



Frequently-Asked Questions – COVID-19

Last updated July 27, 2021

ABOUT VACCINES AND VACCINATION RATES

What is the status of vaccinations at Revera homes and residences?

The COVID-19 vaccines have been offered to all residents and staff at Revera homes and residences, and the vast majority of our residents and staff have been vaccinated. Vaccinations are ongoing for staff. The vaccination rate continues to rise, but we do not provide exact numbers. Vaccines are a proven, safe and powerful weapon in our battle against COVID-19, and we strongly advocate for them.

What is Revera’s policy on staff vaccinations?

Now that vaccines are widely available and recognizing that many of our staff are already vaccinated, Revera has implemented a new policy to reflect our expectation that all staff be vaccinated except when impossible due to legitimate, established exceptions of a medical nature.

Revera expects that all staff be vaccinated against COVID-19 if they are able and will request a documented medical reason from those who are not. An education session on vaccines is required for those who do not provide medical documentation. Since early July 2021, Revera has required daily testing of any unvaccinated staff, along with PPE requirements that will remain in place even after no longer mandated by public health authorities. Vaccination is now a condition of employment for new hires, except when impossible due to legitimate, established exceptions.

We are grateful to the many staff who have already been vaccinated, and to our union partners who have supported and encouraged staff vaccinations. This policy is one more important step to protect both our residents and staff as we continue to battle this deadly virus, particularly the emergence of several variants of concern.

ABOUT VISITING A REVERA HOME OR RESIDENCE

What are the rules or guidelines around visiting a resident in a long term care home or retirement residence?

The rules around visiting residents varies by province and sometimes within provinces based on different public health authorities or regions. The rules also vary depending on whether or not the site is experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19, or if the resident is self-isolating or showing symptoms. Many provinces have special provisions for designated visitors or essential caregivers. Please see the latest information on [visiting someone in long term care](#), or [visiting someone in a retirement residence](#).

Do I need to book an appointment if I want to visit someone in a long term care or retirement residence? How much notice do I need to provide?

In our long term care homes in most provinces (with B.C. and Alberta being exceptions), general visitors are asked to book a visit in advance. This allows us to maintain physical distancing and to sanitize as necessary between visits. There's no minimum notice time; please just call the home and ask about the time that you wish to come. General visits are often suspended if a home experiences an outbreak of COVID-19, based on direction from public health.

In most cases, essential visitors do not require an appointment.

Do visitors need to be vaccinated?

This varies from province to province. In Manitoba personal care homes, general visitors who wish to visit indoors need to be fully vaccinated and must provide proof to the screener upon entry. General visitors who are not fully vaccinated may visit outside or in the designated visitor pod/space if there is one.

In most other provinces, vaccination is not required for general visitors, however there will be screening questions for visitors to answer when they arrive, and some provinces require that visitors take a rapid antigen COVID test (provided at the site) when they arrive. Some provinces ask for proof of vaccination. In Ontario long term care homes, fully-vaccinated visitors no longer need to be tested before visiting.

Am I allowed to hug my loved one when I visit?

The rules around physical distancing and physical contact vary from province to province, so please contact your Executive Director for specifics. In Ontario, fully-vaccinated visitors are able to have close physical contact, including handholding, if the resident is also fully vaccinated. Brief hugs can take place between residents and their visitors, regardless of vaccination status.

Is it possible to tour a Revera retirement residence?

We are offering both in-person and virtual tours at many of our retirement residences. Find more information about the virtual tours at Revera at reveraliving.com/virtualtour or contact us at 1-877-929-9222.

Is it possible to tour a Revera long term care home?

This varies from province to province. In Ontario, Alberta and B.C., tours can take place; tours must be booked in advance. In Ontario, people who come for tours are considered general visitors, which means that they may be required to undergo rapid testing depending on their vaccination status. In Manitoba, on-site tours are at the discretion of the home, depending on circumstances. Virtual tours are available.

