

GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

PREAMBLE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and safety of our Residents, families, staff, and visitors remains our top priority. The presence of family and friends is an important source of mental and emotional strength for our Residents and we recognize that nothing replaces an in-person visit. The following policy supports safe visits.

POLICY

In accordance with the most current directives and guidance documents issued by Provincial and/or Municipal/Local authorities, Good Samaritan Seniors' Complex (GSSC) shall permit "general visitors" at the Home/Lodge during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PURPOSE

The requirements set out in this policy are to ensure the safety of all Residents, staff and visitors, and allow for the continuity of general visits that support the mental, physical and spiritual needs of Residents for their quality of life. Any non-compliance with the rules set out in this policy will be the basis for discontinuation of a visit.

Guiding Principles

- **Safety** – any approach to visiting must balance the health and safety needs of Residents, staff, and visitors, and ensure risks are mitigated
- **Emotional well-being** – allowing visitors is intended to support the mental and emotional well-being of Residents by reducing any potential negative impacts related to social isolation
- **Equitable Access** – all Residents must be given equitable access to receive visitors, consistent with their preferences and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard Residents
- **Flexibility** – the physical/infrastructure characteristics of the home, its staffing availability, whether the home is in an outbreak and the current status of the home with respect to personal protective equipment (PPE are all variables to consider when setting home specific policies)
- **Equality** – Residents have the right to choose their visitors. In addition, Residents and/or their substitute decision-makers have the right to designate caregivers

GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

This policy is based on the principles of safety, emotional well-being, equitable access and flexibility. It is with compassion that we recognize the need for Residents' connection with loved ones, and it is through in-person visits that this can be best achieved. We will take all reasonable steps to help facilitate visits within the parameters of ministry directives.

Per ministry guidelines, GSSC will follow the requirements for the minimum visit frequency and seek to accommodate more visits where possible. Where it is not possible or advisable for visits to occur in person, GSSC will continue to provide virtual visiting options. The Administrator/Designate shall provide email and/or phone communication with family/friends of Residents regarding the status of visits to the Home/Lodge.

Good Samaritan Seniors' Complex also recognizes the concepts of non-maleficence (i.e., not doing harm), proportionality (i.e., to the level of risk), transparency and reciprocity (i.e., providing resources to those who are disadvantaged by the policy). These concepts will inform decision making with regards to the scheduling and/or refusal of indoor/outdoor visits as appropriate.

General Visitors:

- A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the Home/Lodge or a particular Resident or group of Residents. General visitors include those persons visiting for social reasons as well as visitors providing non-essential services such as personal care services, entertainment, or individuals touring the home.
- General visitors are not permitted to visit in any of the following situations:
 - The Home/Lodge has an outbreak; and/or
 - The Resident is self-isolating or symptomatic
 - Upon direction from the Province, Municipality, or Health Unit.
 - This applies to both indoor and outdoor visits.

General visitors younger than 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult and must follow all applicable public health measures that are in place at the home (e.g., active screening, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masking for source control).

PROCEDURE

General visitors are permitted to enter the Home/Lodge and visit with Residents in-suite.

**GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

All general visitors regardless of vaccination status, visiting the Home/Lodge, whether indoors or outdoors, must demonstrate that they have received a negative antigen test on the day of the visit or demonstrate proof that they received a negative antigen test from an antigen test taken on the previous day before granting them full entry into the Home/Visitor as a visitor.

A maximum of 4 general visitors are permitted indoors to visit with a Resident; a maximum of 10 general visitors are permitted outdoors to visit with a Resident in a designated area. Note: the maximums include caregivers (essential visitors) if any in attendance.

N.B. In the event GSSC enters into an outbreak, all visits will end, and GSSC will establish compliance with all Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) directives for outbreak and follow directions from the local public health unit (PHU).

1. GSSC has policies and procedures in place for visits and a process for communicating such policies and procedures with Residents, families and staff, including but not limited to infection prevention and control (IPAC), scheduling, and any site-specific policies.
 - a. This process will include sharing a guidance document with visitors on IPAC, masking protocols, and other operational procedures such as limiting movement, and ensuring visitors' agreement to comply;
 - i. GSSC materials shall include an approach to dealing with non-compliance to policies and procedures, including discontinuation of indoor/outdoor visits.
 - b. Protocols to maintain the highest of IPAC standards prior to, during/after visits.
 - c. GSSC shall maintain a log of visitors including a contact number; the list will be available for relevant/appropriate staff members to access.
2. Additional factors that will inform decisions about general visitors at GSSC include:
 - **Access to adequate testing:** GSSC shall have a testing plan in place, based on contingencies informed by local and provincial health officials, for testing in the event of a suspected outbreak.
 - **Access to adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** GSSC shall have adequate supplies of relevant PPE.
 - **Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) standards:** GSSC shall have essential cleaning and disinfection supplies and adhere to IPAC standards, including enhanced cleaning.

GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

- **Physical Distancing:** GSSC must be able to facilitate visits in a manner aligned with physical distancing protocols.

General visitors who are unvaccinated and/or not “up to date” with vaccination, shall only be permitted to visit in the Resident room only and are NOT permitted to roam about the Home/Lodge or take part in dining, programs, or visit with other Residents/visitors.

GSSC will maintain contact with Residents, families, and friends through in-house councils, email, regular mail, and phone communication to ensure any changes to visitation is communicated clearly and in a timely manner for everyone.

- Visitors will be provided with education that includes the following:
 - PPE application and removal;
 - Hand Hygiene; and
 - Visitation policies.
- No food or beverages are to be consumed by any visitor during the visit as masks must remain in place covering the nose and mouth at all times;
- Physical contact is permitted between “up to date” vaccinated visitors and Residents; however,
 - Physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be restricted to necessary contact for the delivery of the service being provided when the essential visitor and/or Resident is NOT “up to date” with vaccination;
 - Fully immunized visitors may join Residents during dining and activities both indoors and outdoors, unless otherwise directed by the local public health unit; visitors who are not “up to date” are not permitted to attend the dining room/activities with others.
- Briefs hugs are permitted to take place between essential visitors and Residents regardless of vaccination status;
- Pets are permitted to attend the visit;
- The highest of IPAC standards will be maintained prior to, during and after visits.
- In the event of inclement weather, outdoor visitors will be contacted in advance of their visit (where possible) and be offered the following options:
 - Convert the visit to an indoor visit;
 - Reschedule the visit;
 - Convert the visit to a virtual facetime/skype visit, or phone call.

GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

Scheduling of Visits:

Provided the Resident is not self-isolating or symptomatic, GSSC is not in outbreak, and all other requirements are met;

- GSSC shall allow a maximum of 4 visitors at a time per Resident indoors
- GSSC shall allow a maximum of 10 visitors at a time per Resident outdoors
 - **The numbers noted above include any essential visitors**
- All general visits must be pre-arranged by phone or email at minimum 48 hours in advance, through the Activity Director/designate;
 - LTC: 705-435-5722; kristiem@goodsamseniors.com
 - Retirement Lodge: 705-435-2867; robertam@goodsamseniors.com
 - Drop-in visits cannot be accommodated at this time.

Screening Protocols & Visitor Requirements

Visitors are requested to arrive at minimum 15 minutes prior to their scheduled visit, don a medical mask, and complete hand hygiene before being screened and tested (in accordance with testing requirements) for the visit.

Every visitor shall be screened in accordance with the following set of criteria: the visitor **MUST**,

- **Complete hand hygiene and don a medical mask;**
 - **Pass active screening;** symptom, exposure, and vaccination/testing questions;

Additional Protocols:

- All first-time visitors will be provided with a guidance document, including education on all required policies and procedures.
 - Additional applicable policies and procedures will be communicated to Residents and visitors as appropriate;
- All visitors must adhere to physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, and follow GSSC infection prevention and control policies and procedures (IPAC);
 - Staff may monitor visits to ensure policies and procedures are followed. If not, the visitor may be asked to leave the premises.

GOOD SAMARITAN SENIORS COMPLEX POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Manual: INFECTION PREVENTION and CONTROL	Subject: GENERAL VISITORS DURING the COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Section: G	Effective Date: JUNE 2022
Approved By: Deirdre Britton	Supersede: June 2020, September 2020, October 2020, December 2020, May 2021, July 2021, December 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022

EDUCATION

Physical Distancing: handout attached

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-guide-physical-distancing.pdf?la=en#:~:text=Physical%20distancing%20means%20keeping%20our.limiting%20activities%20outside%20the%20home.&text=When%20outside%20your%20home%2C%20it,from%20other%20people%20whenever%20possible.&text=Work%20from%20home%2C%20if%20possible.>

Respiratory Etiquette: handout attached

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/c/2013/clincial-office-cough-signage.pdf?la=en>

Hand Hygiene: handout attached

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/j/2011/jcyh-brochure-Residents-visitors.pdf?la=en>

IPAC: handout attached

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/r/2012/rpap-factsheet.pdf?la=en>

PPE: handout attached

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/r/2012/rpap-recommeded-ppe-steps.pdf?la=en>

RELATED HOME/LODGE POLICIES

- Essential Care Giver During the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Essential Visitation During the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Managing Residents and Staff During the Covid-19 Pandemic

REFERENCES

- COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long Term Care Homes in Ontario
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-guidance-document-long-term-care-homes-ontario>
- Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministers-directive-covid-19-response-measures-for-long-term-care-homes>