|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Infection Control Policy and Procedure**  | **Subject: Mask Requirement** |
| **Approved By:**  |  |
| **Effective:** 2/13/2023 | **Revised:**  |

**POLICY**

It is the policy of this facility to follow all New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and/or recommendations for the use of masks as source control to prevent the spread of respiratory infections.

**BACKGROUND**

Source control refers to use of respirators or well-fitting masks or cloth masks to cover a person’s mouth and nose to prevent spread of respiratory secretions when they are breathing, talking, sneezing, or coughing.

**PROCEDURE**

**Mask Use as Source Control for Covid-19 Infection**

1. **HIGH SARS-CoV-2 Community Transmission**
	1. The facility will utilize CDC’s [Community Transmission](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&list_select_county=all_counties&data-type=Risk) levels (see Table 1 below) are high to determine using masks as universal source control.
	2. The Facility IP/Designee will monitor community transmission levels weekly and as needed and report any change in transmission levels to the Administrator and Director of Nursing.
	3. When the SARS-CoV-2 Community Transmission level is high in the County in which the facility is located, everyone (e.g., employees, residents, visitors, consultants, vendors, etc.) in the facility will wear masks as source control.
2. **Substantial, Moderate, Low SARS-CoV-2 Community Transmission**

When the SARS-CoV-2 Community Transmission level is **substantial**, **moderate**, or **low** in the County in which the facility is located, the facility may choose not to implement masks as universal source control. However, even if source control is not universally required, it remains recommended for individuals who:

* Have suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection or other respiratory infection (e.g., those with runny nose, cough, sneeze); or
* Had [close contact](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html#closecontact) (patients and visitors) or a [higher-risk exposure](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html) (HCP) with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection, for 10 days after their exposure; or
* Reside or work on a unit or area of the facility experiencing a SARS-CoV-2 outbreak; universal use of source control could be discontinued as a mitigation measure once no new cases have been identified for 14 days; or
* Have otherwise had source control recommended by public health authorities

**TABLE 1: CDC’s Indicators of Community Transmission**

****

**Mask Use as Source Control for Influenza Season**

1. Per NYSDOH, all healthcare personnel not vaccinated for influenza for the current influenza season will wear a surgical or procedure mask while in areas where residents/patients are typically present when the NYS Health Commissioner announces Influenza is widespread.
2. The facility will maintain a line list of all staff who are not vaccinated against influenza and cross reference to ensure compliance with flu masking requirement.

**REFERENCES**

CDC (9/23/2022). Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

CDC. Covid Data Tracker. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=all_states&list_select_county=all_counties&data-type=Risk>

CDC (2/25/2022). Indicators for Monitoring Covid-19 Community Levels and Covid-19 and Implementing Covid-19 Prevention Strategies. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/science/Scientific-Rationale-summary-COVID-19-Community-Levels.pdf>

NYSDOH (2/10/2023). NH DAL #23-02. NYSDOH Guidance for Use of Face Masks and Face Coverings in Healthcare Facilities. <https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/hospital_administrator/letters/2023/docs/dal_23-02.pdf>

NYSDOH (11/19/2014). Prevention of Influenza Transmission by Healthcare and Residential Facility and Agency Personnel. <https://regs.health.ny.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/recently_adopted_regulations/2014-11-19_prevention_of_influenza_transmission.pdf>