



Universal Masking Update and Masking Guidance

Universal Masking on HPHA Properties

Effective immediately we are now requiring that **all staff and physicians must wear masks outside of the buildings while on HPHA property unless 2 meters can be maintained.** This includes exiting your vehicle to come to a building and after leaving a building to go to your vehicle.

- **Once you enter into the building the expectation is that you change your mask into one of the medical masks provided at each of the entry points.**
- A cloth mask or other personal mask can be worn from your car to one of the badge access entry doors at each of the sites.

When you are done for the day and exiting the building, you can either choose to keep on your mask as you exit the building or change into your cloth or other personal mask once you exit the building.

Guidance on Appropriate Mask Use

Universal masking has been one of the strategies implemented to to slow the spread of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2). A recent study published by the CDC* discussed two methods in a community setting of improving the fit of medical procedure masks: 1) Fitting a cloth mask over a medical procedure mask (double masking) 2) knotting the ear loops of a medical procedure mask and tucking in and flattening the extra material close the face through laboratory based experiments.

The key take-away for staff and physicians on Universal Masking:

- Wear the medical mask provided
- A mask must fit close to the face, over the mouth and nose, without gaping. Always check for proper fit. If you feel that you are experiencing issues with the fit of your medical mask, alternate masks may be available for use or you can use mask holders or knotted ear loops to provide a more secure fit.
- **Double masking (ex. cloth over medical, medical mask over medical mask) is not required with an appropriately fitting mask and may cause additional issues such as impeding breathing.**
- **The wearing of a surgical mask over an N95 is not approved or recommended by NIOSH and voids certification of the respirator. N95s should be used responsibly to ensure ongoing supplies; for Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures, as part of a Point of Care Risk Assessment and as otherwise directed in [Directive #5 \(October 5 2020\) from the Ministry of Health](#)**

The IMS Command Group for COVID-19 Response across the HPHA and Infection Prevention and Control continues to reviews available evidence and updated guidance documents as they become available in the adequate control of COVID-19 transmission. Should staff or physicians have questions, concerns or



feedback related to new or evolving evidence in the control of COVID-19 – either related to Personal Protective Equipment or other methods of control, please share with your appropriate manager/director/Senior Leader, Site Chief/Chief of Staff or Infection Control.

*Reference: Brooks JT, Beezhold DH, Noti JD, et al. Maximizing Fit for Cloth and Medical Procedure Masks to Improve Performance and Reduce SARS-CoV-2 Transmission and Exposure, 2021. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. ePub: 10 February 2021.

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