

Corporate Policy

Title: Visitor Policy	
Original Effective Date: May 2025	Date of Last Revision: September 7, 2026
Approved By: Andree Quesnel	Reviewed By: Natalie Larocque-Come
Position: Administrator	Position: Administrative Assistant/ RPN
Signature: 	Signature: 

VALUE STATEMENT:

Au Château recognizes that meaningful relationships are essential to residents' quality of life, emotional well-being, dignity, autonomy, and sense of belonging. The Home is committed to supporting residents' rights to receive visitors of their choice while maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for residents, staff, volunteers, caregivers, and visitors.

The Home will administer this policy in a manner that respects:

- The Residents' Bill of Rights under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*.
- The *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, including the Home's obligation to provide a workplace free from violence, harassment, and threats.
- The *Ontario Human Rights Code*, ensuring visitors and residents are treated with dignity, respect, and without discrimination.

DEFINITIONS:

Essential Visitors: in accordance with *O. Reg 246/22*, Essential Visitors include:

- Caregivers designated by the resident and/or Substitute Decision-Maker (SDM).
- Support workers who provide services to residents or support the critical operations of the Home.
- Individuals visiting a very ill resident for compassionate reasons, including end-of-life care.
- Government inspectors and others with a legislated right of entry.

Essential Visitors continue to have access to the Home during outbreaks of communicable diseases, outbreaks of public health significance, epidemics, pandemics, or other emergency situations, subject to applicable legislation and infection prevention and control requirements.

General Visitors: includes family members, friends, neighbours, community members, and others visiting for social purposes.

Caregiver: A person designated by the resident and/or Substitute Decision-Maker who provides direct care or support to the resident, including support for cognitive stimulation, communication, decision-making, mobility, personal care, and emotional well-being.

POLICY:

Au Château supports visitation as an important component of resident-centered care. Residents have the right to receive visitors of their choice and to maintain meaningful relationships with family, friends, caregivers, advocates, spiritual advisors, and community members. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit a resident's rights under the Residents' Bill of Rights, including the right to receive visitors of their choice and maintain personal relationships.

The Home will:

- Support visitation in a manner that respects resident choice and preferences.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and rights of all residents.
- Accommodate Essential Visitors in accordance with applicable legislation
- Maintain a safe environment for residents, staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- Apply any visitation restrictions in a fair, reasonable, and individualized manner.
- Take reasonable steps to prevent violence, harassment, intimidation, threats, and disruptive behaviour.

The Home reserves the right to implement reasonable measures when visitor behaviour places the safety, well-being, privacy, dignity, rights, or care of residents, staff, volunteers, or other visitors at risk

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Meet the requirements of the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021* and *Ontario Regulation 246/22* regarding visitation, caregiver access, documentation, and outbreak management.
- Support residents' right to receive visitors of their choosing.
- Promote social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, and family connections.
- Establish clear expectations and responsibilities for visitors.
- Ensure the safety, privacy, dignity, and well-being of residents, staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- Provide a fair and consistent framework for visitation during routine operations, outbreaks, emergencies, or situations involving inappropriate conduct.

PROCEDURE:

1. Recommended Visiting Hours

Au Château encourages visits between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. to support residents' quality of life while maintaining a safe, respectful, and home-like environment. These hours recognize residents' rights to receive visitors while also promoting privacy, comfort, participation in care and activities, and uninterrupted rest and sleep.

Visits outside of these hours may be accommodated based on the resident's wishes, care needs, and individual circumstances, in consultation with the Registered Nurse or designate.

Residents receiving palliative or end-of-life care may receive visitors at any time. The Home will make every reasonable effort to support family presence and meaningful connections during these circumstances.

2. Caregiver Designation Process

Residents and/or their Substitute Decision-Maker (SDM) may designate one or more caregivers in accordance with applicable legislation. The Home will maintain documentation of caregiver designations within the resident's Electronic Health Record in PointClickCare (PCC).

Where a designated caregiver is under the age of sixteen (16), written approval from a parent or legal guardian shall be obtained and maintained in the resident's health record in PCC.

3. Visitor Sign-In and Visitor Logs

All visitors entering Au Château are required to sign the 'Visitor Log Book' located at the main entrance. Visitors must record:

- Name and contact information of the visitor
- The time and date of the visit

- The name of the resident visited.

The Home will maintain visitor logs for a minimum of thirty (30) days in accordance with *Ontario Regulation 246/22, s. 267(2)*. All visitors are required to sign in upon entry. Failure to do so may result in access being postponed until the visitor has complied with the sign-in requirements.

