

## MANDATORY MASK POLICY

<b>Section</b> COVID-19 Temporary Policies and Procedures	<b>Initial Approval Date:</b> 10-Aug-2020	<b>Policy Number</b> COVID-006
<b>Subsection</b>	<b>Current Revision Date:</b> 14-Dec-2020	<b>Revision Number</b> 01

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.

### **Purpose**

To ensure the safety and protection of employees and patients of the SCFHT as it relates to providing and receiving care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **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. Consuming food or drink;
    - ii. 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
    - iii. For any emergency or medical purpose.
2. Persons with exemptions listed under 1a) are not required to show proof of exemption. However, if a patient is declining to wear a mask for an in-person assessment and they do not fit the mask exemption criteria listed above, they should not be seen in-person and should be provided a virtual appointment only.

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If a patient declines to wear a mask and indicates an exemption, they will be offered a disposable face shield to wear for the duration of their visit at the SCFHT. If the patient will not wear the face shield, they will either be required to wait outside of the building or in a designated area until the exemption can be verified by a primary care provider.

### 3. Patients

Patients presenting for in-person care at the SCFHT are required to wear the appropriate face masks dependent on if they are asymptomatic (cloth mask), or symptomatic (surgical/procedure mask).

### 4. Employees/Contractors/Visitors

Employees who have an in-person appointment with any of the above listed patients are expected to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect themselves and the patient.

Employees providing patient care are expected to wear a surgical/procedure mask for the duration of their shift, especially when moving about the building, at any time that social distancing cannot be maintained, and/or when interacting with and within 2 meters of patients who screen negative. **Eye protection, (e.g., goggles or a face shield) for the duration of shifts are strongly recommended.**

Surgical/procedure masks are to be worn by all employees working outside of direct patient care areas when interacting with other primary care staff when physical distancing cannot be maintained. **Eye protection, (e.g., goggles or a face shield) for the duration of shifts are strongly recommended.**

Contractors and visitors presenting to the SCFHT will be expected to abide by the same guidelines set forth above.

5. Signs about the requirement to wear masks or face coverings shall be posted at all public entrances. Hand sanitizer that is authorized by Health Canada (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html>) will be made available at all entrances and exits for persons entering or exiting the SCFHT.
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
  - Clinical staff when not with a patient
  - Patients
  - Visitors at all times while in the SCFHT

Staff may choose to remove their mask while alone in their office.

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

- People 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 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.

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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

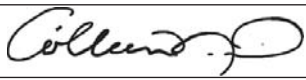
Review Date	Description of changes	Change Requested By	Revision made By	Revision Date
	Policy Created		L. Kinger	10-Aug-2020
14-Dec-2020	Policy updated to include recommendation for goggles or face shields	C. Neil	L. Kinger	14-Dec-2020

### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as often as necessary.

### Executive Director

Print Name                    Colleen Neil

Signature                     

Date                             15 / 12 / 2020