

## Safe Visitation Under Compassionate Exemption FAQ

Current federal and provincial requirements call for individuals who are entering Alberta from another country, or who are a close contact of a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19, to be in quarantine for a minimum of 14 days. Quarantine means that the person must remain at home and away from others, and not participate in any activities that take them from their home.

However, there are circumstances where a patient/client in Alberta in an acute care facility requires visitation when they are either receiving critical care for a life-threatening illness or receiving imminent end of life care, or where a resident in a continuing care facility or hospice is at end of life, and where the person wishing to visit would otherwise be subject to quarantine.

An Exemption has been established ([Request for Compassionate Exemption – Section 10 – Orders 05-2020 and 28-2020 – Urgent End of Life or Critical Injury or Illness Visitation](#)) to allow individuals to seek visitation in Alberta under these specific conditions.

### **How does the exemption work if an individual is in Alberta but under quarantine?**

If the person wishing to visit is quarantined under Alberta requirements, they will need to complete an Alberta exemption.

For example, Mr. Roberts is in the ICU and is receiving full ICU support and needs visitation from his daughter who is a close contact of a co-worker at her workplace who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. She is on quarantine under Alberta requirements.

1. The Alberta process requires that the unit completes the [Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist – Facility](#) form and provides this to the person seeking exemption.
2. The person seeking exemption completes the form and returns it to the unit, along with a signed [Requirements for Exemption - Visitor Attestation Form](#).
3. The unit submits these documents to the site administrator for approval.

### **How does the exemption work if an individual is outside of Canada and wants to visit?**

If the person wishing to visit is outside of Canada, they will need to complete both the federal and Alberta processes.

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For example, Mrs. Smith is at end of life on a hospital unit and her son lives in the United States but wishes to see his mother before she dies. Either she or her son may ask the unit in the hospital to start the process for exemption.

1. The federal process requires that a healthcare practitioner, which is usually the Most Responsible Healthcare Practitioner, completes the [Letter of Required Support Request for Exemption on Compassionate Grounds: COVID-19 Federal Travel Restrictions and/or Limited Release from Federal Quarantine](#).
2. The individual seeking exemption completes the first part of the [Site Visit Authorization Limited Release from Federal Quarantine form](#) and submits this through the unit to the site administrator.
3. The site administrator reviews and completes the form and returns it to the individual seeking exemption for submission through the Government of Canada Portal at <https://border-frontiere.powerappsportals.com/en-US/entry-to-Canada-and-Limited-Release/>.
4. The Alberta process may be initiated in parallel, as above, but all steps must be completed.

### **Can I make the decision to approve?**

No, this decision must be made by the site administrator (Alberta Health Services, Alberta Health and/or federal government).

### **How long does it take to get an exemption?**

If the person requesting the exemption is in Alberta, the decision is made at the site administrator (or designate) level.

If the person requesting the exemption is not from Canada, the federal process may take up to seven (7) days for completion.

### **Will all applications be approved?**

There is an obligation to ensure the safety of staff, other patients/clients/residents and any other visitors. If the site does not feel that appropriate measures can be put in place, the application may not be approved.

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### **What if the exemption is in place and the site goes on outbreak?**

There may be circumstances where visitation may need to be restricted. Should this happen, all steps will need to be taken to allow visitation when it is safe to do so.

### **What happens if the visitor develops symptoms of COVID-19?**

All visitors must self-assess their health. If the visitor under the exemption develops any symptoms of COVID-19, they must leave the site immediately and return home to isolate.

The exemption process does not apply if the person requesting exemption is symptomatic or has COVID-19 as they are no longer in quarantine and are required under [Section 6 of CMOH Order 28-2020](#) to isolate.