

MultiCare Guidance for Infection Prevention Practices and Masking for Staff, Patients and Visitors

Staff Masking in Clinical Settings (Outpatient/Ambulatory or Inpatient Care Areas)

- All employees who work in a clinical setting (patient care area or in an area where you are interacting with patients) **must wear** a MultiCare-provided face mask while on clinical facility premises, to include medical-grade masks (procedure masks) or respirators (N95), depending on care provided.

Discard mask when wet, soiled or difficult to breathe through.

- Discard used masks and don a new mask when indicated, (i.e. going on break). When changing to N95, first perform hand hygiene and then don a new mask; N95s continue to be reprocessed.

All staff must wear a face covering (cloth or procedure mask) upon entering a MultiCare medical facility. Switch to medical-grade (procedural) mask or respirator (N95) before providing patient care or interacting with patients.

- Cloth masks provide a measure of protection, but they are not to be used by staff in clinical settings.
- Masks must be worn in hallways, common areas and when moving throughout the clinical setting
- When removing mask to eat, employees must maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others.
- Maintain strict hand hygiene practices following the [WHO Five Moments of Hand Hygiene](#).
- Avoid touching your face or mask.
- Use care in doffing your mask and perform hand hygiene.
- When possible maintain six (6) feet of physical distancing from others.
- Follow proper respiratory etiquette – cover your coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue and perform hand hygiene.
- Stay home and contact your manager if you suspect that you are ill and follow employee health guidance.

Enhanced Eye Protection:

Staff are required to don eye protection (goggles, face shield) whenever they have direct patient within six feet or less for more than 15 minutes. Follow the [Reuse Workflow](#) to reuse eye protection/face shield between patients.

Staff Masking in Non-Clinical Settings

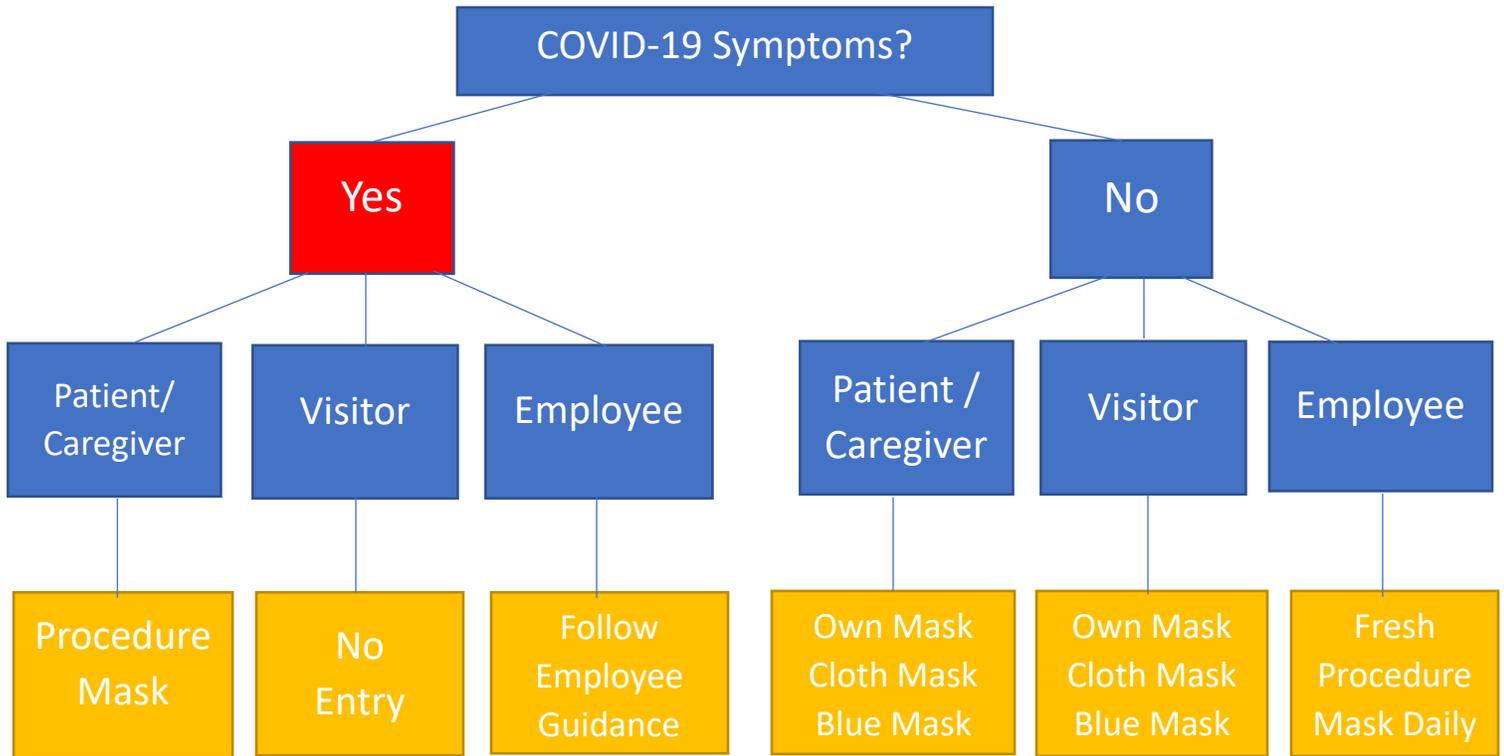
- Masking is **required** in non-clinical, non-patient care areas and administrative offices wherever employees are unable to maintain at least six feet distance from others.
- A cloth mask is acceptable in the non-clinical facilities
- Employees should maintain six (6) feet physical distancing when possible throughout their workday to avoid transmission and cross-contamination.
- Practice frequent hand hygiene.
- Clean surfaces with a disinfectant wipe at the beginning of the shift.
- Follow proper respiratory etiquette – cover your coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue and perform hand hygiene.
- Stay home if you suspect that you are ill and follow employee health guidance.

