

Ministry of Health

# COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes

Version 12 – June 27, 2022

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 or legal advice.

In the event of any conflict between this document and any applicable orders or directives issued by the Minister of Health or the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the order or directive prevails.

Per section 9 of the [Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes](#) ("LTCHs"), LTCHs are required to ensure that the COVID-19 screening requirements as set out in the [COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care Homes in Ontario](#) ("MLTC COVID-19 Guidance"), are followed. Per the MLTC COVID-19 Guidance, LTCHs must follow this screening tool for minimum requirements and exemptions regarding active screening.

In accordance with clause 27(5) (O.a) of O. Reg. 166/11 under the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010* ("RHA"), the licensee of a retirement home shall ensure that any guidance, advice, or recommendations given to the retirement homes by the Chief Medical Officer of Health ("CMOH") are followed in the retirement home. Per the CMOH memorandum to the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) dated June 10, 2022, the CMOH recommends that retirement homes implement the policies, procedures, and preventative measures in the [COVID-19 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#), which recommends that retirement homes ensure that the COVID-19 screening requirements as set out in the Ministry of Senior Affairs and Accessibility [COVID-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario](#) ("MSAA COVID-19 Guidance") are followed. The MSAA COVID-19 Guidance states this screening tool must be followed for minimum requirements and exemptions regarding active screening.

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 should 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 (if applicable), ideally at home, and, if experiencing symptoms, 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 Guidance: Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#) and
- Staff and essential visitors who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations as per the [Guidance for Employers Managing Workers with Symptoms within 48 Hours of COVID19 or Influenza Immunization](#) document.
- Visitors for residents receiving end of life care, 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, maintain physical distance from other residents and staff and be restricted to the resident's room. This exception does not apply to visitors for residents receiving end of life care who failed screening due to federal quarantine requirements.
- Staff members where the LTCH/RH has advised that the individual is allowed to work (e.g., test-to-work), should be permitted entry but homes must ensure they are following the requirements as set out in Appendix A of [Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario](#).

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 as required, such as hand hygiene, physical distancing, and masking or wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), as appropriate. 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 (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:**

All LTCHs and RHs are responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, public health guidance, and any other applicable legal requirements.

## Screening Questions for All Persons

**1. In the last 10 days, have you experienced any of these symptoms? Choose any/all that are new, worsening, and not related to other known causes or conditions that you already have.**

Select "No" if all of these apply:

- Since your symptoms began, you tested negative for COVID-19 on one PCR test or rapid molecular test or two rapid antigen tests taken 24 to 48 hours apart; and
- You do not have a fever; and
- Your symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours if you have nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea).

<b>Do you have one or more of the following symptoms?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b>
<b>Fever and/or chills</b>	Temperature of 37.8 degrees Celsius/100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
<b>Cough or barking cough (croup)</b>	Not related to asthma, post-infectious reactive airways, COPD, or other known causes or conditions you already have.
<b>Shortness of breath</b>	Not related to asthma or other known causes or conditions you already have.

<p><b>Decrease or loss of smell or taste</b></p>	<p>Not related to seasonal allergies, neurological disorders, or other known causes or conditions you already have.</p>
<p><b>Muscle aches/joint pain</b></p>	<p>Unusual, long-lasting (not related to a sudden injury, fibromyalgia, or other known causes or conditions you already have).</p> <p><i>If you received a COVID-19 and/or flu vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild muscle aches/joint pain that only began after vaccination, select "No."</i></p>
<p><b>Fatigue</b></p>	<p>Unusual tiredness, lack of energy (not related to depression, insomnia, thyroid dysfunction, or other known causes or conditions you already have).</p> <p><i>If you received a COVID-19 and/or flu vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing mild fatigue that only began after vaccination, select "No."</i></p>
<p><b>Sore throat</b></p>	<p>Painful or difficulty swallowing (not related to post-nasal drip, acid reflux, or other known causes or conditions you already have).</p>
<p><b>Runny or stuffy/congested nose</b></p>	<p>Not related to seasonal allergies, being outside in cold weather, or other known causes or conditions you already have.</p>
<p><b>Headache</b></p>	<p>New, unusual, long-lasting (not related to tension-type headaches, chronic migraines, or other known causes or conditions you already have).</p> <p><i>If you received a COVID-19 and/or flu vaccination in the last 48 hours and are experiencing a headache that only began after vaccination, select "No."</i></p>
<p><b>Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea</b></p>	<p>Not related to irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, menstrual cramps, or other known causes or conditions you already have.</p>

