

VISITS AND EXTERNAL OUTINGS DIRECTIVE

Directive in Summary

Visits by family and other essential and non-essential visitors are permitted based on established principles that are intended to limit the potential exposure of individuals served, their families and CLTO staff to COVID-19. Community Living Toronto (CLTO) considers visits as necessary to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights, of a resident. Guiding principles and the Ministry framework will be used as a guide to determine risk and safety for indoor and outdoor visits, outings, and essential overnight absences.

A family member/caregiver who is considered to be an essential visitor will be permitted to visit with their family member supported by CLTO regardless of the zone and vaccination status. Depending on the vaccination status of the family member or the individual served and/or the location of visit, there may be additional precautionary measures for the family member or the individual served, upon return from a visit based on Public Health guidance.

Background

This Directive outlines expectations for visits to Community Living Toronto (CLTO) residences and external outings. It is intended to protect the health and safety of people in our residential services, their families, and our staff. All elements of the Directive are in keeping with established principles that are intended to limit the potential exposure to COVID-19 through practices for social and physical distancing, and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE). It reflects Ministry Emergency Orders and/or Guidelines regarding Permitted Visitor and Recreational Activities, Outdoor Visits for Congregate Care Settings, Brief Physical Contact and Recreational Activities; Public Health guidance and the current environment which includes vaccination roll-out.

The Directive will be reviewed and updated as required and in accordance with any changes in the degree of risk, advice or recommendations from government and public health authorities.

Scope

The expectation is that this Directive and requirements are to be adhered to by all visitors.

This Directive applies to CLTO Program locations.

Sites under outbreak should adhere to restrictions listed in outbreak letters provided by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. Restrictions may include suspension of all visits for the duration of an outbreak. In the event of any conflict between this Directive and an outbreak letter, the Ministry outbreak letter should be followed as closely as possible.

Definitions

Outings: include short term outings or absences, essential overnight absences, and longer-term overnight absences.

Essential visits to CLTO Program locations include the following:

- Family (a parent or guardian) visits necessary to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights, of a person living in congregate care including visits to a very ill or palliative individual
- Service visits by third-party contractors and/or CLTO maintenance staff for services related to fire safety systems, HVAC systems, home repairs, repairs or regular for elevators/lifts, and pest control
- Healthcare or social services appointments required to maintain good health (e.g. child welfare working visits, phlebotomy testing, foot care, etc.)
- Inspectors from the Ministry or public health unit.

Urgent Essential Visits: visits that require an immediate response.

- This includes **urgent repair** to the location (e.g. a critical interruption that would impact health and safety of individuals in the environment) and/or **urgent medical visits**.

Essential Visitor: is generally a person who:

- 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.

Non-Essential Visitor/Visits: Any visitor or visits that do not fall into the definitions above

Zone: Public Health Ontario has identified specific protective measures based on zones that apply to a geographic location.

General Principles

The following principles will be used to guide and determine risk and safety for indoor and outdoor visits, outings, and essential overnight absences:

Safety: Any approach to visiting inside a congregate living setting should consider the health and safety needs, and overall well-being of individuals supported, staff, and visitors. Risks and susceptibility to the virus must be mitigated. Support staff will remain in visual contact with the individual, family/friend for the duration of the indoor or outdoor/porch visit. Virtual visits are strongly encouraged and facilitated wherever possible.

Emotional well-being: Accommodating visitors is 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 and rights: Visits should be conducted equitably and consistent with resident preference and rights, and within reasonable restrictions that safeguard residents and staff.

Flexibility: Any approach to visits should consider COVID-19 spread in their community and the physical/infrastructure characteristics of the site, its staffing availability, and the current status of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) levels for staff and residents. Scheduling of all visits and rescheduling of cancelled visits will be at the discretion of the supervisor/manager.

Immunization: CLTO strongly encourages all Staff and Essential Visitors, as well as families and individuals served, to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Immunization status of will be incorporated into the screening protocol for visitors.

Zone: CLTO is bound by the requirements of the zones of Public Health measures in place at the time of the visit. Risk factors for transmission based on the Zone where the CLTO home is located, the location to be visited and where visitors are arriving from will be considered for the conditions of the visits. The MCCSS Visitor and Recreational Activities Community Risk Continuum will be applied to determine the requirements.

Exceptions to these general principles will be considered for **urgent essential visits** that require an immediate response. In these cases:

- Urgent essential visitors do not require Active Screening at the point of entry, but it will be required upon exit (as possible) for the purpose of contact tracing. The names and contact information at a minimum must be recorded.
- Urgent essential visitors will be permitted entry if someone is in isolation precautions or when there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID 19, or an outbreak. In this case these urgent essential visitors are required to wear full PPE an outbreak gown, procedural mask, and face shield. These visitors must also perform hand hygiene upon entry and again just before exiting the home, as well as between tasks where appropriate.