Mask Distribution to Patients, Caregivers and Visitors

- All patients, caregivers and visitors are required to wear a mask while in MultiCare facilities, unless they have certain qualifying health conditions.**
- For the safety of our staff and patients in **non-hospital-based clinics**, if someone refuses to wear a mask for reasons unrelated to a health condition, they may be asked to leave the clinic and assisted in scheduling a virtual visit instead.
- Symptomatic patients will be provided with a medical-grade mask to replace a cloth face covering if they are using one
- All patients, caregivers and visitors will undergo screening protocols at all facilities. They will be provided with a mask if they arrive without one.
- Patients are required to wear a mask until they are instructed by their care teams to remove the mask for treatment.

**Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes, but is not limited to, persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitate or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance. (From the Order of the Secretary of Health on face coverings – 6.24.2020)

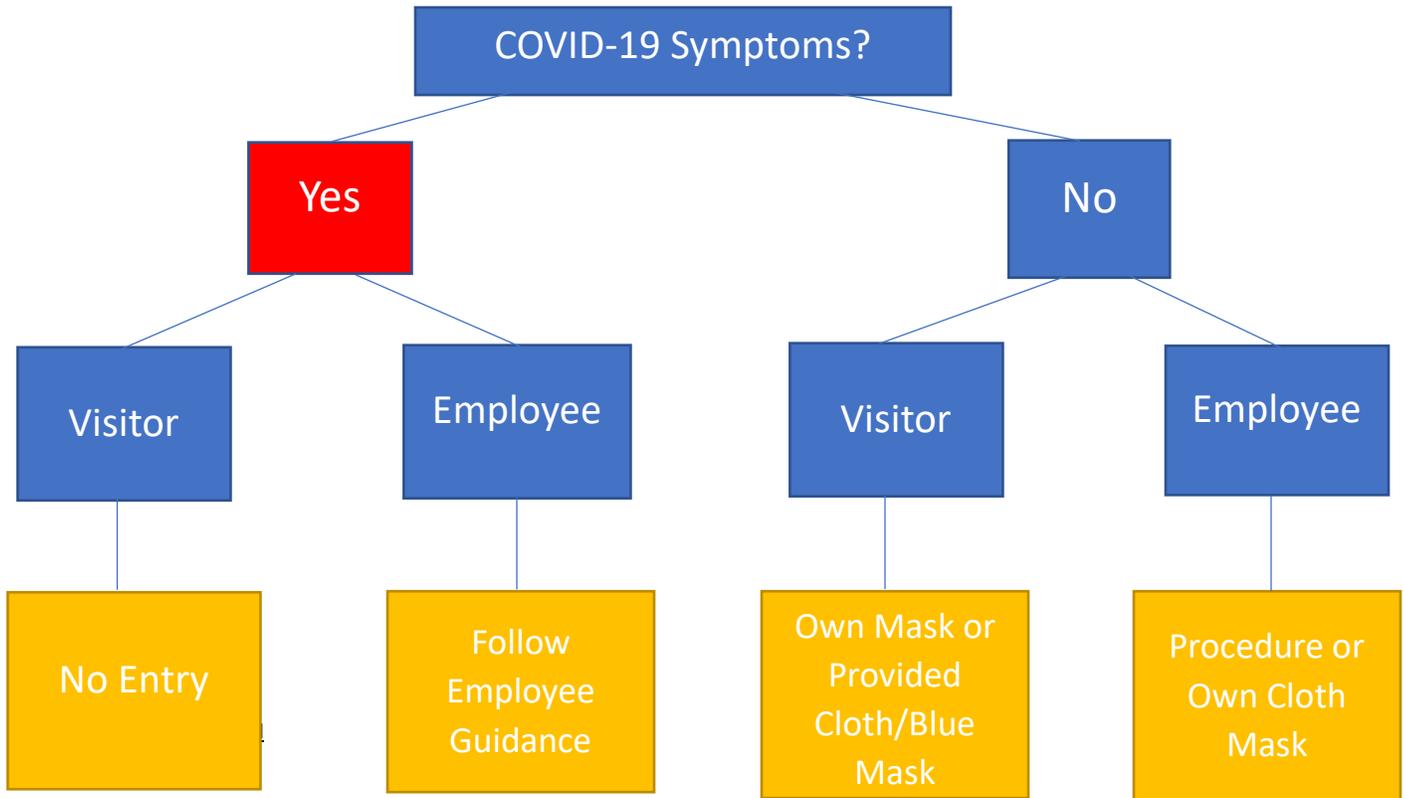
Mask Distribution at Clinical Facilities



