

MASKING POLICY

Updated masking requirements are being implemented at Saratoga Hospital due to seasonal respiratory viruses circulating at this time. This is intended to help limit the transmission of viruses and other illnesses and protect the health and safety of patients and the professionals who provide care. Our priority at Saratoga Hospital is to keep all our patients, our staff, and our community safe.

This policy is applicable to all Saratoga Hospital inpatient and outpatient-operated sites and facilities.

Implementation will begin Wednesday, January 10, 2024.

Masking Guidelines

- All clinicians, employees*, volunteers, students, and vendors will be required to wear a medical-grade mask in patient-facing areas. These masks will be provided by the Hospital.
 - Note, there has been no change to our standard infection control protocols. As such, a higher-level mask (i.e. KN95, N95) may be required for specific clinical (i.e. Enhanced Droplet and Airborne precautions) and non-clinical (i.e. EHS recommendation for employees) scenarios.
 - Although not mandated, masking in non-patient facing areas is strongly encouraged.
- Patients** will be required to wear a medical-grade mask. These masks will be provided by the Hospital. Those who refuse to wear a mask will be considered PUIs per Infection Control and Prevention policy for the purposes of bed placement.
- Visitors*** must be free of respiratory or flu-like symptoms (fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath) a rash, and/or diarrhea. They must also wear a medical-grade mask in patient-facing areas. These masks will be provided by the Hospital.
- Visitors and support persons who refuse to wear a mask will not be allowed to visit.

*If an employee cannot safely wear a mask due to a medical condition or disability defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and approved by Employee Health Services or due to religious beliefs approved by Human Resources, accommodations may need to be made consistent with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. In this case, alternatives such as a full face shield need to be offered and the employee should maintain a 6-foot distance whenever possible.

**Patients who refuse to wear a mask will be considered Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) per standard Infection Control and Prevention policy. When it is essential to see the person's mouth (i.e. for the deaf or hard of hearing), an alternative should be offered such as a mask with a clear window or a full face shield. In this case, employees should maintain a 6-foot distance whenever possible.

***Please see Saratoga Hospital Visitation Guidelines for further details.

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