Visitor and Recreational Activities Community Risk Continuum and Visit Guidelines

When scheduling/planning a visit at a CLTO residence, or an outing, CLTO staff will apply the MCCSS Visitor and Recreational Activities Community Risk Continuum to determine the level of risk and requirements for the individual supported, family member/caregiver and any other individuals who may be encountered during a visit or overnight absence.

The zones and associated colours are explained in the chart below.

VISIT/OUTING	ZONE	RED & GREY Outbreak/ Comprehensive Precautions	ORANGE Enhanced Precautions	YELLOW Additional Precautions	GREEN Normal Precautions
Indoor visits & Outdoor and Porch visits	Restricted to essential visits only	Suspended, during an outbreak. Permitted, when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorized by screening for activity and/or public health advice; or • essential for medical purposes only and virtual care is not possible. 	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Short Term Outings or absences	Health and well-being activities outside of residence (e.g., doctor’s appointments,	Permitted, when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authorized by screening for activity and/or public health advice; or 	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted

	work, school etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> essential for medical purposes only and virtual care is not possible. 			
	Recreational activities outside of residence	Suspended	Suspended	Permitted	Permitted
	Day Supports	Suspended	Permitted. Max group size (including staff) is 5 people.	Permitted. Max group size (including staff) is 10 people.	Permitted, when: Max group size (including staff) is 10 people.
Essential overnight absence	(e.g. to a family home) considered necessary to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights, of a resident.	Suspended	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted

Safe Visit Guidelines

Indoor and Outdoor Visits

Essential Visitors

- For operational needs, families are requested to continue to schedule an indoor or outdoor visit; other essential visitors must pre-schedule a visit
- Must pass active screening for COVID-19
- Must wear surgical/procedural masks and eye protection at all times*

Non-essential Visitors

- must schedule the outdoor visit in advance using the SWAS App
- must pass active screening for COVID-19 with information recorded in the SWAS App
- must wear surgical/procedural masks and eye protection at all times*
- must maintain physical distance at all times (2 meters/6 feet)
- must not enter the congregate living setting during visits / indoor visits are not permitted
- visits must be supervised by a CLTO staff person

*Brief physical contact with visitors:

- Residents and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, are permitted to engage in brief physical contact (e.g., a hug) during indoor or outdoor visits. This includes essential and non-essential visitors.
- The requirement for visitors to wear eye protection and a surgical/procedure mask at all times remains in place.
- Where feasible, residents are strongly encouraged to wear a surgical/procedure mask also.
- Non-essential visitors must maintain physical distance (2 meters/6 feet) before and after physical contact.

In addition, all MCCSS COVID-19 guidance for congregate settings remains in effect and service providers with congregate living settings are to continue to follow the enhanced precautions. These are summarized below:

1. Visits are to be scheduled in advance using the SWAS App. This allows for Supervisors to ensure that physical distancing and other safety protocols can be adhered to and the visit will not impede the operational needs of the CLTO site. And also allows for contact tracing.
2. Visitors will receive the Essential Visitors Guidelines including the Passive Screening Questions in advance.
3. The home must NOT be currently in confirmed or suspected outbreak.
4. Where there is an individual currently isolated and awaiting COVID-19 test results indoor visits would be suspended.
5. Visitors are to be advised during Active screening at the door that strict adherence to the masking/eye protection requirements are a condition of entry and failure to adhere may result in them being asked to leave the premises.
6. Individuals and visitors must maintain physical distancing restrictions (6 feet, or 2 metres) at all times, with the exception of brief physical contact (described above).
7. All visitors must wear, at a minimum, a surgical/procedural mask and eye protection (face shield or goggles) at all times during the visit and maintain proper respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
8. CLTO locations are to supply essential visitors with a surgical/procedure mask and face shield as needed.
9. For indoor visits, a designated visiting area will be established in the home. Visitors will only be permitted in the area designated for visits and a designated washroom. Visitors will not be permitted elsewhere in the home for any reason.
10. The indoor visiting area must be appropriately cleaned and disinfected before and after each scheduled visit.
11. Outdoor visits will be permitted in the backyard or on the porch of the residence; or, where there is no backyard or porch, in courtyards or a local park, with physical distancing measures in place
12. The visit will be ended if it becomes apparent that individuals cannot maintain physical distance (beyond brief physical contact).

Recreational Outings (Short Stay Absences)

- Residents are permitted to leave the congregate living setting for a short-stay (i.e. same day) absence in the community in alignment with provincial parameters
- This will now include recreational outings (activities for pleasure) in addition to essential absences (e.g., work, school, medical appointment, physical exercise).

Recreational outings will be permitted when possible and according to the matrix. Outings such as park visits, shopping, etc. can be undertaken in accordance with public health guidelines and use of PPE. These will be scheduled by supervisors.