**2. In the last 14 days, have you travelled outside of Canada AND are currently required to be in 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 (regardless of whether you are currently self-isolating or not), have you been identified as a “close contact” of someone (regardless of whether you live with them or not) who has tested positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms consistent with COVID-19?**

Select “No” if:

- You completed your isolation period after testing positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (using a rapid antigen, rapid molecular or PCR test); and/or
- Your close contact is isolating because of COVID-19 symptoms but has already received a negative PCR or rapid molecular test, or two negative rapid antigen tests, 24-48 hours apart.

Yes

No

**5. In the last 10 days (regardless of whether you are currently self-isolating or not), have you tested positive for COVID-19, including 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

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\* A “close contact” is defined as an individual who has an exposure to a confirmed positive COVID-19 case, an individual with COVID-19 symptoms, or an individual with a positive rapid antigen test result. You are considered a close contact if you were less than two metres away from the case/symptomatic person for at least 15 minutes, or multiple shorter lengths of time, without personal protective equipment in the 48 hours before the case’s symptoms began or their positive test result, whichever came first.

## 6. Do any of the following apply?

- You live with someone who is currently isolating because of a positive COVID-19 test
- You live with someone who is currently isolating because of [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- You live with someone who is isolating while waiting for COVID-19 test results

Select "No" if:

- You completed your isolation period after testing positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days (using a rapid antigen, rapid molecular or PCR test); and/or
- Your household member is isolating because of COVID-19 symptoms but has already received a negative PCR or rapid molecular test, or two negative rapid antigen tests, 24-48 hours apart.

Yes

No

## Results of Screening Questions:

- If the individual answers **NO to all questions from 1 through 6**, 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 and/or flu vaccine in the last 48 hours and has mild headache, fatigue, muscle ache and/or joint pain that only began after vaccination, 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 6** they have not passed the screening and should not be permitted entry **unless** they are a resident; who are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations; visiting a resident receiving end of life care;

or directed by public health or the LTCH/RH that they are allowed to work (e.g., test-to-work) as outlined above.

- If they answered YES to question 1: they should be advised to self-isolate and not leave their home except to get tested, visit a clinical assessment centre, or for a medical emergency. If they test positive for COVID-19, they must isolate [for at least 5 days](#) from the day symptoms began, and not enter the LTCH/RH for at least 10 days after developing symptoms.
- If they answered YES to question 2: they must follow [federal guidelines](#). If they were told to quarantine, they must isolate for 14 days immediately after return.
- If they answered YES to question 3: they should be advised to self-isolate and not leave their home except to get tested, visit a clinical assessment centre, or for a medical emergency. They must isolate as per [provincial guidance](#) or the instructions from the health care provider or public health unit, and not enter the LTCH/RH for 10 days after symptom onset or last day of exposure.
- If they answered YES to question 4: they are required to wear a mask and [self-monitor](#) for symptoms for 10 days after their last exposure to the isolating individual, and they are not permitted entry to the LTCH/RH for 10 days after their last exposure.
- If they answered YES to question 5: they are required to self-isolate for at least 5 days from the date of the positive test. They are not permitted entry to the LTCH/RH for 10 days after positive test date.
- If they answered YES to question 6:
  - If they are under 18 years old and [fully vaccinated](#) or over 18 years old and have received a COVID-19 booster dose, they should wear a mask and self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days after exposure, and they are not permitted entry to the LTCH/RH for 10 days after their last exposure to the isolating individual.
  - If they do not meet any of the criteria above, they must self-isolate while the person with symptoms/positive test result isolates, and they are not permitted entry to the LTCH/RH for 10 days after their last exposure to the isolating individual.
- Staff and students who answer YES to any question from 1 through 6 should inform their manager/immediate supervisor of this result.

- Residents who answer YES to any question from 1 through 6 should be placed in a separate room near the entrance to be further assessed by the appropriate LTCH/RH staff.
- If any of the answers to these screening questions change during the day, the individual should inform their employer of the change (where applicable), 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. Homes are required to maintain visitor logs of all visits to the home. The visitor log must include, at minimum, the name and contact information of the visitor, time and date of the visit, and the purpose of the visit (e.g., name of resident visited). 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](#).