

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

April 8, 2021

INFORMATION SHEET ON MEASURES IN FORCE FOR FAMILIES AND INFORMAL OR FAMILY CAREGIVERS WHOSE LOVED ONES RESIDE IN A PRIVATE SENIORS' RESIDENCE (RPA)

Due to the current epidemiological situation in Québec and in order to limit the spread of COVID-19, it is recommended the measures must be pursued aimed at limiting, in particular access to a limited number of people in living environments for vulnerable individuals. Additional measures are planned to limit contacts among residents of the same RPA.

The following infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures must apply at all times in the above facilities:

- Physical distancing of 2 meters at all time
- Handwashing
- Availability of all required personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Masks must be worn at all times, in accordance with guidelines in effect.
- A protocol must be strictly applied for cleaning and disinfecting shared equipment and physical premises, including elevator buttons, door handles, etc. High-touch surfaces in common areas and shared bathrooms must be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day (or more often depending on traffic and the epidemiological situation) and up to 4 times a day during an outbreak.

These measures are easier to apply with a stable team.

The following informal caregiver and visitor definitions will facilitate the understanding and their implement instructions:

Informal caregiver:

Anyone who on a regularly or occasionally basis provides supports to a member of their close entourage who has a temporarily or permanently disability and with whom they share an emotional relationship whether this member is a part of the family or not. In this case, support is provided on a non-professional basis regardless of the ages, living environment or the nature of disability (physical, psychological, psychosocial or otherwise) of the supported individual. This care can take a variety of forms, for example, helping with personal care, emotional support or coordinating care and services.

This means that close and immediate family members must be able to access the living environment of their loved one as for informal caregivers.

Visitor:

Anyone who is not close or immediate family member and who does not fall within the definition of an informal caregiver and wishes to visit a resident. This may be a person known by the resident with whom the contacts are occasional and not essential to that individual's physical and/or psychological integrity.

INSTRUCTIONS RELATING TO VISITS BY INFORMAL CAREGIVERS TO PRIVATE HOMES FOR SENIORS

1. Guidelines

- In regions at the **red alert level** or if the RPA has an outbreak, a single informal or family caregiver, known to the facility, per day may visit the resident.
- In regions at the **orange alert level**, a single informal or family caregiver may visit at a time, for a maximum of two per day.
- In regions on **yellow alert**, two informal or family caregivers at a time and a maximum of four informal or family caregivers per day can visit a patient/resident.
- At facilities with an outbreak and on **red** or **orange** alert, only informal or family caregivers known to the facility can visit, namely those who have been trained in and are already familiar with required IPC measures. No more than two informal and family caregivers identified by the resident and known to the RPA may visit the facility.
- It is strongly recommended to have informal or family caregivers make an appointment before visiting the facility to touch base and go over the IPC measures to be followed at all times in accordance with the guidelines in effect.
- A known and identified informal or family caregiver can visit the resident more than once a day, by appointment, if applicable.
- **Travel between regions:**
 - Travel from red and orange regions to yellow and green ones is forbidden. People living in RCMs subject to special emergency measures are forbidden to leave their region unless it is absolutely necessary (except for essential travel, students, workers, shared custody, and transportation of goods). Travel to other orange and red regions not subject to special emergency measures is not recommended. However, travel by informal or family caregivers from nearby areas is allowed.
 - An exception applies for visits to patients in palliative and end-of-life care settings, regardless of the alert level in place. Travel that falls under this exception is permitted for informal and family caregivers and visitors.
- Informal or family caregivers who visit residential facilities during the period concerned must follow the guidelines for the general public, reduce contacts to a minimum, and comply with the curfew. However in certain specific situations, informal or family caregivers can obtain a letter from a health and social services institution allowing them to break curfew if it is clinically required for the patient/resident. See directive DGAPA 20 on curfew and informal and family caregivers at:
https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/document-002876/?&txt=couvre-feu&msss_valpub&index=directives-covid-19&date=DESC

Instructions for the general population in the context of COVID-19 are available at the following address: <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus->

2019/systeme-alertes-regionales-et-intervention-graduelle/cartes-paliers-alerte-covid-19-par-region.

