

## AD 1-22 Visitors Policy

	<b>Manual:</b> Administration	<b>Section :</b> 1-General
	<b>Approved/Reviewed By:</b>	September 19, 2025 by Administrator
	<b>Original Date:</b>	June 15, 2020

### PURPOSE

*Revised August 25, 2025*

1. Ensure resident safety and well-being
2. Support resident rights and social connections
3. Establish clear expectations
4. Comply with legal and Public Health requirements
5. Promote a respectful and safe environment

Every resident has the right to communicate in confidence and receive visitors of their choice and consult in private with any person without interference.

This visiting policy is guided by the following 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 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 take into account 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.

Visitors should consider their personal health and susceptibility to any communicable virus prior to visiting the Home is appropriate.

### COMPLIANCE AND APPLICABILITY

Compliance with this policy is required by all Maple Villa employees, members of the medical staff, students, and other persons, including contracted service providers, acting on behalf of Maple Villa in the province of Ontario.

### POLICY

For everyone's safety and protection, Maple Villa has a Prevention of Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and does not permit any kind of violence or aggressive behaviour.

- a) The Home is open to residents, their family members and significant others 24 hours a day seven days a week. To ensure safety, no individual other than a resident, staff member or designated physician may enter the home between the hours of 12 midnight and 5:30 a.m. unless prior arrangements have been made with the Administration of the home.
- b) All visitors are expected to complete the Visitor Log Sign-in on entry. These logs will be maintained for 30 days.
- c) All visitors 13 years of age or younger are to be accompanied by an adult.
- d) All visitors are expected to visit the intended resident.
- e) The Home is limiting 2 (two) visitors at the bedside at one time. More than 2 visitors will visit with the resident in the designated lounges.
- f) Palliative/End of Life visitors will be limited to 4 (four) at the bedside at one time.
- g) Except for service animals or approved support animals for persons with disabilities, no pets are allowed within the Home without written prior authorization by the Home.
- h) All visitors are expected to treat all people in the Home with respect, fairness and sensitivity.
- i) All visitors who are experiencing Respiratory or Gastric symptoms will not enter the Home.
- j) All visitors to the Home will follow Public Health measures and the Home's Policies regarding self-screening, proper hand hygiene, and coughing etiquette.
- k) Any additional direction with respect to isolation protocols or enhanced safety measures, such as additional personal protective equipment (PPE), must be followed by all visitors depending on the specific situation.
- l) Any visitor who becomes aggressive or violent or fails to adhere to the expectations of this policy, will have their visit ended (suspended) immediately by the Administrator or Designate, or the Charge Nurse, and may be asked to leave the premises. Code White & 911 will be called when the risk of safety is threatened.
- m) An investigation by the Administration may follow within 10 days to determine when or if the visit may resume.

## **TYPES OF VISITORS**

The Home staff, volunteers, and student placements are not considered visitors as their access to the Home is determined by the Home.

### **General Visitors**

A general visitor is a person who is not an essential visitor and is visiting:

- a) to provide non-essential services related to either the operations of the Home or a resident or group of residents. This excludes children under the age of one.
- b) for social reasons that the capable resident, or their Power of Attorney for Care (POA)/Substitute Decision-Maker (SDM), assesses as different from direct care, including care related to cognitive stimulation, meaningful connection, and relational continuity.

### **Essential Visitors**

An essential visitor is defined as:

- a) a caregiver
- b) a support worker who visits the Home to provide support to the critical operations of the Home or to provide essential services to residents,
- c) a person visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons including, but not limited to, Palliative or end-of-life care
- d) a government inspector with a statutory right to enter a long-term care Home to carry out their duties.

### **Designated Essential Caregivers**

- a) Caregivers must be designated in writing to the Director of Care (or designate) by the capable resident and/or POA/SDM.
- b) Caregivers agree to follow the expectations of a designated essential caregiver as outlined by Maple Villa's designated essential caregiver policy.

### **OVERNIGHT ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION**

Overnight access to the home is restricted to authorized staff, essential personnel, and emergency responders.

Visitors may request overnight accommodation under exceptional circumstances, such as:

- a) End-of-life or palliative care support.
  - b) Compassionate grounds as determined by the Administrator/Director of Care.
- Approval is required before any overnight stay. Unauthorized overnight presence is not permitted.
  - The home reserves the right to restrict, limit, or revoke overnight access if it poses risks to safety, infection prevention and control (IPAC), or the privacy of other residents.
  - Visitors must submit a request to the Administrator or Director of Care (DOC).
  - Requests will be considered based on resident needs, safety, and operational capacity.
  - Approved visitors will receive confirmation in writing (or electronically).

