



March 22, 2020

Emergency amendments to Retirement Homes Act, 2010 related to Chief Medical Officer's recommendations for retirement homes

On March 20, 2020, the province amended the Retirement Homes Act, 2010 to require retirement homes' infection prevention and control programs to follow the recommendations of the Chief Medical Officer to ensure the protection and safety of Ontario's seniors. Homes must also take all reasonable steps to follow any recommendations by the Chief Medical Officer directed at long-term care homes as they relate to COVID-19 specifically. This regulation took immediate effect.

We recognize the vital importance of the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations in providing guidance to the entire health care community. The regulation provides the RHRA an opportunity to work with our sector stakeholders and where appropriate provide an interpretation of what 'reasonable' looks like for retirement homes. This may not be required with each recommendation made by the Chief Medical Officer, but where it is, the RHRA will provide its interpretation in a timely way so that retirement homes can understand and comply with the recommendations. We are committed to working collaboratively and responsively with the sector to clarify and resolve any issues of interpretation throughout this period.

The [FAQs](#) available on our website will be updated on an ongoing basis in response to new recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer as well as in response to questions we receive. We encourage retirement homes to access this information regularly.

All previous recommendations from the Chief Medical Officer concerning essential visitors, active screening of anyone entering a retirement home and the return to work of health care workers have not changed and apply to all retirement homes in Ontario.

For more information, visit the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Guidance for the Health Care Sector [webpage](#).