

October 19, 2021

Dear Friends and Families

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in British Columbia (BC) the Ministry of Health, in consultation with BC's Provincial Health Officer, mobilized to rapidly respond to the risk of COVID-19 transmission in congregate care settings. Several enhanced protective measures have been put in place to minimize the risk for introduction and transmission of COVID-19 in long-term care homes and seniors' assisted living residences and protect those most vulnerable to serious illness.

On October 12th, 2021, the Provincial Health Officer and the Minister of Health announced details on updated requirements for visitation in long-term care and seniors' assisted living facilities. In recognition of the added layer of protection provided by the COVID-19 vaccines and given the vulnerability of residents in long-term care and seniors' assisted living even when fully immunized themselves, all visitors (both essential and social) are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, excluding young children ineligible for vaccination or those with an approved medical exemption. Proof of vaccination (e.g. [BC Vaccine Card](#) or equivalent) is required prior to entering or passing through the facility.

Effective October 12, 2021(updated October 19, 2021)

- Visitors are required to show proof of vaccination prior to entry, including if only to pass through the facility to access an outdoor space;
- Visitors who do not demonstrate that they are either partially or fully vaccinated will not be able to enter a facility (excluding young children under the age of vaccine eligibility or those with an approved medical exemption);
- Partially or unvaccinated visitors must adhere to all required preventative measures including wearing a medical mask for the duration of the visit.
- **Rapid point-of-care testing is no longer required during the visitor screening process for partially and unvaccinated visitors.**

Effective October 26, 2021:

- Visitors must demonstrate they are fully vaccinated to enter a facility (excluding young children under the age of vaccine eligibility or those with an approved medical exemption).

Exceptions regarding vaccination status in circumstances related to compassionate care such as end-of life visits will be considered on an individual basis for partially or unvaccinated individuals. Additional information regarding visitation, including proof of vaccination requirements, in long-term care and seniors' assisted living facilities can be found through the [BC Centre for Disease Control – Long-Term Care and Assisted Living](#).

Thank you for continuing to take the necessary steps to enable support residents and staff to stay safe during these challenging times. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Doris Brisebois, ED

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