- Approval is time-limited and subject to review.
- Overnight visitors are to remain only in the resident's room or other approved areas.
- Overnight visitors are to refrain from using common spaces for sleeping (lounges, hallways, dining areas).
- Overnight accommodation may be denied if it:
  - a) Interferes with care delivery to the resident or others.
  - b) Creates a risk to health and safety (infection, fire safety, etc.).
  - c) Compromises resident privacy or dignity.
- The Administrator/DOC has authority to discontinue overnight access immediately if non-compliance occurs.

### **SCREENING GENERAL VISITORS DURING OUTBREAK OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Maple Villa will follow the direction from our local public health unit during an outbreak of a communicable disease, an outbreak of a disease of public health significance, an epidemic and or a pandemic, which may include screening modifications and advising general visitors to postpone all non-essential visits.

Essential visitors are permitted when there is an outbreak in a Home or area of a Home or when a resident is symptomatic or in isolation. Essential visitors include caregivers, support workers and people visiting very ill residents, or residents receiving end-of-life care, and government inspectors with a statutory right of entry.

For clarity, individuals such as maintenance workers, contractors, or engineers, who provide support to the critical operations of the Home, including performing critical maintenance services necessary to comply with applicable laws, are considered support workers and permitted to enter a Home during an outbreak.

Emergency circumstances as defined by the regulation as being “those of an urgent or pressing situation or a condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the Home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of the persons of the Home”, that may come by Ministry Directive, may additionally include a temporary suspension of all visitors until further instruction by the Administrator or Designate as outlined in Maple Villa's Emergency Preparedness Plan.

### **VACCINATION STATUS**

All visitors are welcome to visit regardless of their vaccination status.

### **INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL INFORMATION/ EDUCATION**

Information sheets and posters are available at the Visitor Sign-In Log to emphasize the importance of physical distancing, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, IPAC practices, and proper use of PPE.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Maple Villa shall ensure that all staff, visitors, and residents who are required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) are provided with such PPE. Required PPE can include, but is not limited to, surgical/procedure masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection (i.e., face shield or goggles).

Maple Villa shall provide training on PPE to all people regularly attending the Home, including caregivers, temporary staff, or service providers from a third party (i.e. an agency).

### **RESPONDING TO VISITOR NON-ADHERENCE**

Any non-adherence to this policy will be viewed as a risk to health and safety. Our response will be both specific and measured to ensure a clear understanding and compliance with the safeguards.

- a) Re-education and support for the visitor and a review of expectations. Should a visitor engage in repeated or flagrant non-adherence to the policy, a follow-up will be completed and documented by the Administrator or Designate, or the Charge Nurse.
- b) Prohibiting a visitor from attending Maple Villa will be a last resort response to non-adherence and signal a complete disregard of the policy by the visitor.

### **Ending a Visit**

Maple Villa shall end a visit with any visitor who repeatedly fails to adhere to the Home's visitor policy, provided:

- a) the Home has explained the applicable requirement(s) to the visitor,
- b) the visitor has the resources to adhere to the requirement(s) and, the visitor has been given enough time to adhere to the requirement(s), and
- c) this will be documented in the resident(s) electronic health record by Administrator or Designate, or the Charge Nurse.

### **Temporarily Prohibiting a Visitor**

Maple Villa may temporarily prohibit a visitor in response to repeated and flagrant non-adherence with the Home's visitor policy.

The following will be considered when determining the risk of non-adherence behaviour:

- a) Alignment with the requirements set out by Halton Public Health or Ministry Directive.

- b) Negatively impacts the health and safety of residents, staff and other visitors and has been demonstrated consistently by the visitor over multiple visits, and
- c) A previous history of visits being ended by the Home due to non-compliance.

The decision to temporarily prohibit a visitor will be made only after all other reasonable efforts to maintain safety during visits have been exhausted; stipulate a reasonable length of the prohibition; clearly identify what requirements the visitor should meet before visits may be resumed; and will be documented by Administrator or Designate, or the Charge Nurse in resident(s) electronic health record.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Maple Villa shall meet all applicable laws such as the current Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

#### **POSTING AND CIRCULATION OF POLICY**

A copy of this policy shall be provided to the Home's Residents' Council and Family Council. The policy shall also be included in resident information packages, posted within the Home, communicated to residents and posted on the Home's website.