# Exceptions for visitation restrictions at End-of-Life:

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 patients, visitors and staff into and within a facility. Visitation restrictions have been put in place for the safety of all individuals at a site, including the patients, staff and essential workers, and other visitors.

**End-of-life-care** is care provided to patients and their families when a person is approaching death. This can be a particularly difficult time for many families. In recognition of the additional needs expressed by patents and families, exceptions for visitation restrictions at end of life will be considered by the manager or delegate at the site on a case by case basis.

If approved for visitation, the following requirements apply:

* All visitors must complete the [screening questionnaire](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-visitor-guidance-continuing-care-and-congregate-living.pdf).
  + Those who are COVID-19 positive or are awaiting results of COVID-19 testing will not be allowed to visit.
  + Others who answer yes to screening questions (but are not COVID-19 positive or awaiting COVID-19 testing) should phone in to the site for further information before visiting.
* Visitors are restricted to individuals identified by the patient or designated decision-maker; this may include family members or religious leaders.
* Underage children will not be allowed to visit, except with the approval of the hospice Manager as children may have COVID-19 with only very mild symptoms.
  + Approved child visits are restricted to one child at a time. The child must be escorted directly to the patient room and must be under the supervision of another adult at all times.
* Visitors are restricted to one person at a time except where an adult is accompanying a child.
* If you are unable to visit for any reason, we are very willing to support other methods to be in touch with your loved one, such as a phone call, video calling or FaceTime/Skype.
* Visitors should keep to the patient’s room and perform hand hygiene including when they enter the facility, before leaving the patient’s room, and at any time before leaving or after entering the patient’s room during the visit.
* Pets will not be allowed to visit.
* In situations where restrictions are in conflict with an individual’s customs or beliefs and in consultation with the health care team, a decision to transfer the patient home with added supports may be considered as an alternative option.
* For visitation with a patient with either suspected or confirmed COVID-19, visitors must be provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and escorted to and from the room.

**During your visit:**

* Follow the instructions provided by unit/hospice manager or delegate for screening and check-in, before entering the patient’s room.
* Follow the instructions provided by unit/hospice manager or delegate regarding hand hygiene and the use of masks, gowns and other protective equipment.
* Visitors should consider having shorter visits.
* Visitors will be asked to leave during specific medical procedures.