



# Elgin County Long-Term Care Homes

## MEMO

**TO:** All Bobier Villa, Elgin Manor and Terrace Lodge Residents and Families

**DATE:** March 23, 2022

**SUBJECT:** County of Elgin Homes & Ministry Pandemic Measures Update

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Dear Residents and Families,

Today, we are writing to provide an update on the Ministry of Long-Term Care Pandemic Measures updates and updated County of Elgin Long-Term Care Home policies, effective March 23, 2022.

### **Effective March 14, 2022: Changes in Provincially-Mandated Vaccination Requirements**

- The provincial directive requiring homes to have a consistent vaccination policy will be revoked. Each LTC home will be responsible for its own vaccination policy.
  - “Effective March 14, 2022, the MLTC is shifting from a provincial directive that requires homes to have a mandatory vaccination policy to a guidance-based approach that continues to support homes with their employer-led policies and best practices”.
- This shift does not change the critical importance of vaccination as a key defense against COVID-19. All Ontarians should be encouraged to get vaccinated, including receiving medically recommended boosters. This is particularly important for LTCH residents to ensure that they have the greatest level of immune protection as possible.
- The Ministry continues to work with the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health to monitor trends and will respond as needed if for example, a new variant emerges.

### **Effective March 23, 2022: County of Elgin Homes Policy Updates/Highlights**

- County of Elgin Administration policy 1.35 “Visitors and Resident Absences During a Pandemic” outlining visitor vaccination requirements has been revised, effective March 23, 2022, and will remain in effect until such time as any amendments are approved.
- - The full copy of the updated policy can be found on the County of Elgin Homes website at <https://www.elgincounty.ca/homes-seniors-services/employee-portal/>

### COVID-19 Vaccinations

- Two (2) dose COVID-19 vaccination requirement for all staff, students, support workers, volunteers and visitors (essential caregivers and general visitors) to enter the Home, with the exception of children under the age of 5,
- Encouraging COVID-19 vaccination booster doses for all residents, staff, students, support workers, volunteers and visitors
- No vaccination requirement for visitors for outdoor visits or absences from the Home

### Screening, Testing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Daily rapid antigen testing (RAT) prior to all entry to the Home for all staff, students, support workers, volunteers and visitors; and, for visitors prior to outdoor visits and absences from the Home
- Continue active screening to be completed prior to entry to the Home and prior to outdoor visits/absences from the Home
- Masks and other PPE requirements as per public health recommendations

### Visiting, Absences and Outings

- Maximum 4 visitors/resident at a time indoors; >4 permitted outdoors depending on space
- All social, compassionate, medical and temporary (overnight) absences permitted with required screening, testing, etc.

### **General Reminders:**

- As the warmer weather approaches, plans are underway to resume scheduling and locations for outdoor visits – additional information shall be provided when available.
- All general visitors, including children under the age of 5, can visit homes. Visitors (including caregivers), with the exception of children under the age of 5, need to follow the vaccination policy requirement of two (2) doses of COVID-19 vaccination for indoor visits.
- Testing of residents returning from day or overnight absences at established intervals will continue until further notice, to identify as early as possible any individual who may become infected with COVID-19 in order to reduce transmission in the home.
- Residents from different areas/parts of the LTC home can now come together for social activities. Cohorting is required for dining only.
- Social group activities can be larger in size while crowding should be avoided and masking continued, including for residents where tolerated.
- A surgical/medical mask continues to be required by all staff, students, visitors, support workers, and volunteers who enter the Home.
- Screening with each entry to the Home remains in place.
- An N95 mask, gown, protective eyewear and gloves is required when visiting any resident that is in isolation and experiencing COVID symptoms and/or has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Rapid antigen testing is required on each visit and results must be complete before entering the LTC Home, before beginning an outdoor visit, and prior to taking a resident on any absence from the Home; visitors are reminded to adjust their visit time to include 15 minutes for processing of rapid antigen test results.
- Individuals who have had a confirmed COVID-19 infection will be required to resume surveillance testing 90 days post-infection (previously 30 days post-infection).
- Visitors are required to wear their mask at all times, and, as such will not be permitted to eat or drink while in the Home. Visitors may attend the designated area to provide meal time support to their loved one.

Additional resources have been created and updated by MLTC to promote a more fulsome understanding of the anticipated changes:

- [Key Messages to Support Residents and Families \(EN\)](#)
- [Key Messages to Support Residents and Families \(FR\)](#)
- [Visitor Absences and Social Gatherings Snapshot \(EN\)](#)
- [Visitor Absences and Social Gatherings Snapshot \(FR\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in Long-Term Care Homes \(EN\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Policies: What Residents Can Expect in Long-Term Care Homes \(FR\)](#)



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- [Pandemic Response Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Homes staff continue to implement all required and recommended measures to support resident, visitor and staff safety and well-being. If you have any questions, please speak to a registered staff member or manager.

Thank you!

Michele Harris, Director of Homes and Seniors Services

Terri Benwell, Administrator, Bobier Villa & Elgin Manor

Christine Leonard, Administrator, Terrace Lodge