

## Masking/Face Covering Practice

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**Florida Law | SB 252 | “Protection from Discrimination Based on Health Care Choices”**

*Effective August 1, 2023*

**AHCA | Rule 59A-35.125 | “ Standards for the Appropriate Use of Facial Coverings for Infection Control”**

**Effective June 2025**

### **When Masks/Face Coverings May Be Recommended**

According to existing Community Hospice & Palliative Care practices, our patients, visitors, and team members may be asked to wear a mask or face covering while in our facilities. Healthcare providers may require visitors to wear a mask under specific circumstances for example, if they have been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or if they show signs and symptoms of such an illness, or if the patient has a condition affecting their immune system which increases their risk for infection and when the healthcare provider determines masks are necessary for patient safety.

### **Opting Out**

Our new masking practice now states that patients, visitors, and team members may request to opt out of wearing a mask or face covering if there are alternative methods of infection control available. To request an opt out, patients and visitors should notify a supervisor at the facility and the request will be reviewed by Community Hospice & Palliative Care Infection Prevention staff. Team members requesting an opt-out should notify their supervisor, and the request will be reviewed by Community Hospice & Palliative Care’s Infection Prevention staff.

### **Exclusions**

Please note there may be times when a patient, visitor, or team member’s request to opt out from wearing a mask or face covering may not be approved, such as when

they are within a sensitive clinical area of a facility, when risk to others' health and safety is considered to be high, or when state or federal law requires masking.

Our masking/face covering practice is designed to help promote public health and safety, and is consistent with state and federal laws, rules and regulations including Florida law SB 252, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) Rule 59A-35.125, and the Department of Health (DOH) jointly developed emergency standards for the appropriate use of facial coverings for infection control in health care settings.