

VISITOR GUIDELINES



FAQS FOR PATIENTS, FAMILIES AND VISITORS

At Mackenzie Health, we are committed to maintaining the safety and well-being of our patients, families and visitors. Part of that commitment is to ensure that we are sharing the most up-to-date information. Please read the information below to answer questions you may have:

Vaccination requirements for visitors:

- **Why is Mackenzie Health implementing vaccination requirements for visitors?**

- At Mackenzie Health, the safety of our patients, families, staff, physicians and volunteers is our top priority.
- COVID-19 continues to affect our community and remains a concern across our region and the province. The most severe impacts are on those who are unvaccinated.
- As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, visitor guidelines are evolving in a safe and compassionate manner. All hospitals in the Central Region are implementing similar visitor policies to reduce and minimize opportunities for transmission of COVID-19.
- With safety in mind, effective November 15, 2021, support persons and visitors to Mackenzie Health will be required to show proof of full COVID-19 vaccination, or a medical exemption, to enter the hospital. There will be limited exceptions for those visiting certain patient populations.
- We encourage everyone to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as it's the best tool we have available to us to end the pandemic.
- This policy is specific to hospital visitors. Anyone can come to our hospital for care whether they are vaccinated or unvaccinated.

- **What is the definition of “fully vaccinated”?**

- Being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 means allowing a minimum of 14 days to pass after having received:
 - the full series (two doses) of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines authorized by Health Canada; or
 - one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada; or
 - three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.

- **How will Mackenzie Health know visitors are fully vaccinated?**

- Visitors will be required to show proof of full vaccination or a documented medical exemption to the screening desk at the hospital entrance. Our screeners will request proof of vaccination records for all visitors, as well as continue to screen for symptoms of COVID-19.
- When a visitor schedules an appointment to see a patient with the clinical unit, they will also be provided with information about Mackenzie Health's visitor vaccination requirement prior to their visit.

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- **Can I still visit a patient at Mackenzie Health if I am not fully vaccinated?**
 - Effective November 15, 2021, individuals who are seeking to visit or accompanying a patient at Mackenzie Health who are not fully vaccinated will not be permitted to enter the hospital. Limited exceptions will apply including:
 - Visitors or support persons of labour and delivery patients;
 - Visitors or support persons of imminent end-of-life patients;
 - Visitors or support persons of NICU and paediatric patients; and
 - Visitors or support persons accompanying a patient to the Emergency Department.
- **If I'm unvaccinated and not able to visit my loved one in hospital, how can I connect with them?**
 - We recognize and appreciate the integral role and impact that loved ones have in providing support to patients. This decision was not made lightly. We're doing everything we can to ensure that families feel supported and connected while their loved ones are in the hospital.
 - That's why we've made WI-FI across the hospital and all TV, internet and phone access free on the tablets available at each bedside. These opportunities to connect virtually have been in place throughout the pandemic as we implemented visitor restrictions intended to keep everyone safe.
 - For the protection of all our patients and staff we encourage everyone eligible for vaccination to be fully vaccinated.
- **Will visitors who are not fully vaccinated be allowed to enter Mackenzie Health if they have a medical exemption? What about children under 12 years old who are not eligible to be vaccinated?**
 - Visitors who have an approved and documented medical exemption that meets the [provincial criteria](#) will be allowed to enter the hospital. Medical exemptions are limited to only those who had an adverse reaction following a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine or those who have an allergy to an ingredient in a COVID-19 vaccine.
 - As children under the age of 12 are not yet eligible for vaccination, they are exempt from this process and will follow our normal process for visitor access.
- **Will there be additional precautions required for visitors who are not fully vaccinated but granted an exception to enter the hospital?**
 - Like all visitors, visitors who are granted an exception but are not fully vaccinated must wear a hospital-issued mask at all times, practice proper hand hygiene, and always maintain physical distancing. Visitors will also be expected to go directly to and from the unit, and not visit any other areas of the hospital except to use the washroom.

