



Enterprise-Wide Policy and Procedure

Policy: E-IP Facial Covering Policy for Employees, Contracted Services, Volunteers, Students, Vendors and Visitors

Policy Number: E-

Responsible Department:	Infection Prevention Employee Health
Coordinating Departments:	Human Resources
Original Issue Date:	
Medical Director/Staff Approval: (if applicable)	
Legal and Regulatory References:	Florida Rule 59AER23-2 “Standards for the Appropriate Use of Facial Coverings for Infection Control”, 2023 “Florida Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities”, section 381.026 F.S.
Other References/Corresponding Policies:	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings, 2007. Flagler Health Plus Policy E-IP-2013 Isolation Precautions

I. Objective

The purpose of this policy is to specify under what circumstances patients, visitors, and employees must comply with facial covering requirements and if/when opt out provisions may apply. This policy is in alignment with Florida Rule 59AER23-2 “Standards for the Appropriate Use of Facial Coverings for Infection Control” and in accordance with the “Florida Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities”, section 381.026 F.S. This policy is specific to facial covering. Employees will refer to the Flagler Health Plus Standard and Transmission Based Isolation policy for complete PPE recommendations.

II. Scope

All Flagler Health Plus Employees, Medical Staff, Contracted Employees, Vendors, Volunteers, Students and Visitors.

III. Definitions

Facial Covering - Cloth or surgical face mask, a face shield, or any other facial covering that covers the mouth and nose.

Standard precautions – Standard precautions are applied to the care of all patients in all healthcare settings, regardless of the suspected or confirmed presence of an infectious agent. Blood, all body fluids (except sweat), secretions and excretions, mucous membranes and non-intact skin of all patients are treated as potentially infectious.

Transmission Based Precautions:

Airborne Precautions – Airborne precautions are to be used for patients who are known or suspected of being infected or colonized with organisms that are transmitted by airborne droplets nuclei that can remain suspended and be dispersed over long distances via air currents.

Droplet Precautions - Droplet precautions are to be used for patients who are known or suspected of being infected or colonized with organisms that are transmitted by large droplets that are generated by the patients via coughing, sneezing, and respiratory tract procedures.

IV. Policy

To ensure the safety Flagler Health Plus patients, visitors, and employees, facial coverings will be required under special circumstances, such as increased risk for infectious disease transmission. This policy conforms to Florida Rule 59AER23-2 “Standards for the Appropriate Use of Facial Coverings for Infection Control” and the “Florida Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities”, section 381.026 F.S.

Facial covering recommendations will be reassessed as necessary in collaboration with state, regional and national recommendations if there is a community or regional outbreak. Flagler Health Plus Infection Prevention will monitor CDC and Florida Department of Health data on a regular basis and advise leadership of trends.

V. Procedure

The information below provides direction on when the healthcare setting may choose to require a patient, visitor, or employee to wear a facial covering and if or when “opt out” provisions may apply.

Role	Facial Covering Required	Opt Out If
Patient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a common area of the health care setting and is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient cannot tolerate facial covering. Alternatives may include, but are not limited to: Employees wearing mask when in close contact with patient or physical distancing
Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission. • In sterile areas of the health care setting or an area where sterile procedures are being performed. • 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. • Visiting a patient whose treating health care practitioner has diagnosed the patient with or confirmed 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 patient and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary for the patient’s safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available. Examples may include, but are not limited to: deferring visit until symptoms resolve, virtual visit, or physical distancing.
Employees, Medical Staff, Contracted Services, Volunteers and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting sterile procedures. • Working in a sterile area. • With a patient on droplet or airborne isolation. • Working with a patient whose treating health care practitioner has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

	<p>diagnosed the patient with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase risk of transmission of an infection from employees without signs or symptoms of infection to a patient and whose treating practitioner has determined that the use of facial coverings is necessary for the patient's safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging in non-clinical potentially hazardous activities that require facial coverings to prevent physical injury or harm in accordance with industry standards.	
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