

Ministry of Health

COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-term Care Homes and Retirement Homes

Version 6 – August 27, 2021

This tool provides basic information only and contains recommendations for COVID-19 screening for entry into a Long-Term Care Home (LTCH) or Retirement Home (RH). It is not to be used as a clinical assessment tool or intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Where the document includes references to legal requirements, it is not to be construed as legal advice.

As per [Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the Long-term Care Homes Act, 2007](#), all LTCHs and RHs must ensure that all individuals seeking entry are actively screened for symptoms and exposure history for COVID-19 before they are allowed to enter the home, regardless of their COVID-19 immunization status. This includes all staff, students, visitors, and residents who are re-entering the LTCH's/RH's premises.

At a minimum, the following questions should be asked to screen individuals for COVID-19 before entry. This tool can be adapted based on need and the specific setting but must include the minimum screening questions set out below. These questions can be adapted to meet the communication needs of people with learning, developmental or cognitive disabilities. The screening questions below are not intended to be used to screen admissions/transfers in the absence of other clinical and detailed admission assessments.

In emergency situations, emergency services or other first responders must be permitted entry without screening.

Anyone who does not pass screening should be informed of this result and should not be permitted to enter the home. They should be advised that they should self-isolate, ideally at home, and call their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario ([1-866-797-0000](tel:1-866-797-0000)) to get advice or an assessment, including if they need a COVID-19 test. Exceptions to this include:

- A resident returning to their home, who must be admitted on entry but isolated on [Droplet and Contact Precautions](#) and tested for COVID-19 as per the [COVID-19: Provincial Testing Requirements Update](#); and

- Visitors for imminently palliative residents, who must be screened prior to entry. If they fail screening, they must be permitted entry but homes must ensure that they wear a medical (surgical/procedural) mask and maintain physical distance from other residents and staff.

Once an individual has passed the screening questions below and is able to enter the home, they must continue to follow all public health measures in the home, such as hand hygiene, physical distancing, and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) or masking, as required. They also should be advised to self-monitor while in the home and report any symptoms immediately.

Staff responsible for occupational health at the LTCH/RH must follow up on all staff (i.e., phone calls, further screening, etc.) who have not passed the screening and been advised to self-isolate based on symptoms and/or exposure risk.

Note:

[O. Reg 146/20](#) and [O. Reg 158/20](#) of the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#) (ROA) prohibit employees of LTCHs and RHs from working in more than one LTCH, RH, or health service provider (within the meaning of the [Connecting Care Act, 2019](#)).

These restrictions do not apply to employees who are fully immunized. As per the Ministry of Long-Term Care's (MLTC) [Minister's Directive: Long-term care home COVID-19 immunization policy](#) for LTCHs and the Retirement Home Regulatory Authority's (RHRA) [Retirement Home's Policy to Implement Directive #3](#) for RHs, each home is now asked to:

- Collect COVID-19 immunization of their staff; and
- Maintain and update record of their staff who work in more than one LTCH, RH, or health care facility simultaneously.

For the purposes of this document, **"fully immunized"** means having received the full series of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 [vaccines approved by the World Health Organization](#) (e.g., two doses of a two-dose vaccine series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine series); and having received the final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

All LTCHs and RHs are responsible for ensuring compliance with the applicable regulation.

Required Screening Questions for All Persons

1. Are you currently experiencing one or more of the symptoms below that are new or worsening? Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions.

Do you have one or more of the following symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Fever and/or chills	Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
Cough or barking cough (croup)	Not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, COPD, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Shortness of breath	Not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have
Decrease or loss of smell or taste	Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have
(For adults \geq 18 years or older)	Unusual tiredness, lack of energy (not related to depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, or other known causes or conditions you already have)
Fatigue, lethargy, malaise and/or myalgias	<i>If you received a COVID-19 vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild fatigue that only began after vaccination, select "No."</i>
(For children < 18 years)	Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have
Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea	

2. In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Canada AND been advised to quarantine per the [federal quarantine requirements](#)?

