

COVID-19 Guidance Resident Leave of Absence For Congregate Living Sites

Particularly for older individuals and those with respiratory, cardiac or multiple chronic conditions, the risks of more severe symptoms and death from COVID-19 are greater. Special steps must be taken to prevent disease transmission when considering the movement of clients or residents, visitors and staff into and within the facilities. In addition, the ability to isolate is limited, which makes it more important that we do all that we can to prevent COVID-19 from being introduced into a residential facility.

For the safety of all individuals at a site, including the residents, staff and essential workers, the following principles apply when residents are either required to leave a site for an essential leave of absence or opt to leave the site and will be receiving care at an alternate location.

This does **not** apply for individuals who remain on the grounds at their site; any contact with others while outside require adherence to social distancing recommendations.

Essential Leaves of Absence

- Residents must stay at the site other than for an essential leave of absence;
- Essential leaves of absence means those leaves required for the necessary medical care for a resident (as approved by the physician or care team), or in the event of an end of life situation for a close family member;
- During an essential leave of absence, all residents must:
 - Go directly from the site to their destination with no other stops permitted;
 - Limit the duration of the essential leave of absence to be no longer than required to attend to the need for the absence; and
 - Go by private vehicle with only required occupants accompanying them (may be up to two – one driver and one support person if required for safety).

Leaves will Receive Care in an Alternate Location

In some circumstances, residents and families may opt for a resident to leave a site and for the resident to receive care in another location. In these circumstances, the following principles will apply:

- Decisions to relocate a resident from a site must be made in conjunction with the physician and care team, and with full appreciation of the needs of the resident that must be met for safe care to be provided;

- Families will need to be prepared to provide care to the residents for an indefinite period. Home care will not necessarily be available to support an individual, depending on circumstances and resources; and
- Given capacity and staffing considerations, there is no guarantee that the site will be able to accept a resident to return including but not limited to situations where the bed has been surrendered; the site is on outbreak and the resident is not ill; or staffing is critically low and the site is unable to manage the care at the time. In these circumstances, another site may be considered to accommodate the resident if possible.

Prior to returning from any leave of absence, the returning resident will require screening using the [Client Admission/Discharge/Transfer Screening Questionnaire](#); enhanced monitoring and/or isolation measures will apply if the response to any screening question is **YES**.