

SECTION: Infection Control Guidelines

SUBJECT: Standards for Use - Facial Coverings 2023

OVERVIEW

The Laws of Florida mandated by Chapter 2023-043 section 408.824, as of August 1st, 2023, Florida Statute mandates that health care providers are to establish facial covering procedures for their associated health care setting. Additionally, these requirements are relayed to residents and visitors by posting information in high-traffic areas of the facility as well as on each individual center's website.

PROCEDURE

1. Wearing masks and facial coverings for infection control is at the direction of a health care practitioner or health care provider (i.e., medical director, resident practitioners and providers).
2. Persons visiting and employees caring for residents who have been diagnosed with or confirmed to have a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase risk of transmission of an infection from persons without signs or symptoms of infection to a resident and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary for the resident's safety are to wear a mask when visiting or caring for that resident.
3. Visitors who have symptoms of respiratory infection or other symptoms that may be associated with an infectious disease that may be spread through droplet or airborne transmission are asked to defer their visit until 10 days after symptom onset, symptoms have improved, and they have been fever free for at least 24 hours. If the visit is urgent, then the visitor must wear a mask at all times while in the facility.
4. Visitors who have tested positive for an infectious disease that may be spread through droplet or airborne transmission (i.e. Shingles virus, etc.) in the last 10 days are asked to defer their visit until at least 10 days have passed since their positive test and if symptomatic, their symptoms have improved and they have been fever free for at least 24 hours.
5. Visitors who have had close contact with someone who is known to have an infectious disease that may be spread through droplet or airborne transmission are asked to wear a mask at all times for the 10 days post close contact while in the facility, including when they are with the person they are visiting. If the visitor and resident cannot wear a mask, refuses to wear a mask or face covering, or is moderately to severely immunocompromised, they are then asked to participate in urgent visits and to potentially visit outdoors and maintaining social distancing of at least six feet as a lower risk option for visitation.
6. If a resident is on transmission-based precautions, their visitors are educated on the risks of visiting and on what personal protective equipment is recommended for them to wear when they are in the resident room, etc.
7. Residents who have signs or symptoms of or have a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission are placed on transmission-based precautions up to and including for example - covering open vesicles caused by the Shingles virus, etc. and are to remain in their room. If the resident must come out of the room for medically necessary reasons, they are to wear a mask when they are outside of their room unless wearing a mask is medically contraindicated.
8. Employees are required to wear masks in accordance with standard precautions to protect themselves from potential splash or spray of blood or body fluids.
9. Employees entering the room of a resident on droplet or airborne isolation (i.e., transmission-based precautions) are to wear an appropriate mask in accordance with the type of precautions indicated.
10. If an employee develops symptoms of an infection that may be spread through droplet or airborne transmission while they are in the facility, they are to immediately put on a mask and notify their supervisor. Symptomatic employees are not to come to work in accordance with employee/occupational health guidelines.
11. In the event of an outbreak in the facility, residents who wish to leave their room in the affected area and employees who may have had exposure to someone with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission and can spread prior to the onset of symptoms, are to wear a mask for 10 days post-exposure or until the outbreak resolves.
12. This guideline will be easily accessible to all staff, healthcare providers, residents, their representatives, and visitors (i.e., webpage, posting at the facility, etc.)