

St Jacobs Place COVID-19 Protocols for Resident Absences

The protocols below reflect changes effective **June 27, 2022**, that must be followed by all residents who leave for absences, as applicable.

There are four types of absences:

1. **Medical absences** are absences to seek medical and/or health care.
 2. **Compassionate/palliative absences** are absences that include, but are not limited to, absences for the purposes of visiting a dying loved one.
 3. **Short term (day) absences** split into:
 - A. **Essential outings** – absences for reasons of groceries, pharmacies, and outdoor physical activity; and
 - B. **Social outings** - absences other than for medical, compassionate/palliative, or essential outings.
 4. **Temporary (overnight) absences** refer to absences for two or more days and one or more nights away from the home for non-medical purposes.
- For all types of absences, residents will be provided with a medical mask free of charge if they are unable to source one and reminded to practice public health measures, such as physical distancing (2 metres separation) and hand hygiene, while they are away from the home. Additionally, all residents on an absence, regardless of type or duration of the absence, must be actively screened upon their return to the home.
 - Residents will be reminded to practice public health measures, such as physical distancing (2 meters separation) and hand hygiene, while they are away from the residence. We require that resident's and/or their SDM/POA/Caregiver report to our Wellness Team if they will be away overnight and/or require medical documentation and/or medications for their absence. 48 hours advance notice is requested to ensure that all departments affected can plan to prepare in advance for their absence and/or return.
 - All residents on an absence, regardless of the type or duration of the absence, will be actively screened upon their return to the home. Resident's MUST enter and exit through the front door in order to accommodate this procedure. If a resident does not pass screening, the residence will follow existing isolation policies.
 - Absences for medical or compassionate/palliative reasons are the only absences permitted when the resident is in isolation on Droplet and Contact Precautions (due to symptoms, exposure, and/or diagnosis of COVID-19) or when the home is in outbreak. The home should consult their local PHU for their advice.
 - Residents are permitted to go on Essential Outings, including walks either on or off the premises, at all times except when that resident is isolating and on Droplet and Contact Precautions, or as directed by the local PHU.
 - Residents may not be permitted to start Short Term (Day) Absences and Temporary (Overnight) Absences if the resident is isolating on additional precautions, or when advised by public health.

- Any resident who has been in close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19 or symptomatic following a short-term or temporary absence should be managed as a close contact as per the MOH’s COVID-19 Guidance: LTCH/RH for PHUs.

Based on absence type, the following requirements will apply:

	Requirements (All Residents)
<p>Short term (day) absence Essential outing and Social outing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes must allow short term absences regardless of reason. Public health units may direct restrictions on absences for residents in isolation and on Droplet and Contact Precautions. Residents must follow public health measures during the absence. Active screening is required on return. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing is not required for residents upon return from a short term (day) absence unless they have been in close contact to a known COVID-19 case.
<p>Temporary (overnight) absence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes must allow overnight absences regardless of reason. Public health units may direct restrictions on absences for residents in isolation and on Droplet and Contact Precautions. Residents must follow public health measures during the absence. Active screening is required on return. All residents, regardless of vaccination status, are required to perform a molecular test on day 5 of return. No isolation is required unless the resident receives a positive test result or is symptomatic. If a timely PCR test is not available, 2 RATs 24 hours apart may be used as an alternative (i.e., on day 5 and day 6 of return). Homes must not deny entry to residents into their home while awaiting testing results and must not impose isolation of residents.

References:

- Ministry of Health [Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario](#) (June 2, 2022)
- Ministry of Health [COVID-19 Guidance: LTC & Retirement Homes for Public Health Units](#) (June 27, 2022)
- [Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility COVID-19 Guidance Document for Retirement Homes in Ontario](#) (June 24,2022)

Appendix A – Symptoms List

Appendix B – How to Put on/Take off a Mask

Appendix A – Symptoms List

Source: Ministry of Health Management of Cases and Contacts of COVID-19 in Ontario (April 19, 2022)
https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/contact_mngmt/management_cases_contacts.pdf#page=5

2. COVID-19 Symptoms

The below symptoms, signs, and clinical features have been most commonly associated with COVID-19. The common symptoms of COVID-19 may change as new VOCs emerge.

To prevent community transmission of infectious diseases, all individuals with symptom(s) of **any** infectious illness should stay home when they are sick. Individuals with COVID-19 symptoms should seek assessment from a health care provider if required and/or if they may be eligible for [COVID-19 treatment](#). Individuals with severe symptoms requiring emergency care should go to their nearest emergency department.

When assessing for the symptoms below, the focus should be on evaluating if they are new, worsening, or different from an individual's baseline health status (usual state). Symptoms should not be chronic or related to other known causes or conditions (see examples below).

One or more of the following most common symptoms of COVID-19 necessitate immediate self-isolation and, if eligible, COVID-19 testing:

- **Fever and/or chills**
- **Cough**
 - Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g., chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- **Shortness of breath**
 - Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g., chronic heart failure, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- **Decrease or loss of smell or taste**
 - Not related to other known causes or conditions (e.g., nasal polyps, allergies, neurological disorders)

Refer to link above for full list of signs and symptoms.

Appendix B - How to Put on/Take off a Mask

HOW TO WEAR A MEDICAL MASK SAFELY

who.int/epi-win

Do's →

Wash your hands before touching the mask

Inspect the mask for tears or holes

Find the top side, where the metal piece or stiff edge is

Ensure the colored-side faces outwards

Place the metal piece or stiff edge over your nose

Cover your mouth, nose, and chin

Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides

Avoid touching the mask

Remove the mask from behind the ears or head

Keep the mask away from you and surfaces while removing it

Discard the mask immediately after use preferably into a closed bin

Wash your hands after discarding the mask

Don'ts →

Do not Use a ripped or damp mask

Do not wear the mask only over mouth or nose

Do not wear a loose mask

Do not touch the front of the mask

Do not remove the mask to talk to someone or do other things that would require touching the mask

Do not leave your used mask within the reach of others

Do not re-use the mask

Remember that masks alone cannot protect you from COVID-19. Maintain at least 2 metre distance from others and wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, even while wearing a mask.

Source: World Health Organization ([Medical Mask](#)) *Poster modified to 2 metres