4. Visitor Expectations

Visitors are expected to:

- Respect the dignity, rights, privacy, and preferences of all residents.
- Treat residents, staff, volunteers, and other visitors respectfully.
- Follow directions provided by staff related to resident care, safety, security, and infection prevention and control.
- Respect roommate privacy and shared living environments.
- Follow all posted signage and Home policies.
- Refrain from disrupting resident care, treatments, or clinical interventions.
- Comply with all infection prevention and control requirements.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy requirements.

5. Unacceptable Conduct

The following behaviours are prohibited:

- Verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or discriminatory behaviour.
- Yelling, profanity, aggressive gestures, or disruptive conduct.
- Physical violence or threatening behaviour.
- Interference with resident care or treatment plans.
- Harassment or intimidation of staff, residents, volunteers, or other visitors.
- Entering unauthorized areas without permission.
- Possessing, using, distributing, or being impaired by alcohol, cannabis, or illicit substances while on Home property
- Failure to comply with Home safety, security, or infection prevention requirements.

Any behaviour that places residents, staff, or others at risk may result in intervention by the Home, involvement of law enforcement, or restrictions to visitation

6. Visitor Conduct, Safety, and Emergency Response

Au Château is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and home-like environment for residents, staff, volunteers, and visitors. The Home reserves the right to address inappropriate, disruptive, intimidating, threatening, harassing, or unsafe behaviour by any visitor. Where concerns arise, the Home may require a review of the Visitor Policy, impose conditions on visitation, restrict visiting times or locations, require supervised visits, temporarily suspend visitation privileges, or issue a Trespass Notice in accordance with applicable legislation.

Situations involving actual or threatened violence, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, harassment, or any circumstance that jeopardizes the safety, well-being, privacy, dignity, or rights of residents, staff, volunteers, or visitors may result in the activation of Code White procedures in accordance with the Au Château Emergency Management Plan. Where necessary, police assistance may be requested, and individuals may be directed to leave the premises immediately.

The Home may take any additional measures necessary to maintain a safe environment and fulfill its obligations under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and

other applicable legislation. Incidents, interventions, restrictions, and actions taken by the Home will be documented.

The Administrator or designate retains the authority to assess each situation individually and determine the least restrictive intervention necessary to protect residents, staff, volunteers, and visitors while respecting resident rights and applicable legislation. Any restrictions imposed under this policy shall be reasonable, proportionate to the identified risk, and documented.

7. Resident Capacity and Substitute Decision-Makers

The Home recognizes residents' rights to make decisions regarding visitors. Where concerns arise regarding resident capacity, safety, exploitation, coercion, abuse, or influence by others, staff will work collaboratively with the resident, Substitute Decision-Maker, care team, and other appropriate parties to determine the most appropriate course of action while respecting resident rights and applicable laws.

8. Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)

During an outbreak of a communicable disease, outbreak of public health significance, epidemic, pandemic, or other emergency, visitation practices may be modified in accordance with:

- The Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021.
- Ontario Regulation 246/22.
- Public Health guidance.
- Chief Medical Officer of Health directives.
- Medical Officer of Health recommendations.
- Au Château infection prevention and control procedures.

Measures may include:

- Active or passive screening.
- Masking and personal protective equipment requirements.
- Restricted access to affected home areas.
- Temporary limits on general visitors.
- Enhanced visitor education requirements.
- Other measures required by public health authorities.

Visitors who are ill, symptomatic, or fail screening requirements may be denied entry. Essential Visitors shall continue to be accommodated whenever permitted by law and public health requirements.

Residents receiving palliative or end-of-life care may receive visitors at any time. No restrictions shall be placed on compassionate or end-of-life visits except where required by law or public health authorities. The Home will make every reasonable effort to support family presence during end-of-life care.

9. Complaints and Feedback

Visitors are encouraged to raise concerns through the Home's complaint process. The Home will work collaboratively with residents, families, caregivers, and staff to address concerns while maintaining resident dignity, safety, quality of care, and workplace safety. (reference Concern and Complaint Policy). Residents, substitute decision-makers, family members, caregivers, and visitors may raise concerns without fear of reprisal

10. Communication and Review

The current version of this Visitor Policy shall be:

- Provided annually to the Resident Council and Family Council.
- Posted on the Au Château website.
- This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as required to reflect legislative, public health, operational, or safety changes.

REFERENCE:

- Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, S.O. 2021, c.39, Sched. 1
- Ontario Regulation 246/22
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1
- Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19