
ESSENTIAL VISITORS DIRECTIVES

Purpose: To provide clarity regarding essential visitors to employees, and families of people supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An essential visitor is generally a person who:

1. Performs essential services to support the ongoing operation of a service agency including a contractor, plumber and or;
2. Considered necessary to maintain the health, wellness, safety, or any applicable legal rights of a congregate living setting.

An essential visitor may include:

- Parent/guardian.
- Social service workers.
- Health care providers.
- Inspectors from ministry or public health unit.
- Person visiting a very ill or palliative individual.

This directive will continue to be reviewed and updated as Ministry Guidelines/and or Emergency Orders are updated and released.

General Principles

This directive is meant to protect the health and safety of people in our agency, their families and employees by limiting potential exposure to COVID-19 in keeping with established principles around social and physical distancing.

The expectation is that this directive and requirements be adhered to by ALL essential visitors.

Outdoor Visits

- All visits need to be prearranged by contacting group home employees.
- Visitors must pass the active screening every time a visit occurs.
- Visitors must wear PPE (face covering/mask for the entire visit).
- Visitors will be informed of the process for ensuring physical distancing (two metres/six feet).
- Visitors will have access to washing their hands or using hand sanitizer.
- An outdoor space will be identified for visits that ensure the ability to comply with social distancing.
- Whenever possible the visitor will access the outdoor space through an outside entrance.
- The area will be thoroughly disinfected after each visit.
- Employee must be available to provide support or assistance.
- Visitors are not allowed to access the inside living areas of the location.
- Area will be thoroughly disinfected after visit.

Indoor visit

- Indoor visits can be prearranged at 95 Cumberland Street office by contacting Community Services Supervisor.
- An employee from the site would have to be onsite with the individual for the visit and that same employee would be responsible for active screening family member at the office including temperature check.
- The same employee will be responsible for cleaning all surfaces touched after visit.

Essential Overnight Absences

- An essential overnight absence (e.g. to a family home) is one considered necessary to maintain health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights of a resident. Agencies should take careful consideration as to whether an overnight absence is truly vital to maintain the health, wellness and safety of the individual.
- All overnight absences will be reviewed by supervisor on a case by case basis.
- A person returning from an essential overnight absence must upon return, while in congregated living setting follow enhanced precautions for 14 days post essential overnight visit including:
 - Upon return, pass an active screening questionnaire screening for potential exposures to COVID-19.
 - Only receive outdoor visitors during the 14 days.
 - Monitor for symptoms.
 - Avoid using common areas; however, if a common area cannot be avoided, the resident must use a face covering (non-medical mask).
 - Limit contact with other residents.
 - Only participate in group activities if physical distancing is maintained (two metres/six feet) and the use of a face covering (non-medical mask) is worn.
 - Practice proper hand hygiene by washing hands often (using soap and water) or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Adhere to respiratory etiquette; and,
 - Continue to follow appropriate physical distancing guidelines ie; maintaining a distance of two metres/six feet.

Individuals who are following the 14-day enhanced precautions may leave their congregate living setting for short stay (non overnight) absences/outings (e.g. go to school, go on walks and other activities of daily living.

Leaving the residence for a short stay absence/outing will NOT reset the 14 -day time period. However, another overnight stay during the same 14-day period will reset the 14-day period.

NOTE: The enhanced precautions for 14-days is not to be applied to an individual who has previously had a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 and have subsequently recovered. Testing/isolation following such absences should be done in consultation with the local public health unit, taking into consideration any symptoms at the time of return to the congregated living setting or new high-risk exposures.

Essential Visits

- Essential visitor (contractor, plumber, OT etc.).
- Visits will be prearranged by group home employees.
- Essential visitor will actively screen prior to entering location and pass the screening test.
- Visitor must wear PPE (mask for entire visit).
- Handwashing or hand sanitizer will be available.
- Visitors will be informed of the process for ensuring physical distancing (two metres/six feet).
- The area will be thoroughly disinfected after the visit.
- Use of bathrooms will not be permitted.

Screening Forms

Green – Family member visits only

Pink – Essential visitors IE; plumbers, contractors or anyone else deemed essential who is not a family member or an employee of OPTIONS NORTHWEST.

Recommended By: The Pandemic Team

Authorized By: Executive Director

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.