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- **Can I still visit a patient at Mackenzie Health if I am partially vaccinated/I only have one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?**
 - A visitor who is only partially vaccinated (only received one dose), will not be granted an exception.
 - Being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 means allowing a minimum of 14 days to pass after having received:
 - the full series (two doses) of a COVID- 19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines authorized by Health Canada; or
 - one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada; or
 - three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.
- **I'm fully vaccinated and can't provide my proof of vaccination, will I be able to visit Mackenzie Health?**
 - Visitors will be required to show proof of full vaccination or a documented medical exemption to enter the hospital. If a visitor cannot provide proof of vaccination, they will not be considered fully vaccinated.
 - Proof of vaccination can be acquired by visiting covid19.ontariohealth.ca and following the step-by-step instructions.
- **Can I provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test in place of full vaccination?**
 - At this time Mackenzie Health will not be accepting proof of negative PCR or rapid antigen tests in place of COVID-19 vaccination records for entry at our hospital. This aligns with the approach to mandatory vaccination in place at other public places in Ontario.
- **Will Mackenzie Health be allowing patients to have more visitors, since only vaccinated visitors will be allowed into the hospital beginning November 15, 2021?**
 - No. The visitor restrictions in place at Mackenzie Health remain in place. The most up-to-date visitor criteria can be found on the [Mackenzie Health website](https://www.mackenziehealth.ca).
- **What if I don't agree with your vaccination policy and I want to speak to someone about an exception?**
 - If a visitor has a concern or complaint about the visitor restrictions in place at Mackenzie Health, they can contact the Patient Relations department by e-mailing patientrelations@mackenziehealth.ca or calling 905-883-1212 ext. 7494.

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Visiting Mackenzie Health:

- **What entrances are visitors to use when arriving at Mackenzie Health?**
 - Designated entrance for patients and visitors:
 - Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital:
 - D-wing entrance: 24/7
 - C-wing entrance: 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m.
 - A-wing entrance: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (reserved for visitors of long-term care, complex continuing care and palliative care patients)
 - Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital:
 - Magna Emergency entrance: 24/7
 - west and main entrances: 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m.
- **What areas can visitors access while in the hospital?**
 - Visitors must remain at the patient's bedside and visit only in the patient's room. There are specific washrooms that visitors are able to use in the public areas of the hospital.
- **How can visitors keep safe while visiting the hospital?**
 - Visitors play an integral role in not only keeping themselves safe but in keeping our patients, staff, physicians, volunteers, and community safe as well.
 - Visitors will be screened at each visit to ensure they have no signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or any other communicable illness. Visitors with symptoms will not be allowed to visit. Visitors must pass the screening assessment with each visit and show proof of vaccination against COVID-19.
 - Visitors will be required to clean their hands and wear a hospital-issued mask at the point of entry to the hospital. The mask must cover both nose and mouth. We will provide a mask at the entrance and instructions on how to properly wear the mask.
 - Visitors must clean their hands using the hand sanitizer available at the doors when entering the hospital and when entering and exiting the patient's room. Visitors must practice regular hand hygiene during their visit.
 - Visitors must maintain a distance of 2 meters (6 feet) between other individuals at all times.
- **What can I expect from the unit when I am visiting?**
 - Visitors will be provided education by unit staff on Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) practices such as hand hygiene, how to wear/remove a mask properly, and donning and doffing of PPE (if needed).

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Additional supports for families:

- **How can families stay in contact with patients?**
 - We're doing everything we can to ensure that families feel supported and connected while their loved ones are in the hospital. That's why we've made WI-FI across the hospital and all TV, internet and phone access free on the tablets available at each bedside. Families can call their loved one via phone or video chat.
- **How can families receive updates on the patient's condition?**
 - We encourage families to connect with the patients directly for updates regarding their care if they are in a position to do so. For patients facing more challenging circumstances, staff will provide updates to next of kin.
 - Families are also welcomed to contact the unit directly – we highly encourage families to identify one family member to be the designated point of contact.
- **The patient does not eat the hospital food. How can I provide a home-cooked meal?**
 - Currently, visitors are not allowed to bring food for patients. We appreciate your cooperation and can assure you that we will do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions.
- **What items can I bring for the patient?**
 - Currently, visitors are only allowed to bring what are considered essential items for patients such as glasses, hearing aids, mobility aids, communication devices/tools, etc.
- **What happens when the patient gets discharged?**
 - Family will be contacted in advance to discuss the discharge process and will be involved in planning to get the patient home. On the day of discharge, clinicians will call the family ahead of time to communicate and confirm the plan, date, and time of discharge.

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HAND HYGIENE

- Visitors must clean their hands with the hand sanitizer available at the doors when entering the hospital and when entering and exiting the patient's unit and room. Visitors must practice regular hand hygiene during their visit.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Visitors must maintain a distance of 2 meters (6 feet) between other individuals at all times.

WEARING A FACE MASK

- Clean your hands immediately before putting it on (practice good hand hygiene while you are wearing the mask).
- Make sure the face covering fits well around your nose and mouth.
- Avoid moving the mask around or adjusting it often.
- Avoid touching the mask while wearing it.
- Do not share it with others.

REMOVING A FACE MASK

- Clean your hands prior to removing your mask.
- Remove masks from the ear loops.
- Dispose into a lined garbage bin.
- Clean your hands after disposing of your face mask.