ABOUT DAILY LIFE IN OUR HOMES AND RESIDENCES

How is daily life in Revera homes and residences changing now that most residents and staff are vaccinated?

As provinces start to re-open, communal dining has resumed in many of our homes and residences, with appropriate physical distancing and/or cohorting in effect. Communal dining has not yet resumed in Manitoba personal care homes.

Hairdressing and personal care services have also resumed in many of our homes and residences. In most cases, group recreation programs have also resumed, always respecting physical distancing requirements and provincial limits on indoor group sizes, where applicable. Individual recreation activities are offered to residents who are symptomatic or self-isolating.

Do residents need to wear masks in common areas of the home and during visits?

This varies from province to province. In B.C. and Alberta long term care homes, residents are not required to wear masks. In other provinces, residents must wear masks (if tolerated) in situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Is it possible for residents to leave for errands, day trips or overnight visits?

Each province has different guidelines around short absences, and these also vary between long term care homes and retirement residences. Please contact the Executive Director for specifics.

ABOUT COVID-19 OUTBREAKS

What happens if an outbreak is declared at a Revera home or residence?

Outbreaks are always managed under the guidance of the local public health authority, so the exact protocols can vary based on the situation. We continue to follow or exceed all public health guidance. When an outbreak is declared, we work with public health to do contact tracing to determine who may have had contact with the affected individual. We may test asymptomatic residents or staff.

We immediately step up the frequency of our enhanced cleaning, which means more frequent disinfection of high-touch surfaces like handrails and doors, common areas and staff rooms. Residents are monitored more frequently for symptoms and are tested if they present any potential signs or symptoms of the virus. Some or all residents may be placed in isolation in their rooms or suites or may be divided into cohorts which do not intermingle. If necessary, meals are served in resident rooms or suites, with supervision or assistance if required.

Usually, group recreation activities in the affected home area are replaced with individual activities designed to maintain stimulation and social engagement during the period of isolation. Often, general visits are suspended during an outbreak. Usually, visits from essential visitors, essential caregivers or designated family members are permitted (the terminology varies from province to province). Essential visits for palliative residents are always allowed.

With all of the safety protocols in place, how does COVID still enter a home or residence?

It is often impossible, even with contact tracing, to know precisely how COVID entered a home or residence. In some cases, asymptomatic staff, care providers or caregivers were exposed to the virus in the community and inadvertently brought it into the home. In addition, throughout the pandemic, residents have needed to leave our homes or residences temporarily for medical treatments and appointments such as visiting hospitals for day treatments, dialysis or minor surgery. Since restrictions have been relaxed, residents may choose to leave the home or residence for a variety of reasons, including medical appointments, family visits or shopping.

Even if residents never leave the home or residence, many have visitors, and of course staff and visitors interact with others while in the community and in their homes. The virus and its variants are very contagious and can be spread without the person having symptoms or before they show symptoms. This is why Revera is so supportive of regular staff surveillance testing. We have many infection prevention and control practices in place, including staff and resident screening, surveillance testing, PPE, hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning and sanitization. None of these interventions are 100% guaranteed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Taken as a group, they can be effective measures. Please know that we take this virus extremely seriously and we are doing everything we can to keep our residents and staff safe.

What is Revera doing to prepare for future waves of COVID-19?

Revera's comprehensive [Pandemic Response Plan](#) focuses on five priority areas: external advisory committee, analytics, building and infrastructure, clinical and operational initiatives, and staffing.

What is considered an outbreak?

Outbreaks are declared by the local or provincial public health authority, and only public health can declare them over. The definition of an outbreak varies from province to province and is always at the discretion of public health. In Ontario, the definition of a COVID-19 outbreak is outlined [here](#).

Here are some additional resources for more information:

- [Alberta](#)
- [British Columbia](#)
- [Manitoba](#)
- [Saskatchewan](#)
- [Ontario Retirement Communities Association](#)
- [Ontario Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority](#)
- [Ontario Long Term Care](#)
- [Newfoundland](#)