Definitions:

- **Caregiver:** an individual who is defined as someone deemed by the care teams to be necessary for optimal care of a patient
 - Example: a mother bringing a two-year-old child into a clinic or ED
- **Patient:** individual receiving care
- **Visitor:** an individual coming into a facility to visit a patient who is already admitted or being seen
- **Clinical Facility:** a place where patient care is provided (a hospital, off-campus ED, urgent care, ambulatory clinic (MMA or RWC))

Mask Distribution at Non-Clinical Facilities



Donated Cloth/Blue Wrap Mask Collection, Cleaning and Distribution

- We have received donations of homemade cloth and blue wrap masks from the community.
- The current goal is to use these masks for visitors, caregivers and patients to preserve manufactured procedure masks for staff.
 - **Donation and Collection:**
 - We are requesting that community members donate masks as follows:
 - PSR - to the loading docks at Tacoma General, Good Samaritan, Auburn Medical Center and Covington Medical Center between 11am - 2pm, Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
 - INW – at the main entrances for Deaconess Hospital and Valley Hospital, between 11am -2pm, M-F.
 - Volunteer Services will coordinate collection of masks and other goods.

o **Mask cleaning and ordering**

- Donated cloth and blue wrap masks will be quarantined for seven (7) days prior to distribution.
- Contact your Supply Chain representative through the standard process for mask supplies.

FAQs:

Is wearing a cloth or blue wrap mask allowed for staff in a clinical setting?

No.

Can employees wear personal masks until they get to their units or departments and can put on a procedure mask or other PPE?

Yes.

How do I know when to get a new mask?

- When going on break
- When mask is wet, soiled or hard to breathe through
- When switching from a respirator (N95) to regular mask

I work in the kitchen; Do I need to wear a medical grade mask?

No. According to Washington State Department of Health recommendations, kitchen staff can wear a cloth mask.

I am an EVS staff member who works in patient-care areas. Do I need to wear a medical grade mask?

Yes. All staff working in clinical/patient care areas need to wear medical-grade masks, NOT cloth masks.

I am an EVS staff member who works in non-patient-care areas (administration offices, etc.) can I wear a cloth mask?

Yes. All staff working in non-patient care areas such as offices can wear cloth masks.

***Who should get a procedure mask rather than a cloth or blue wrap mask?**

Symptomatic patients will be provided a procedure mask, not a cloth or blue wrap mask.

Asymptomatic patients, visitors and caregivers should be provided a cloth or blue wrap mask if they do not have their own.

***Can a symptomatic visitor be allowed to enter a facility?**

No.

***Can a symptomatic caregiver (defined as someone deemed by the care teams to be necessary for optimal care of a patient) be allowed to enter a facility?**

This is discouraged for both the safety of the caregiver and the patient. Discuss with the care team and attending physician. Exceptions may apply and will be addressed on case-by-case basis.

***If a symptomatic patient or caregiver arrives wearing their own masks, do I need to give them a procedure mask instead?**

Yes. After they remove their personal mask, please instruct them to put it away or store it with their belongings until they leave the facility.

***Are symptomatic patients required to wear a mask? What if they refuse?**

All patients are required to wear a mask unless they have a qualifying health condition.

If they refuse to wear a mask and are patients in a hospital-based clinic, staff must develop a workflow to safely isolate them for treatment.

If they refuse to wear a mask and are patients in a non-hospital-based clinic, staff may ask them to leave the clinic and assist them in scheduling a virtual visit instead.

Mary Bridge Children's ambulatory clinics require patients two years of age and older to wear a mask, except for those with developmental delays, sensory concerns or for specific therapy treatments.

***Are symptomatic caregivers required to wear a mask? What if they refuse?**

Symptomatic caregivers are required to wear a mask. If they refuse, we will still allow them to accompany the patient so we can provide care, but we will ensure that all staff interacting with the patient and caregiver are wearing adequate PPE. This scenario applies to parents with children. Mary Bridge Ambulatory requires all caregivers to wear a mask. If they refuse, they may be asked to leave the clinic and assisted in scheduling a virtual visit instead.

***Do children need to wear a mask?**

Per the CDC, children two years old and under do not need to be masked. Other children should be provided with a mask.

***Can asymptomatic patients, visitors or caregivers wear their own masks, or do they have to remove them and use a MultiCare-provided mask?**

Asymptomatic patients, visitors and caregivers may use their own masks. There is no need to ask them to remove their masks and replace them with a MultiCare-provided mask.

***If asked by a patient, caregiver or visitor how to clean a cloth mask, what should I say?**

Laundering masks in hot water with detergent will provide adequate cleaning of a cloth mask. Blue wrap masks should be discarded once the wearer leaves the facility.