Visitor Information for Residential Aged Care Facilities

KEEP IT COVID safe

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In Tasmania, visits to residential aged care facilities are permitted for families, friends and people providing care and support. Individual sites and facilities may have in place their own processes and procedures to protect our most vulnerable members of the community.

This may include:

- undertaking a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) before entering
- wearing a face mask at all times while you remain on the premises
- requiring vaccination for COVID-19 and/or flu
- entry screening for all visitors and contractors.

People who are in isolation after being diagnosed with COVID-19 or are a close contact are not permitted to visit, unless they have an exemption provided by Public Health.

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID 19, even mild, should not enter an aged care facility until their symptoms have resolved, even if they test negative to COVID-19.

Can cases or close contacts enter a residential aged care facility under exceptional circumstances

E.g. to provide end-of-life care. An exemption for close contacts and cases to visit residential aged care premises may be provided by the Director of Public Health or delegate on compassionate grounds.

A residential aged care facility may assist individuals to apply for an exemption if you are a case or close contact. This exemption cannot be provided by the facility directly, except for cases who have been released from isolation on day 5 and are seeking to visit on day 5 and day 6. In this situation, an exemption from Public Health is not required, only approval from the facility.

The final decision to let a case or close contact enter the facility once they hold an exemption is still at the discretion of the facility management.

If an exemption is granted, visitors must always comply with requirements as set out by the facility during the visit.

How to apply for exemption to visit a residential aged care facility for an end-of-life visit when you are a case or case contact

1. The person who wishes to seek an exemption to enter the residential aged care facility should contact the facility and obtain a letter of support from the facility stating:

   - The name, date of birth, address and contact phone number of the person(s) requesting the exemption
   - The relationship of the visitor to the resident
   - The name of the resident and whether they are receiving end-of-life care
   - Whether the facility is in support of the visit occurring
   - Additional risk mitigating strategies the facility intends to implement for the visit.

2. The treating doctor must also provide written documentation stating the residents' details and that they are receiving end-of-life care.

3. The facility will then assist you in forwarding your application to Public Health Services for review.

4. Both letters must be emailed to covid.response@health.tas.gov.au

5. Applications are assessed by Public Health Services every day between 8am and 8pm. Please call the Public Health Hotline on **1800 671 738** if your application is urgent.

6. If additional details are required Public Health may contact the applicant or facility via phone.

7. You will be notified of the outcome of your exemption application by email.

Who does not require an exemption from Public Health to enter a residential aged care facility?

Close contacts who are staff members intending to enter the facility for the purposes of employment or engagement must let their employer know that they are a close contact before attending.

The facility may then decide whether to allow them to attend the facility and what additional risk mitigating strategies they will need to comply with. They do not require an exemption from their workplace to attend for the purposes of employment or engagement.

They must be:

- asymptomatic
- have a negative RAT result daily
- wear a mask when outside their home.

For more information visit: call the Tasmanian Public Health Hotline: **1800 671 738** or visit: Aged care facility visits | Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Tasmanian Government