2. General information

- Support for informal caregivers who access a CHSLD or an RI with 20 places and more and that welcomes seniors is necessary in order to validate the absence of exclusion criteria related to symptoms associated with COVID-19. The exclusion criteria are as follows:
 - a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and who does not meet the other criteria for ending self-isolation
 - a person who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 – refer to the COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool available on Québec.ca
 - a person who has been advised to self-isolate because they are suspected of being infected, because they are waiting to get tested or for a test result or because they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19
 - a person who has been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
 - a person exposed to a symptomatic person who lives in the same home, is awaiting a test result, and is considered a person under investigation (PUI)
 - a person who has been instructed to self-isolate because they have returned from travel outside Canada
 - a person who has been instructed by the public health to self-isolate

Anyone who is presenting one of these criteria will be refused access to the living environment.

Any visitor or informal or family caregiver who so wishes may be tested at the facility on request. Under no circumstances may the RPA require an informal or family caregiver to test negative to have access to the residential facility.

Informal or family caregivers and visitors who do not follow the rules, despite having received all the information and having been assisted with applying IPC measures, may be denied further access to the RPA.

Relations between people and their loved ones must be continued and even intensified during the confinement virtually or through telephone contact.

Informal caregivers and visitors will be permitted entry to all palliative and end-of-life facilities. Please refer to the current directives on the MSSS website at:

https://msss.gouv.qc.ca/professionnels/documents/coronavirus-2019-ncov/COVID-19-Directives_SPFV_2020-10-05.pdf.

3. Informal or family caregivers and visitors must comply with the following instructions:

3.1. Infection prevention and control (IPC) measures:

- Sign the visitors log so that you can be quickly contacted by public health authorities and isolated if necessary, in the event of an outbreak.

- Read the information provided on symptom monitoring, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Perform hand hygiene when entering and leaving the RPA as well as the resident's room and a hot zone, if applicable.
- Masks must be worn at all times, in accordance with guidelines in effect, during your entire visit to a RPA. Medical masks may not be reused for a subsequent visit.
- Use personal protective equipment correctly according to the guidelines in effect.
- Two metres physical distancing must be maintained in RPA at all times, with no exceptions, especially when clients/residents share a room, but also throughout the residential facility.
- Arrive at the facility in clean clothing and change and wash it (in the usual way) on returning home afterwards.

3.2. Moving around inside a RPA

- Avoid common areas in the residence (e.g., lounge, dining room) except to go to a rental unit or help a resident walk in a corridor. Keep two metres away from other residents and wear a mask at all times in accordance with guidelines in effect.
Starting April 12, 2021, informal or family caregivers will be able to visit common areas with patients/residents in facilities on **yellow alert**, under certain conditions.
- Stay two metres away from residents, staff, and other informal and family caregivers at all times.
- Stay out of equipment storage areas.
- Leave the residents' room if aerosol-generating medical procedures are to be conducted and follow the staff's instructions as to when you can return.
- Ask which washrooms informal or family caregivers can use and what health precautions and guidelines must be followed. For example, washrooms in hot zones should not be used.

You are invited to consult the following Québec.ca website which is intended for informal caregivers: [Informal and family caregivers and visitors to facilities during the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).

This site brings together a lot of information, videos clips and references to support you in your role, help you to better understand and remember the important hygienic measures that you must observed during visits and answer some of your questions.

You have dissatisfaction or disagreement with the interpretation and application of ministerial directives?

- A manager or other designated individual at a private home for seniors
- is responsible for answering the questions and the dissatisfaction of informal caregivers related to the interpretation and application of ministerial directives. You are welcome to ask who this designated person is.
- If your dissatisfaction or disagreement persists, you have the right to confidentially contact the Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner per the facility's complaints review procedure.