When scheduling an outing, families should work with the supervisor to find a mutually agreed-upon time that does not impede the operational needs of the CLTO site. Families must make arrangements for picking up residents from their CLTO home. Family members and Hosts and the resident will be screened upon pick-up and return to the CLTO site. Residents must pass Active Screening every time they re-enter the site and perform hand hygiene before leaving and upon return.

While away, residents and their families must follow local public health restrictions (according to the Zone) and guidelines, such as mask usage, eye protection, physical distancing, and limits on gathering size. CLTO

will provide masks and eye protection for the outing if necessary.

Should an outbreak occur in the home after an outing, the Outbreak Management Protocol will be followed. All future visits to the home will be cancelled until the outbreak is over. If the visitor or any contacts made during the outing experience symptoms of or test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days (two weeks) after the visit, they must inform the staff at the home and Toronto Public Health. Future outings will be suspended until further notice.

Overnight Absences

Overnight absences from CLTO residences to maintain the health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights of a resident are permitted when possible.

The individual and their family/caregiver are to be advised before an overnight visit takes place of required enhanced precautions that are to be implemented upon return of the resident from an overnight visit, for example self-isolation depending on the visit location, and vaccination status of individual and/or the family or caregiver.

Longer term overnight absences (e.g., Shadow Lake Camp) in the community will be permitted, as possible and take into consideration a risk assessment for the individual supported, and other individuals who may be encountered during the extended absence. These will be scheduled by supervisors and permitted in accordance with Active Screening and other Public Health guidelines.

Return from Overnight Absences

A resident returning to the CLTO residential setting from a permitted essential overnight absence must upon return, follow the self-isolation protocol and enhanced precautions for a maximum of 14-days post the overnight visit, including:

1. Pass active screening for signs and symptoms of, and potential exposures to COVID-19
2. Only receive outdoor visitors during the 14 days
3. No contact with others outside of the home
4. Monitor for symptoms
5. Limit contact with other residents
6. Avoid using common areas; if a common area cannot be avoided, the resident must wear a surgical/procedure mask if tolerated
7. Follow physical distancing guidelines and only participate in group activities if physical distancing can be maintained (i.e., 6 feet or 2 meters) and the use of a 5 surgical/procedure mask
8. Practice proper hand hygiene by washing their hands often (using soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
9. Adhere to respiratory etiquette

Visits by Healthcare and Support Services Providers

In addition to the requirements above for indoor and outdoor visits the following is required.

1. Essential support services, healthcare services or a visit to a palliative care resident, must be pre-arranged with the Program Supervisor. The Program Supervisor will provide the Essential Visitor Guidelines and record the up-coming visit in SWAS App.
2. Only items necessary to perform the essential service are to be brought into the location and must be

cleaned and disinfected (to the extent possible). Sharing of equipment should be minimized as much as possible. Any item that is shared must be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

Property Maintenance and Inspections

Property maintenance and inspections are permitted. These visitors must adhere to the requirements above for indoor and outdoor visits. In addition, the following is required.

For regular property maintenance conducted and arranged through CLTO maintenance staff:

- CLTO's Supervisor of Property Maintenance will coordinate the visit with residence and/or office staff. CLTO staff will record the upcoming visit in the SWAS App.
- It is expected and required that CLTO staff visiting a CLTO location for property maintenance will understand the content of the Guidelines for Essential Visitors and this will be recorded in the SWAS App.

For property maintenance, inspections and ad-hoc service requests conducted by a third-party contractor AND arranged by CLTO

- Examples include special request for Pest Control; HVAC and fire inspections; maintenance for Hoyer lifts and other specialized equipment; Internet supplier technical issues, cleaning. The CLTO Manager of Purchasing, CLTO's Supervisor of Property Maintenance or Facilities Compliance Specialist will coordinate the visit with residence supervisor/office staff contact, and provide the Essential Visitor Guidelines (via email) to the third-party contractor, with a copy to the CLTO Program supervisor/CLTO contact.
- The Program supervisor/CLTO office contact will record the upcoming visit in the SWAS App.

For regular maintenance or inspections conducted by a third-party provider where the provider contacts the home directly (e.g. pest control or elevator services)

- The CLTO Program Supervisor will arrange a day and time (with confirmation via email) and provide and remind third party contractor of the need to review the Guidelines for Essential Visitors prior to the visit.
- The supervisor will record the upcoming visit in the SWAS App.

Other ad-hoc visits scheduled by Program Supervisors/office staff e.g., Movers, 1-800 Got Junk, etc., need to be scheduled in advance, Essential Visitor Guidelines provided and the upcoming visit recorded in the SWAS App.

Related Documentation

Pre-screening and Active Screening Questions

[Essential Overnight Absence Log, July 30, 2020](#)

Outbreak Management Protocol, September 28, 2020

Return Plan Template for Essential Overnight Absences, July 30, 2020

Active and Passive Screening Protocol, December 23, 2020

Guidelines for Essential Visits, December 15, 2020

Re-Opening Ontario Act and related orders