



Effective 07/2023

Area Administration

Applicability BMC Baptist  
Health System

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## Masking Policy and Procedures

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### I. POLICY

To ensure the health and safety of our Patients, Visitors, Team Members and Professional Staff Members, Masks may be required under special circumstances, such as when a Patient, Visitor, Team Member, or Professional Staff Member is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.

### II. PURPOSE

Establish system-wide standards and processes for the appropriate use of Masks at all Baptist Health Locations to comply with emergency rules issued by the Florida Department of Health (the "**Department**") and the Agency for Health Care Administration (the "**Agency**"). This Policy may change or be updated as the Department and the Agency work through the final rulemaking process regarding the use of facial coverings in the health care setting.

### III. SCOPE

The standards and processes in this Policy will govern in the event that Baptist Health encourages or requires the use of Masks at any of its Locations. All other Baptist Health policies, procedures, and guidance that encourage or require the use of Masks are subject to the standards, processes, and provisions herein. This Policy applies to all Team Members, Professional Staff Members, Patients and Visitors that are two years of age and older.

This Policy does not apply to the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that are recommended and/or required for chemical or physical hazards.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Locations** – Any of the Baptist Health owned or affiliated hospitals, campuses, facilities, premises, and locations.
- B. **Patients** – Any person receiving treatment, care, or other services from Baptist Health or any of its wholly owned or affiliated subsidiaries at any of the Baptist Health Locations.
- C. **Team Members** – Any person that is a Baptist Health employee, volunteer, student, resident, independent contractor, vendor, member of the Board of Baptist Health, or any other person who provides any care, treatment, or other services (including clinical staff and physicians) to Baptist Health and/or patients of Baptist Health at any of the Baptist Health Locations, or any of Baptist Health's wholly owned or affiliated subsidiaries.
- D. **Professional Staff Members** – Any person who is an appointee to the Professional Staff at any of the Baptist Health affiliated hospitals, including Allied Health Professionals, Medical Staff, Associate Staff, Locum Tenens, and any other person or provider with permanent or temporary privileges at any of the Baptist Health affiliated hospitals who provides any care, treatment, or other services for Baptist Health and/or patients of Baptist Health, any of the Baptist Health affiliated hospitals, or any of Baptist Health's wholly owned subsidiaries.
- E. **Visitors** – Any person visiting any of the Baptist Health Locations that is not a Patient, Team Member, or Professional Staff Member.
- F. **Masks** – Any cloth or surgical face mask, a face shield, or any other facial covering that covers the mouth and nose that is compliant with Baptist Health's current masking guidelines.

## V. MASKING PROCEDURE

Baptist Health may ask or encourage Patients, Visitors, Team Members and Professional Staff Members to wear a Mask consistent with Baptist Health policies, procedures, and processes, and state and federal laws, rules, requirements, and regulations. Mask and other PPE recommendations and/or requirements may be reviewed and reassessed with national and state standards, and state and federal laws, rules, requirements, and regulations in the event of a community outbreak.

- A. **Patients.** In the event that Baptist Health requires the use of Masks, Patients may be required to wear a Mask in the common areas of the Baptist Health Locations if the Patient is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
- B. **Visitors.** In the event that Baptist Health requires the use of Masks, Visitors may be required to wear a Mask if the Visitor is:
  - 1. Exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission;
  - 2. In any sterile area of a Baptist Health Location, including where surgeries or procedures that require aseptic techniques are performed;
  - 3. In an in-patient or clinical room with a Patient who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission; or

4. Visiting a Patient (i) whose treating health care provider has diagnosed the Patient with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase the risk of transmission of an infection to the Patient from a person without signs or symptoms of infection; and (ii) whose treating provider has determined that the use of a Mask is necessary for the Patient's safety.
- C. **Team Members & Professional Staff.** Team Members and Professional Staff Members should avoid entering the Baptist Health Locations if they are sick, unless they are seeking treatment. In the event that Baptist Health requires the use of Masks, Team Members and Professional Staff Members may be required to wear a Mask consistent with Baptist Health policies, procedures, and processes, and state and federal laws, rules, requirements, and regulations.
  - D. **Generally.** Baptist Health reserves the right to require the use of Masks at the Baptist Health Locations in other circumstances consistent with national and state standards, and state and federal laws, rules, requirements, and regulations..

## VI. OPT-OUT OF MASKING PROCEDURES

In the event that Baptist Health encourages or requires the use of Masks at any of its Locations, then Visitors, Patients, Team Members and Professional Staff Members may opt-out from wearing Masks as follows:

- A. Patients and Visitors may opt-out of any existing Mask requirements if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available. To submit a request to opt-out of any Mask requirements please notify the manager on duty at the Baptist Location, and such request will be reviewed by Baptist Health's Infection Prevention team consistent with infection control procedures.
- B. Team Members and Professional Staff Members may opt out of any Mask requirements if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available. To submit a request to opt-out of any Mask requirements, please notify Baptist Health's Employee Health department, and such request will be reviewed by Baptist Health's Infection Prevention team consistent with infection control procedures.