MEASURES APPLICABLE TO RESIDENTS IN RPA

1. Specific measures for RPA without an outbreak in regions at the red alert level

- Someone living alone in a RPA can meet with one other person (always the same person). A person living alone in a RPA can see one other person (always the same person), provided they follow all public health guidelines for the general public. This also applies to two residents by themselves from two different rental units in the same RPA, as long as it is always the same two people.
- Since March 24, 2021, dining rooms can be reopened in RPAs whose at least 75% of the residents have been vaccinated for at least 28 days. All dining rooms must have strict sanitary measures in place. Visitors and informal and family caregivers are not permitted in the dining room. Dining rooms will be gradually reopened based on vaccination campaign rollout. For RPAs where residents have either not been vaccinated or have been vaccinated for less than 28 days, dining rooms must remain closed. Certain exceptions apply.
- Activities aimed at preventing mental, cognitive, and physical deconditioning are permitted with a maximum of 8 residents with strict adherence to infection prevention and control measures.
- Walking indoors along corridors, outdoor walks, and essential trips (e.g., grocery store and drugstore) are permitted, but contact with other residents must be avoided and they must respect the curfew and infection prevention and control measures.
- Access to home cinemas or auditoriums is permitted under a staff member's supervision. Everyone must be seated, and a limited number of residents may be present for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures.

2. Specific measures for RPA with an outbreak in regions at the red alert level or for a resident in isolation

- Residents must follow the measures required for the requested isolation, including taking their meals in their unit.

3. Specific measures for RPA without an outbreak in regions at the orange alert level

- A person living alone in a RPA can see one other person (always the same person), provided they follow all public health guidelines for the general public. This also applies to two residents by themselves from two different rental units in the same RPA, as long as it is always the same two people.
- In RPAs in regions at the orange alert level, meals can be eaten in the dining room if strict sanitary measures are implemented (e.g., visitors and informal and family caregivers must not be permitted in the dining room).
- Activities aimed at preventing mental, cognitive, and physical deconditioning are permitted with a maximum of 10 residents for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures.
- Walking indoors along corridors, outdoor walks, and essential trips (e.g., grocery store and drugstore) are permitted, but contact with other residents must be avoided and they must respect the curfew and infection prevention and control measures.
- A limited number of residents (maximum 10 people at a time) can use the pool and fitness room under the supervision of a staff member for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures. The changing room must remain closed, except for the

bathrooms.

- Access to home cinemas or auditoriums is permitted under a staff member's supervision. Everyone must be seated, and a limited number of residents may be present for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures.

4. Specific measures for RPA with an outbreak in regions at the **orange alert level** or for residents in isolation

- Residents must follow the measures required for the requested isolation, including taking their meals in their unit.

5. Specific measures for RPAs without an outbreak in regions on **yellow alert**

- Residents in rental units can meet with people living at another address, inside or outside the RPA, subject to public health guidelines for the general public and specific guidelines for RPAs.
- In regions on yellow alert, meals can be eaten in the dining room if strict sanitary measures are applied:
- Supervised group activities in RPAs aimed at preventing mental, cognitive, and physical deconditioning are permitted with a maximum of 25 residents for the rigorous respect of infection prevention and control measures.
- Walking indoors along corridors in RPAs, outdoor walks, and outings (e.g., grocery store and drugstore) are permitted by respecting the infection prevention and control measures.
- A limited number of residents (maximum 25 people at a time) can use the pool and fitness room under the supervision of a staff member for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures. Access to changing rooms and showers is permitted subject to strict conditions.
- Access to home cinemas or auditoriums is permitted under a staff member's supervision. Everyone must be seated, and a limited number of residents may be present for the rigorous application of infection prevention and control measures.

6. Specific measures for PSRs on **yellow alert** with an outbreak or for residents in isolation

- Residents must follow the measures required for the requested isolation, including taking their meals in their unit.

USEFUL REFERENCES

Informal caregivers

- [Informal and family caregivers and visitors to facilities during the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)
- [Answers to questions about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Caregiver Support](#): 1-855 852-7784 or info-aidant@lappui.org