

A visiting guide for family and friends

This guide will help you walk through the steps the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services has put in place effective June 2022, to ensure people using services can have safe visits with their family and friends.



We know you miss your loved one and they miss you too! The Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) has put in place new visiting requirements for people who live in group homes or other settings where multiple people live and receive services. These guidelines come into place on **June 2022**.

The guidelines follow the Ontario government's reopening framework and list where it is safe and allowable to have different types of visits. People who are interested in hosting their family and friends for visits or people who require an overnight visit away (necessary to maintain their health, wellness, safety, or any applicable legal rights), will need to follow these guidelines.

We've included the MCCSS requirements in this guide to help you prepare for your visit.

Ontario





Guidelines for When People Using Services Host Visitors

We're here to support people who use Christian Horizons services in hosting you for a visit that follows MCCSS guidelines.

Additional details about these guidelines can be found at the following link: [**Covid-19 Guidance for MCCSS-funded and Licensed Congregate Living Settings**](#)

The following pages describe the MCCSS guidelines and how Christian Horizons can support you in following these guidelines where these visits are permitted.

Types of visits people may host in their home

There are a few different types of visits people using services can host at their home:

- Essential Visitors
- Indoor visits with non-essential visitors
- Outdoor visits with non-essential visitors

Essential Visitors

Essential visitors provide an essential service that employees supporting people in their home cannot provide. This can sometimes include a health care professional. This is the only type of visitor who can visit during a COVID-19 outbreak in the home. MCCSS states that "Service providers may use discretion to change who is deemed an essential visitor in the context of changing community risk unless the essential visitor has legal authority to enter the setting (e.g., an inspector)."

However, it is advised that visits be scheduled ahead because if other families are visiting when you arrive, you may need to wait until there is room to host your visit. We will work with the people who use our services and their families to learn from them who their designated visitors are.

Non-Essential Visitors

In addition to essential visitors, people using services are able to invite other friends and family to their home for visits. These visits must be scheduled in advance.

The following pages describe:

- government guidelines for these visits
- how Christian Horizons can support you to follow these guidelines

1

We'll help you to plan your visit

We will schedule your **Drive-By** (from a vehicle), **Outdoor** (driveway/front or back yard/porch/deck), or **Indoor** (in a designated area) visit at least 48 hours in advance. This way we can plan to support you and your friend/loved one well. While designated visitors are not required to pre-book their visits, pre-booking helps to ensure there is room to safely host the visit when you arrive. Also, some locations may have certain times where visits are more easily accommodated.

2

We'll help with active screening

When you arrive, we'll ask you some screening questions.

We'll help you to reschedule your visit if any of the following are true for you:

- If you have a **fever** (37.8°C or higher) or a **cough** that's new or getting worse
- If you're **out of breath**, or **unable to take deep breaths** (shortness of breath)
- If you have a **sore throat**, **difficulty swallowing**, or are **losing your sense of taste or smell**.

We will ask if you have any of the following: Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or stomach pain. A runny or stuffy nose that is not because of allergies or another known reason. If you are really tired or don't have energy and is this something that's new or different for you. If you're falling down often, feeling chilled, or have a headache. If you have a "barking cough" or are making a whistling noise when breathing (croup). If you have pink eye (conjunctivitis) or aching muscles.

We will also ask whether in the last 10 days you have:

- been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- been in close contact with someone who either:
 - is currently sick with a new cough, fever, or difficulty breathing? OR
 - returned from outside of Canada in the last 2 weeks and has symptoms of COVID-19
- traveled outside of Canada
- been advised by Public Health to self-isolate?

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We'll help you wear the right PPE and maintain physical distancing

Visitors can choose to wear a surgical mask and/or eye protection supplied by Christian Horizons.

We'll help your loved one to set up a designated area inside or outside of the home for the visit.



What we need from you

Please follow the guidelines. We will all work to follow the guidelines set above by the MCCSS so we are not required to end the visit early.

Thank you for your flexibility! Reasons such as illness, bad weather or other extenuating circumstances may mean that your visit needs to be rescheduled. Please be gracious with us as we reschedule as soon as possible.



Guidelines for When People Using Services Visit Others (Essential Overnight Visits)

On June 2022, the Ontario Government released new guidelines for essential overnight visits. These visits are intended for people who for health, wellness and safety, or any applicable legal rights reasons require an overnight stay away (e.g. an overnight visit to their family member's home).

We're here to support people who use Christian Horizons services in any essential overnight absences that are necessary.

Additional details about these guidelines can be found at: [Covid-19 Guidance for MCCSS-funded and Licensed Congregate Living Settings](#)

MCCSS Guidelines

On November 30, 2021, updated guidance from MCCSS allows for people who use services that are fully vaccinated and returning from an overnight visit will only need to pass active screening on their return home. No additional precautions are required.

People using services that are not fully vaccinated will be required to follow the additional precautions as listed below for 10 days or until a negative PCR test for COVID-19 is obtained.

- Pass active screening
- Maintain physical distance from others and limit contact with housemates
- Avoid using common areas; however, if a common area cannot be avoided, the person must use a surgical/procedural mask
- Only participate in group activities if physical distancing is maintained and a surgical/procedural mask is used
- Practice proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19

During the 10-day period people may:

- only receive outdoor visitors during the 10 days.
- leave their residence for short stay (non-overnight) absences (e.g. go to school, go on walks and other activities of daily living). MCCSS guidelines for going out in the community (See [Section E: Requirements for Short-Stay Absences & Outings of Covid-19 Guidance for MCCSS-funded and Licensed Congregate Living Settings](#) effective November 30, 2021, should be followed.



What we need from you

- ✓ **Please follow the guidelines.** We will all work to follow the guidelines set above by the MCCSS so people stay healthy and safe.
 - ✓ **Reschedule the visit if you are unwell.**
 - ✓ **Follow safety precautions during the visit** (e.g. respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, avoid crowded places, practice physical distancing and wear a mask if out in the community etc.). See our [Safety in Your Community Social Story](#) for a helpful resource.
 - ✓ **Support your friend or family member to track the places they have gone and who they have been in contact with.** You can do this by completing the ["Where I've been Timeline"](#) on our Coronavirus website together.
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How we will help

- ✓ A few hours before the visit starts, we will ask you and the person coming to visit you if either of you have signs or symptoms of COVID-19. People showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will need to reschedule their visit.
 - ✓ When the person who uses our services returns after their essential overnight visit, we will ask them questions to see if they have signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Those who show symptoms of COVID-19 or anyone who wishes to, will be supported to get tested.
 - ✓ We will support the person to complete 10-days of **enhanced precautions** as per the MCCSS guidelines outlined on the previous page.
 - ✓ During the 10 days, we will support the person to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.
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Hosting visits in the community

Information about having visits in the community (e.g. in parks, on patios, at a family member's home not overnight etc.) can be found in the [Going out Safely Guide](#) on our website.



The [Safety in Your Community Social Story](#) and [Rules and Risks Social Story](#) on our website can be used to help understand or explain how to safely spend time in the community. Please see the MCCSS guidelines to learn which activities are permitted in your community: [Covid-19 Guidance for MCCSS-funded and Licensed Congregate Living Settings](#).