Yes

No

3. Has a doctor, health care provider, or public health unit told you that you should currently be isolating (staying at home)?

This can be because of an outbreak or contact tracing.

Yes

No

4. In the last 10 days, have you been identified as a “close contact” of someone who currently has COVID-19?

If public health has advised you that you do not need to self-isolate (e.g., you are fully immunized or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and since been cleared), select “No.”

Yes

No

5. In the last 10 days, have you received a COVID Alert exposure notification on your cell phone?

If you have already gone for a test and got a negative result, select “No.”

If you are fully immunized or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and since been cleared, select “No.”

Yes

No

6. In the last 10 days, have you tested positive on a rapid antigen test or a home-based self-testing kit?

If you have since tested negative on a lab-based PCR test, select “No.”

Yes

No

7. Is anyone you live with currently experiencing any new COVID-19 symptoms and/or waiting for test results after experiencing symptoms?

If you are fully immunized or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and since been cleared, select “No.”

If the individual experiencing symptoms received a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours and is experiencing mild headache, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, select “No”.

Yes

No

For general visitors only:

8. **In the last 14 days, has someone in your household (someone you live with) travelled outside of Canada AND been advised to quarantine (as per the federal quarantine requirements)?**

If you are fully immunized or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and since been cleared, select "No."

Yes

No

9. **In the last 10 days, has someone in your household (someone you live with) been identified as a "close contact" of someone who currently has COVID-19 AND advised by a doctor, healthcare provider or public health unit to self-isolate?**

If you are fully immunized or have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days and since been cleared, select "No."

Yes

No

Results of Screening Questions:

- If the individual answers **NO to all questions from 1 through 7 (NO to all questions from 1 through 9 for general visitors)**, they have passed and can enter the home. They need to wear a mask to enter the home and should be told to self-monitor for symptoms.
 - In addition to following all the home's regular control measures, if the individual is a worker (e.g., staff) who received a COVID-19 vaccine in the last 48 hours and has mild headache, fatigue, muscle ache and/or joint pain that only began after immunization, and no other symptoms, the worker must wear a medical mask for their entire shift at work even if not otherwise required to do so. Their mask may only be removed to consume food or drink and they must remain at least two metres away from others when their mask has been removed. If the symptoms worsen, continue past 48 hours, or if they develop other symptoms, they should leave work immediately to self-isolate and seek COVID-19 testing.
- If the individual answers **YES to ANY question from 1 through 7 (YES to ANY question from 1 through 9 for general visitors)**, they have not passed the screening and should not be permitted entry unless they are a resident or visiting an imminently palliative resident.

- Staff and students: They should inform their manager/immediate supervisor of this result. They should be told to go or stay at home to self-isolate immediately and contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to get medical advice or an assessment, including if they need a COVID-19 test.
- Visitors: They should be told to go or stay at home to self-isolate immediately and contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to get medical advice, including if they need a COVID-19 test.
- Residents: They should be placed in a separate room near the entrance to be further assessed by the appropriate LTCH/RH staff.
- If the individual answers **YES to question 7**, they must be advised to stay home, along with the rest of the household, until the sick individual gets a negative COVID-19 test result, is cleared by their local public health unit, or is diagnosed with another illness.
- If any of the answers to these screening questions change during the day, the worker should inform their employer of the change, go home to self-isolate immediately, and contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) to get medical advice or an assessment, including if they need a COVID-19 test.
- Homes are required to maintain a record of the date/time that workers were in the home and their contact information. This information may be requested by public health for contact tracing. These records should be maintained for a period of at least 30 days.
- Any record created as part of worker screening may only be disclosed as required by law.

Note:

For more information on federal requirements for travellers, including for unvaccinated children less than 12 years of age and quarantine exemptions, please see the Government of Canada's [website](#).