## VII. EXCLUSIONS FROM THE OPT-OUT PROCEDURES

Notwithstanding the opt-out provisions in Section VI herein, in the event that Baptist Health requires the use of Masks at any of its Locations, the following exclusions shall apply:

- A. If there are no alternative methods of infection control or infectious disease prevention, a Patient **may not** opt-out of any Mask requirements in the following circumstances:
  1. A Patient has been diagnosed or is exhibiting signs or symptoms of an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission;
  2. Opting-out has been identified by a provider as being medically or programmatically contraindicated for medical, safety or programmatic issues; or
  3. Opting-out would otherwise infringe on the rights and would risk the safety or health of other patients, individuals or staff/employees of Baptist Health.

- B. If there are no alternative methods of infection control or infectious disease prevention, a Visitor **may not** opt-out of any Mask requirements in the following circumstances:
1. The Visitor has been diagnosed or is exhibiting signs or symptoms of an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission;
  2. Opting-out would otherwise infringe on the rights and would risk the safety or health of other patients, individuals, or staff/employees of Baptist Health; or
  3. For the reasons listed in Section V.B herein so long as there are no alternative methods of infection control or infectious disease prevention.
- C. A Team Member or Professional Staff Member **may not** opt-out of any Mask requirements if the Team Member or Professional Staff Member is:
1. Conducting a sterile procedure, including aseptic procedures or surgeries, that call for practices that minimize the risk of microbial contamination to reduce the rate of invasive or surgical site infection;
  2. Caring for a Patient or being present while sterile procedures are being performed, including aseptic procedures or surgeries;
  3. Working in a sterile area of any Baptist Health Location, including where surgeries or procedures that require aseptic techniques are performed;
  4. With a Patient who is on droplet or airborne isolation;
  5. Working with a Patient (i) whose treating health care provider has diagnosed the patient with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase the risk of transmission of an infection to the Patient from others without signs or symptoms of infection; and (ii) whose treating provider has determined that the use of a Mask is necessary for the Patient's safety; or
  6. Engaging in non-clinical potentially hazardous activities that require a Mask to prevent infection, injury or harm in accordance with national, state, and industry standards, and state and federal laws, rules, requirements, and regulations.
- D. Baptist Health reserves the right to consider other exclusions from the opt-out provisions of Section VII herein in order to comply with applicable state and federal laws, rules, requirements and regulations.

## VIII. COMMUNICATION/EDUCATION

In the event that Baptist Health requires the use of Masks at any of its Locations, Baptist Health will communicate such requirement, and the standards and procedures herein will be made generally available to the affected persons.

## IX. REFERENCES

- A. Fla. Stat. § 408.824
- B. Fla. Stat. § 381.026
- C. Fla. Admin. Code 59AER23-1

- D. Fla. Admin. Code 59AER23-2
- E. OSHA Rules
  - 1. Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030)
  - 2. Personal Protective Equipment (29 CFR 1910. 132)
  - 3. Respiratory Protection (29 CFR 1910. 134)
- F. Conditions of Participation Infection Control Worksheet – See tag 1.A.3. – "The Infection Control Officer(s) can provide evidence that the hospital has developed general infection control policies and procedures that are based on nationally recognized guidelines and applicable state and federal law." (located at: [http://apic.org/Resource\\_/TinyMceFileManager/Implementation\\_Guides/1\\_CMS-CoPIInfectionControlWorksheet.pdf](http://apic.org/Resource_/TinyMceFileManager/Implementation_Guides/1_CMS-CoPIInfectionControlWorksheet.pdf))
- G. Joint Commission
  - 1. Hospital Respiratory Protection: Resources and Projects | The Joint Commission (located at: <https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/patient-safety-topics/infection-prevention-and-control/respiratory-protection/hospital-respiratory-protection-resources-and-projects/>)
  - 2. Hospital Respiratory Protection Program Toolkit (osha.gov) (located at: <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3767.pdf>)

*This policy/procedure is only intended to serve as a general guideline to assist staff in the delivery of patient care; it does not create standard(s) of care or standard(s) of practice. The final decision(s) as to patient management shall be based on the professional judgment of the health care provider(s) involved with the patient, taking into account the circumstances at that time. Any references to sources, some parts of which were reviewed in connection with formulation of the policy/procedure are for informational purposes only. The references are not adopted in whole or in part by the hospital(s).*

## Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
CEO	Michael Mayo: Chief Executive Officer	07/2023
Policy Owner	Amanda Brown: VP, Nursing Workforce Optim	07/2023