

MANDATORY MASK POLICY

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| Section COVID-19 Temporary Policies and Procedures | Initial Approval Date: 10-Aug-2020 | Policy Number COVID-006 |
| Subsection | Current Revision Date: | Revision Number 00 |

The following is the temporary mandatory mask policy for the Sunset Country Family Health Team (SCFHT) during the COVID-19 pandemic. This policy has been created in compliance with the Letter of Instruction issued by the Medical Officer of Health under the authority of the Reopening Ontario Act Ontario Regulation 364/20.

Policy Statement

1. All employees, patients, and visitors are required to wear a mask or face covering upon entering and remaining within the Sunset Country Family Health Team in conjunction with the Risk Mitigation Tool for Operating During the COVID-19 Pandemic Policy (COVID-007). The mask or face covering must fully cover the nose, mouth and chin without gaps.
 - a) The following persons are exempt from the requirement to wear a mask or face covering:
 - i. Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - ii. Persons who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering because of medical conditions such as breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties;
 - iii. Persons who cannot wear or are unable to apply or remove a mask without assistance, including those who are accommodated under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) or who have protections under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19, as amended;
 - iv. A person who is employed by or is an agent of the Operator of an Enclosed Public Space and is within or behind a physical barrier such as plexiglass.
 - b) Temporary removal of the mask or face covering is permitted where necessary for the following purposes:
 - i. Actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity;
 - ii. Consuming food or drink;
 - iii. Receiving services in a personal service setting on an area of the face that would otherwise be covered by a mask or face covering; and
 - iv. For any emergency or medical purpose.
2. This policy will be implemented and enforced in “good faith” to primarily educate people on masks and face coverings and promote their use in enclosed public spaces.
3. Persons with exemptions listed under 1a) are not required to show proof of exemption.

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4. Signs about the requirement to wear masks or face coverings shall be posted at all public entrances. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will also be made available at all entrances and exits for persons entering or exiting the Sunset Country Family Health Team.
5. Employees will be trained on the policy (see Appendix A), including:
 - a) How and when to provide verbal reminders of the masking requirement to persons entering the premises without a mask or face covering, and those who remove their mask or face covering for an extended period of time;
 - b) Where and how to properly wear a mask or face covering;
 - c) How to respond to patients or visitors who do not have a mask or face covering;
 - d) Where people can get more information about the policy; and
 - e) How to handle a patient who becomes aggressive about the requirement to wear a mask.
6. A copy of this policy will be made available on request to a public health inspector or other person authorized to enforce the *Reopening Ontario Act* Ontario Regulation 364/20.

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Appendix A

In the current context of PPE shortages associated with COVID-19, it is vital that medical masks be conserved for use by healthcare providers.

Mandatory masking involves the use of a:

- Medical grade mask by all clinical staff when seeing patients at all times while in the SCFHT.
- Non-medical grade mask for administration staff and clinical staff when not with a patient, patients, and visitors at all times while in the SCFHT.

Staff may choose to remove their mask while alone in their office or behind an appropriate plexiglass barrier.

To facilitate judicious and effective use of masks as part of source control, the following are recommended as best practices:

- Persons must also practice physical distancing where possible even while wearing a mask, maintaining at least two metres (six feet) of separation from patients, visitors, and staff to prevent exposing themselves to droplets from others.
- The mask is to be donned when entering the facility and removed when eating or leaving the facility at the end of the shift.
- After use, masks are to be handled in a manner that minimizes the potential for cross-contamination.
- If a mask is to be re-used, keep it from being contaminated by storing it in a labeled clean paper bag.
- Hand hygiene is to be performed before putting on and after removing or otherwise handling masks.

Patients or visitors will be informed of the mandatory mask policy when booking their appointment. Patients or visitors who do not have a mask when they arrive at the SCFHT will be given a non-medical grade mask to wear for the duration of their appointment.

Patients or visitors who refuse to wear a mask and are not considered exempt from the requirement to wear a mask or face covering, as per 1a) will be asked to leave the SCFHT and wait outside or in their vehicle. The provider who is scheduled to see the patient will be notified and will determine if the patient can have a virtual visit/phone call, or if they need to have their appointment rescheduled.

This policy will be available for the public to view on the SCFHT website.

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References

<https://www.nwhu.on.ca/covid19/Pages/masks.aspx>

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/health-care-resources>

Policy Review and Revision History

| Review Date | Description of changes | Change Requested By | Revision made By | Revision Date |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| | Policy Created | | L. Kinger | 10-Aug-2020 |
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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as often as necessary.

Executive Director

Print Name Colleen Neil

Signature 

Date 10 / 08 / 2020