



FAQS: CAMH's Updated Visitor Policy

Q: What is CAMH's updated visitor policy?

A: As of Monday, November 8, 2021, CAMH will require all people visiting patients, both indoors and outdoors, be fully vaccinated, subject to a few exemptions that are outlined below.

Requiring visitors to be fully vaccinated will protect the health and well-being of our patients and staff, allow us to resume the re-opening of more in-person programming, and ensure that our services can remain open so people in need can continue to safely visit our hospital.

Q: When does this policy come into effect?

A: The policy comes into effect on Monday, November 8, 2021.

Q: Why is CAMH updating its visitor policy now?

A: As an acute care hospital, CAMH's priority throughout the pandemic has been to ensure that our emergency department and inpatient programs remain open for in person care so we can provide crisis care to those who urgently need it. COVID-19 transmission in any hospital can have severe ramifications, including on our workforce and on our ability to continue delivering care. Requiring visitors to be fully vaccinated will protect the health and well-being of our patients and staff, allow us to sooner resume more in person programming, and ensure that our services can remain open so people in need can continue to safely visit our hospital. This vaccine is our best path to being able to offer more and more options to our patients and ease some of the burdens on our staff.

Q: How do I show proof that I am fully vaccinated?

A: Visitors will be required to present their provincial vaccine certificate at screening stations.

Q: When am I considered fully vaccinated?

A: You are considered fully vaccinated 14 days following the second dose of any Health Canada approved vaccine, with the exception of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, which is only one dose.

Q: Which vaccines are acceptable?

A: Vaccines approved by Health Canada are required. If you have not received a Health Canada approved vaccine, please contact your Public Health Unit for further guidance.

Q: What if I have a medical exemption?

A: Individuals who are exempt from vaccination will be permitted to visit CAMH. Written evidence of medical exemption must be provided to the clinical care team of the patient you are visiting in advance of the visit.

Q: What if I have a religious exemption?

A: We have conducted thorough research and at this time are not aware of any religion that prevents receiving a vaccination against COVID-19.



Q. What are the exemptions to the policy?

A. There are some limited exemptions to the mandatory vaccination requirement for visitors, including:

- People accompanying patients to the Emergency Department or Bridging Clinic;
- People accompanying outpatients attending appointments in the Child, Youth and Emergency Adult Program;
- Correctional/Immigration officers transporting patients from jail, Court Services Personnel, and emergency services personnel.
- Attendees at hearings of the Consent and Capacity Board or Ontario Review Board/Nunavut Review Board who are medically exempt for vaccination or who have been granted exemptions in consultation with Legal Services.
- People who have a medical exemption from vaccination.
- People who have been granted an exemption on compassionate grounds.

Visitors seeking an exemption on compassionate grounds can discuss their request with the patient's clinical team who, if they support the exemption, can apply for leadership approval.

Visitors with medical exemptions must provide written evidence of medical exemption to the patient's clinical team in advance of the visit. Visits with individuals who are not fully vaccinated, but granted a medical or other exemption, will only be permitted if appropriate infection control precautions can be reasonably implemented.

Q: Why are visitors accompanying family members to the Emergency Department, Bridging Clinic and Child, Youth and Emergency Adult Programs exempt from vaccination?

A: We recognize that in certain circumstances, family members need to accompany their loved ones in crisis to CAMH for urgent mental health services. In order to provide timely access to care for those who need it, we are not requiring this small subset of visitors to be fully vaccinated. All other screening processes will still apply.

Q. What are visiting hours and parameters?

A: Please note, patients may have one visit per day from up to two visitors, for a maximum of one hour. This can be different visitors each time. Only three visitors can be on an inpatient unit at any given time and further restrictions on numbers may be imposed to accommodate the needs of a unit on any particular day.

Inpatients who have been admitted for more than seven days and who have passes to the hospital grounds may be permitted up to seven outdoor visitors (at the same time) for outdoor visits on the hospital grounds. As indicated above, outdoor visitors must be fully vaccinated, subject to certain exemptions. Outdoor visits must take place on CAMH grounds. Courtyards, porches and terraces are excluded, as these would require visitors to enter CAMH buildings to access these spaces.

Visiting hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Q. What is the process for visiting?



A: All indoor and outdoor visitors must register with the patient's care team before 2 p.m. one day in advance of their planned visit. Lawyers wishing to visit inpatient units must notify CAMH Clinical Legal Services no later than 2 p.m. the day prior to the intended visit.

The patient's care team will ask visitors to verbally confirm that they are fully vaccinated. On the day of the visit, visitors will be required to present their provincial vaccine certificate at screening stations.

All visits to particular units, including those on outbreak or enhanced surveillance, clinical areas, or outdoor spaces may be restricted in response to increase in general risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Q: Why do I need to be fully vaccinated for outdoor visits?

A: Many of our patients are very ill and live in congregate settings, putting them at an even higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Requiring all visitors to be vaccinated will protect patients and reduce the risk of transmission in our hospital.

Q: I am fully vaccinated. Do I still need to be screened before entering CAMH?

A: Yes, all visitors need to be actively screened and will be required to adhere to infection prevention and control measures, including self-monitoring for symptoms, performing proper hand hygiene, and donning personal protective equipment where appropriate, at the direction of CAMH personnel.

Q: I am fully vaccinated but am experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Can I visit CAMH?

A: No. Individuals with COVID-19 symptoms are not permitted to enter CAMH.

Q: I am fully vaccinated but recently came into contact with someone with COVID-19. Can I visit CAMH?

A: No. Individuals who have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter CAMH.

Q: Does the new visitor policy apply to people participating in research at CAMH?

A: No, the visitor policy does not apply to research participants and they will not be required to provide proof of vaccination in order to participate in a research study on site. All current practices (e.g. mandatory phone COVID pre-screening of research participants prior to study visits, appropriate use of PPE, onsite screening on day of study visit, etc.) will continue to be required. In alignment with the policy for patients, visitors accompanying underage research participants will also not be required to show proof of vaccination.

Q: I disagree with CAMH's decision to deny or restrict my visits. What do I do?

A: Visitors who wish to appeal a decision to deny or restrict visits may do so by contacting CAMH's Client Relations Office at 416 535-8501 ext. 32028 or at client.relations@camh.ca.