearly posted on health authority's main public website.
- Information shall be available in English and all languages commonly spoken in the local community.
- Family and visitors can request a formal review of the decision + an immediate review of the decision by an administrator.
- Visitors screened for sign and symptoms of illness prior to every visit.
- Visits limited to one visitor per patient/client within the facility at a time.

## LINK

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17001.aspx>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- One essential visitor allowed to support either care needs that cannot be met without their assistance, or to support quality of life.
- A resident may have only one Essential Visitor designated by the resident or guardian (or other alternate decision maker).
- An Essential Visitor may be a family member, friend, religious and spiritual advisor or paid caregiver 18 years of age or older.
- Essential visitors allowed in the following cases:
  - o End of life situations where there is a time-sensitive need to be with a loved one.
  - o An outdoor visit may be arranged for a resident not on isolation. An Essential Visitor and up to one additional person may visit as long as the additional person remains outside and does not enter the facility.
- Visitors must:
  - o Pre-arrange visits with the facility manager and be expected by the site administration or charge nurse. There may be circumstances where not all visitors are able to be accommodated, even if otherwise permitted in this guidance.
  - o Be feeling well on the date/time of visit.
  - o Complete health screening prior to entering the facility, including a temperature check for fever over 38 degrees Celsius and a questionnaire.
  - o Wear a mask or face covering while inside the facility.
  - o Sign in and out of all visits.
  - o Perform hand hygiene (hand washing and/or use of hand sanitizer) when entering and leaving the facility and when entering and leaving the resident's room.
  - o Pets cannot be brought in by any visitor.

# Saskatchewan

## LINK

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/public-health-measures/guidance-for-health-care-facilities>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visitors allowed only for compassionate care reasons.
- Compassionate care reasons include:
  - o family or support persons during end-of-life care
  - o major surgery
  - o intensive care/critical care
  - o a care partner aiding in clinical care (at the discretion of the patient's care provider).
- Visitors must be verified and undergo a health screening prior to entering the facility, including a temperature check and questionnaire.

# Manitoba

## LINK

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-family-ltc.pdf>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visitors not allowed, with the exception of compassionate reasons or end of life will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of individual facility managers.

# Ontario

## LINK

[https://files.ontario.ca/mltc-resuming-visits-long-term-care-homes-en-2020-06-11-v3.pdf?\\_ga=2.162710964.944363698.1592406607-2030599794.1592406607](https://files.ontario.ca/mltc-resuming-visits-long-term-care-homes-en-2020-06-11-v3.pdf?_ga=2.162710964.944363698.1592406607-2030599794.1592406607)

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Outdoor visits of one person per resident each week at minimum allowed.
- Physical distancing required for all visits.
- Visitors must have tested negative for COVID within two weeks prior to visit.
- Homes must not be in outbreak.

# Quebec

## LINK

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/answers-questions-coronavirus-covid19/questions-answers-health-services-covid-19/>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visits allowed for humanitarian reasons, such as when death is imminent (24-48 hours).
- Maximum 2 visitors are allowed at a time.
- Visitors will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19.
- A significant caregiver may continue to provide support to a resident if the resident was receiving support prior to visiting restrictions being put in place due to COVID-19.

# New Brunswick

## LINK

[https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news\\_release.2020.06.0324.html](https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2020.06.0324.html)

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Outdoor visits with up to two visitors for residents in long-term care facilities are permitted with physical distancing, if the facilities are able to do so.
- Indoor visits with one visitor at a time for residents of long-term care facilities will be permitted. (Unless the visitor requires support, in which case, two visitors at a time will be allowed.) **effective June 19, 2020.**

# Nova Scotia

## LINK

<https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20200610004>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visitors are permitted with the following restrictions:
  - o Visits must take place outdoors in designated areas on the facility's grounds
  - o Maximum of two visitors may attend at one time
  - o Visitors must maintain physical distance of two meters
  - o Visitors must be screened for COVID-19 upon entry and wear a non-medical mask
  - o Visits must be logged

# Prince Edward Island

## LINK

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/long-term-care-easing-restriction-on-visitation>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Routine visiting:
  - o Outdoor visits will take place in designated areas.
  - o A maximum of two designated visitors per resident.
  - o Designated visitors remain consistent and do not change.
  - o Designated visitors may visit together or separately.
  - o Visits will be limited to a maximum of 60 minutes to allow access to all residents within the property.
  - o Visits will be scheduled at specific visiting times to allow for appropriate staff support to help during the visit.
- End of life visits:
  - o These visits entail bedside visits in residents' rooms.
  - o A maximum of six designated visitors will be selected per resident.
  - o Only two of the six designated visitors may visit at one time.
  - o The two daily visitors may visit together or separately.

# Newfoundland & Labrador

## LINK

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/guidelines-for-support-person-designated-visitors/>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Residents can identify one support person/designated visitor who should remain constant for the duration of the visiting restrictions.
- The support person/designated visitor must contact the home to coordinate the time of the visit and to ensure they are aware of all visiting requirements.
- For all visiting, the designated visitor must complete the self-assessment questionnaire upon arrival/prior to the visit beginning.
- Support person/designated visitor must register upon presentation to the home. The name of visitor, name of resident and date of the visit must be recorded and retained.
- Homes choose from in-home, window or outdoor visiting.
- Window visiting and outdoor visiting may take place with multiple visitors at a time but must be at a two-meter distance from the resident.
- End of Life:
  - o The clinical care team will discuss visiting protocols with the support person/designated visitors, and advise the number of visitors permitted, as determined by the clinical status of the patient/resident.
  - o All immediate family (parents, siblings, spouse and children) will be permitted to visit the patient/resident.
  - o Individuals will not be limited to one visit per day.
  - o Clinical care team will discuss the coordination of visitors with the primary support person or substitute decision maker and decide the number of visitors permitted in the patient/resident room at any given time.



# Nunavut

## LINK

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/news/covid-19-department-health-services-update>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Currently no visitors allowed, but, starting June 29<sup>th</sup> long-term care facilities will begin accepting visitors in a limited capacity; they can only allow one to two visitors per resident at a time, and these visitors can only be immediate family.

# Northwest Territories

## LINK

<https://www.nthssa.ca/en/newsroom/public-notice-march-17th-nthssa-operational-update>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visitations to long term care sites cancelled .

# Yukon

## LINK

<https://yukon.ca/en/news/june-12-2020-covid-19-update>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- One visitor permitted per visit. Outdoor visits only.
- Phase 2 (coming July 1) will permit two outdoor visitors at a time.