UCI Health

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) HOT TOPIC:
Required Universal Masking

Q1: What is the "required universal masking" policy for employees?

A: UCI Health has changed its universal optional masking policy to a required universal masking policy, in keeping with CDC guidance issued mid-April and OCHCA mandate. Every person (e.g., healthcare personnel, patients, visitors) must wear a mask at all times for source control, regardless of symptoms, while on UCI Health premises. This includes all buildings, parking lots and open common spaces on Medical Center grounds.

All staff and healthcare providers are required to wear their own community cloth face masks when entering and leaving UCI Health premises.

- Staff whose job duties do not require patient care masks should wear their community cloth mask for source control at all times while on UCI Health premises.
- Direct patient care providers must change from a community cloth mask to a UCI Health patient care regular mask when performing patient care duties.

Who	What	Where
Non-direct patient care providers	Community cloth mask	On arriving and leaving UCI Health and continuously through the day while on UCI Health premises.
Direct patient care providers (e.g. MDs, RNs, OT/PT/Speech, Technicians, RTs)	Community cloth mask	On arriving and leaving UCI Health premises and in open common areas Non-patient care areas During administrative time (not providing patient care for all or part of day) During breaks
Direct patient care providers	UCI patient care mask	Can be worn continuously in patient care areas or during patient care duties

Q2: What is the purpose of universal masking?

Universal masking serves two helpful purposes

- It prevents transmission through coughing, sneezing, or loud voices/singing from someone who is ill
- It prevents droplets from someone else who is ill from reaching your nose or mouth

However, universal masking does not replace the need to

- Keep a 6 foot distance from others whenever possible (social distancing)
- Clean your hands before and after touching or readjusting your mask
- Clean your environment in case the person touching items before you was ill

Q3: What type of masks are to be worn under the universal masking policy?

- Community cloth masks should be cloth masks. Please save UCI disposable masks for clinical care providers.

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- Masks worn in the hallways, workrooms, nursing stations, and common areas of patient care locations should be disposable regular masks issued by UCI Health or community cloth masks.
- Do not wear N95 respirators in hallways, workrooms, nursing stations, and common areas of patient care locations. These are reserved for aerosol generating procedures and care of patients with tuberculosis, measles, or chicken pox.

Q4: Will I receive a mask from UCI Health?

UCI Health will provide a supply of community cloth masks. Non-UCI issued cloth masks from home may also be worn as your "community mask". Mask must fit completely over the nose and under the chin. Masks must be professional and not distracting or offensive. No external logos will be allowed.

| Examples of community cloth masks | |

| Examples of patient care masks | |

Direct patient care providers will be issued UCI Health patient care masks after reporting to work. Extended and reuse protocols will still apply. See the COVID SharePoint for specific PPE guidance.

Q5: I'm not used to wearing a mask all day. What is the safe way to wear a mask?

None of us are accustomed to wearing a mask all day. We have to learn how to do it through practice. Wearing a mask can cause people to touch their face more due to the need to adjust the mask. Frequent touching of the face can, unintentionally, increase the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 if hands are not clean.

Here are some key pearls about how to wear a mask. ALL of these take practice.

- Mask should cover nose and chin
- Try your best to avoid touching face and mask
- Clean hands every time before & after touching mask
- Do not put mask under chin, over forehead or over one ear
- Store mask in clean, open bag for re-use
- Put on clean mask if wet, soiled, or damaged
- For cloth mask, wash mask between use with detergent at home
- Masks can be re-used unless wet, soiled or damaged. See COVID SharePoint on PPE re-use.

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Masking Dos	Masking Don'ts
• Wear community cloth mask on arrival to work, anytime when on UCI Health premises and when going home • Cloth masks must be worn all day at work by non-direct patient care providers • Cloth masks can be worn in non-patient care areas, during administrative time and breaks by direct patient care providers • Perform hand hygiene before and after putting on, taking off, or adjusting your mask. • Remove mask by grasping ear loops or ties and directly removing away from face. • Store in a clean, unsealed bag for reuse. • Protect your mask under a face shield in Droplet + Eye and anytime when splash or spray could occur • Non-UCI issued masks from home may also be worn as your "community mask". Masks must be professional and not distracting or offensive	• Don't touch or adjust the mask with unclean hands • Avoid touching the inside of your mask if possible • Don't remove mask by grasping the front of it • Don't reuse your mask if it is wet, soiled, damaged, loses function (e.g. unable to breathe through) or the fit cannot be maintained • Don't wear mask on chin, top of head or hanging over one ear • Don't double mask • Don't wear your community cloth mask into patient care rooms if you are a direct care provider

Q6: When am I allowed to take off my mask?

To minimize touching and manipulating masks, it is recommended to leave your face mask on at all times, except when needing to remove it for breaks, lunch or when leaving work. When alone in a personal office or cubicle, masks can be removed if not encountering other persons within 6 feet. Remember to clean your hands immediately before and after taking off and putting on your mask. Store masks in a clean breathable bag (open plastic or paper bag)

Q7: How do I clean my cloth mask?

The novel coronavirus, SARS CoV-2 is easily killed by standard laundry detergent. Cloth masks should be put in the hamper daily and washed with home detergent. It is recommended to bring additional clean cloth masks for backup in case one becomes soiled or wet during the day.

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Q8: Will patients and visitors be required to wear a mask?

Yes. Patients will be asked to wear a cloth mask to come to their appointments. The same will be asked of the few visitors who are still permitted to come to the hospital (partners of laboring women, parents of NICU patients, and family of dying patients). If patients or visitors do not bring their own masks, one will be provided. However, we ask for your help in reminding patients and visitors to bring their own to preserve our mask supply for employees.

Q9: Are there any health issues I should look out for when wearing a mask all day?

Masks are generally safe to use all day. Because the skin of our faces is more fragile than other parts of our body, there have been reports of healthcare workers developing skin irritation (e.g., contact dermatitis). Cloth masks will minimize this risk while still providing protection. Rarely, people who wear masks all day can develop side effects that include buildup of carbon dioxide in the air enclosed within the mask. This is least common in cloth masks and is expected to be more common when wearing very tight fitting masks or N95 respirators. It is recommended to safely remove and store your masks during breaks and lunch.