



March 29, 2023

Dear Family and Friends:

I am writing to advise you of important updates regarding Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) protocols and mandates implemented during COVID-19. On March 22, 2023, Villa Colombo Toronto (VCT) and all long-term care facilities received notice from the Ministry of Long Term Care (MLTC) that they would be scaling back on some of the Directives and Ministry recommendations related to COVID-19 response measures.

Effective March 31, 2023, the following changes will be implemented:

Masking

Indoor masking requirements will remain in place for everyone. This includes remaining physically distanced before removing your mask for eating and drinking. However, residents, caregivers and visitors will no longer be required to mask outdoors. Staff will continue to mask when outdoors if in close proximity to a resident.

Asymptomatic Screen Testing (Rapid Tests)

Asymptomatic surveillance testing for staff, students, volunteers, support workers, caregivers and visitors will no longer be required. As such our testing centre will be closed. With the availability of vaccines and antivirals, adherence to the new IPAC standard, and the high levels of immunity in the general community, there is no evidence to support the need for ongoing asymptomatic screening and testing requirements.

Resident Activities and Events

The requirement for physical distancing during resident programs and events will be removed. Resident activities and events will be held without adjusting to optimize for physical distancing. This will include the Chapel.

Caregivers

There will no longer be a limit to the number of caregivers allowed at one time during a COVID-19 outbreak, when a resident is symptomatic, or isolating under additional precautions. VCT will continue to be subject to public health unit's direction as per the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Guidance during times of suspect or confirmed outbreaks.

Effective April 1, 2023, the following change will be implemented:

Screening

Active screening of all visitors will be discontinued and passive screening will be implemented. This requires visitors to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory or infectious diseases. Anyone with symptoms of illness is asked to not attend Villa Colombo Toronto. ***The COVID-19 Self Screening Questionnaire is attached for review prior to each visit.***

Villa Colombo Homes for the Aged Inc.

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Villa Charities Inc.(1971)=Villa Colombo Toronto(1976)=Villa Colombo Toronto Auxiliary(1976)=Columbus Centre(1980)=Caboto Terrace(1984)=Joseph D. Carrier Art Gallery(1987)=Villa Charities Foundation(1990)=Casa DelZotto(1991)=Casa Abruzzo(2004)=Villa Colombo Vaughan Di Poce Centre(2006)

Proof of Vaccination

Visitors will no longer be required to show proof of their COVID-19 vaccination in order to enter Villa Colombo Toronto.

Visitation by Unvaccinated Visitors

There will no longer be restrictions on visitation by unvaccinated visitors. VCT’s Board of Governors has approved repealing the current mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy for all visitors including employees, volunteers, students and general visitors in light of revised MLTC mandates and guidelines.

With this, there will be no need to pre-book or schedule a visit. The “garden visits” telephone number will be discontinued.

Entry and Exit

Visitors will continue to enter and exit VCT at the front at 40 Playfair Avenue entrance. The rear entrance will remain closed to visitors. The key pads and entry codes will be disabled and all visitors will be required to check-in with the receptionist/security guard before being given access for entry and exit. For safety and security reasons, all visitors will be required to sign in and out at every visit.

Employees will be accessing the home from the front and rear doors using an assigned fob. Employees are not authorized to allow visitors in or out without following the proper access protocol and checking in and out. Please follow posted signage.

The front doors will be staffed from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Monday – Sunday. If attending Villa Colombo Toronto outside of these hours, the charge nurse can be contacted using the telephone in the front entrance vestibule.

Entrance to the garden will remain through the west garden entrance door from within the main building. The garden will not be accessible through the outside gates unless otherwise specified for special events.

VCT will continue to ensure that adherence to all IPAC standards are maintained and work closely with Toronto Public Health and the Ministry of Long Term Care.

We thank you for your patience and cooperation as we navigate these significant changes. Please feel free to email us at info@villacolombo.on.ca if you have any questions.

Toni Dell’Aquila
Executive Director