

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Office of the Associate Deputy
Minister, Long-Term Care Policy
and Pandemic Response

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April 25, 2022

MEMORANDUM TO: Long-Term Care Home Licensees

FROM: Erin Hannah
Associate Deputy Minister
LTC Policy and Pandemic Response

SUBJECT: Long-Term Care Pandemic Response Update

In follow up to the memo released on April 20, 2022 announcing the issuing of the [Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes](#) ("Minister's Directive"), I am writing to inform you of the relevant and applicable updates to the COVID-19 Guidance Document.

As you are aware, the Minister's Directive was developed to ensure the ability to maintain critical components of Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) Directives, once rescinded, as well as to consolidate the requirements of the [Minister's Directive: COVID-19 – Long-term care home surveillance testing and access to homes](#).

CMOH Directives

In light of recent increases in COVID-19 cases across Ontario, and out of an abundance of caution to protect the most vulnerable sectors, the CMOH Directives have been extended beyond April 27, 2022 and will remain in effect for at least 45 days. The recently released Minister's Directive will still come into effect as of April 27 and will work in conjunction with the relevant CMOH directives through continued incorporation in the LTC COVID-19 Guidance Document.

The extension of CMOH Directive 3 will reflect one update to remove the masking requirement for residents, visitors, staff, students and volunteers when outdoors. Universal masking for staff, students, volunteers and visitors is still required for the entire duration of their shift or visit indoors. We have updated the [LTC COVID-19 Guidance Document](#) to reflect this as well, effective April 27.

Please note, the CMOH has also issued a new order that requires masking in specific indoor settings until June 11 (unless otherwise extended or revoked). This order does mention long-term care homes in addition to other settings like public

transit however it does not include anything different than what is in CMOH Directive 3 and the LTC COVID-19 Guidance Document.

COVID-19 Asymptomatic Screen Testing

As previously noted, the authority to require asymptomatic screen testing in long-term care homes is now part of the new [Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes](#), and the separate Minister's Directive on surveillance testing is revoked as of April 27. Detailed requirements for asymptomatic screen testing can now be found in the updated COVID-19 Guidance Document.

The testing requirements for staff, students, volunteers and caregivers have now been updated to reflect the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 vaccination recommendations, as outlined in the guidance document [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses](#). Staying up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, including any booster dose(s) when eligible. It is no longer appropriate to use the term "fully vaccinated" for those who have received two vaccines, as they may not be up-to-date. The testing requirements for staff, students, volunteers and caregivers have been updated to replace "fully vaccinated" references which means the testing requirements are now as follows:

- An antigen test at least two times per week, on separate days, if they are **up-to-date** with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses);
- An antigen test at least three times per week, on separate days, if they are **not up-to-date** with recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses; or
- One PCR (polymerase chain reaction) and one antigen test per week, at a minimum, on separate days.

All other asymptomatic screen testing requirements remain the same, however the content has been streamlined to improve readability.

Thank you for your continued support and diligent efforts in keeping long-term care homes safe for residents and staff as we move through the changing landscape of this pandemic. As always, should you have questions you may contact us at MLTCPandemicResponse@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Erin Hannah
Associate Deputy Minister

Attachments: CMOH Memo and Class Order – Continued Mask and Face Covering Requirements in Certain Settings Beyond April 27, 2022 (French and English memo and order), Updated COVID-19 Guidance Document for Long-Term Care in

Ontario (EN only with online to be posted in English and French shortly), Minister's Directive: COVID-19 response measures for long-term care homes, Pandemic Response FAQs

- c: Nancy Matthews, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC)
- Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
- Dr. Barbara Yaffe, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health
- Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Pandemic Response and Recovery Division, Ministry of Health (MOH)
- Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Capacity Planning and Analytics Division, MOH/MLTC
- Lisa Levin, Chief Executive Officer, AdvantAge Ontario
- Donna Duncan, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Long Term Care Association
- Monika Turner, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Michael Jacek, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Colleen Geiger, President and CEO (Acting), Public Health Ontario
- Jeff Butler, Assistant Deputy Minister, LTC Operations Division, MLTC
- Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health
- Cynthia Martineau, CEO, Home and Community Care Support Services