

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL COVID-19 COMMITTEE

ID/IPC Update

May 8, 2023

Changes to Horizon's Continuous Masking Directive - Effective Monday, May 8, 2023

The continuous use of face masks will no longer be required in Horizon facilities with the following exceptions:

- **Oncology Units/Clinics** – Health care workers (HCWs), Designated Support Persons (DSPs) and social visitors will be required to wear a medical grade face mask when patient facing. Patients are not required to wear a mask while in their room/bedspace or treatment chair, but masking is recommended when they are within two metres of another person.
- **Symptomatic patients and HCWs** will be required to wear a medical grade face mask at all times when in a Horizon facility. (Symptomatic patients are not required to wear a mask while in their room/bedspace during hospitalization, but masking is recommended when they are within two metres of another person.)
- Outpatients and HCWs who have had **close contact** with a positive COVID-19 case in the last seven days will be required to wear a medical grade face mask at all times.
- **Symptomatic DSPs** and those who meet exposure risk criteria will be managed as per DSP Guidelines.
- **If a patient chooses to wear a face mask**, HCWs will support the patient's decision and will wear a medical grade face mask during the provision of patient care.
- The continuous use of medical grade face masks will be required on **outbreak units**.
- **Suspect/confirmed COVID-19 patients** will continue to be managed on Droplet/Contact Isolation Precautions.

The continuous use of face masks is **optional** in most settings across Horizon and medical grade face masks will be accessible for patients, social visitors, DSPs and HCWs who choose to wear a face mask.

Departmental managers may choose to implement continuous masking in clinical or non-clinical settings based on multiple factors and their unique circumstances such as:

- COVID-19 activity and evidence of nosocomial transmission
 - outbreaks
 - hospitalizations and ICU admissions
 - HCW positivity rates and absenteeism
- operational capacity (e.g., critical staffing shortages that could be affected by transmission between HCWs).

NOTE: The continuous use of masks may be reinstated based on COVID-19 and/or respiratory viral season activity.

Security and Safety Services – Update on Screeners – Effective May 18, 2023, at midnight

In alignment with changes to Horizon's continuous masking directive public points of entry will no longer be staffed by screeners. Screeners will remain at these entrances until May 18 at midnight to remind patients, DSPs and social visitors to clean their hands prior to entering a Horizon facility.

Please visit the [IPC Resources COVID-19 Skyline page](#) for COVID-19 information.