

COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees
of Southcoast Health

November 17, 2020

Good afternoon, Southcoast colleagues.

#SouthcoastFrontlines trending on social media

On social media, **#SouthcoastFrontlines** is trending with photos and notes of encouragement from our friends and followers, who are “going red” with lights and other displays to show their appreciation, pride and respect for all of you.

Red is the color of emergency, of urgency, of energy, of determination, of aid, of heart. Thank you for showing these qualities and More with your outstanding work on the frontlines and behind the scenes, every day.

We encourage all employees and your networks to take part and voice your support for our frontline colleagues on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

Important reminders: temperature checks, masking requirement, cell phone # for attestation

Temperature checks: The first attestation question you receive each morning or at the start of each shift asks if your temperature is 100 degrees or more. Please remember to take your temperature daily, as it is the only reliable way to have the information needed to answer this question

accurately. An easy way to not forget is to set a reminder on your cell phone or Outlook calendar.

Masking requirement: Please remember to put on your facemask before entering any Southcoast facility, not after. This is not only a Southcoast policy, but it is now a Massachusetts state policy.

Salaried staff and members of Leadership, we need your cell phone numbers: Please add your cell phone # in PeopleSoft, via Self Service option, if you have not yet done so. This is necessary in order to receive the attestation each day on your cell phone. It is also necessary in order to receive emergency alerts through Everbridge.

Quarantine status for inpatients

Quarantine status means a person has been *exposed to a COVID-19 case*. This is not the same as a PUI (person under investigation) who is exhibiting symptoms and needs laboratory testing for COVID-19.

Admitted patients who have had contact with a COVID-19 case (exposure) require 14 days quarantine from the last date of the exposure because of the two-week length of the incubation period.

Required measures when caring for hospitalized patients on quarantine:

1. Without a positive COVID test result, patients are not considered a COVID-19 patient, but they are at risk of becoming positive due to exposure.
2. Private room with no visitors. Limit entry into the room to essential personnel only. Limit the number of different staff caring for the patient to as few as possible.
3. Monitor temperature and symptoms closely for the development of COVID-19.
4. Test for COVID-19 as soon as possible after the date of the exposure.

5. Wear eye protection and mask. Gowns and gloves required for providing high-contact care.

Any patient in quarantine must have a [precautions sign](#) on the room door.

Patients may be discharged while on quarantine; they will be provided with quarantine instruction sheets.

Limiting exposure risk and steps after an unprotected exposure

When caring for a COVID-19 patient, if you are wearing eye protection and a mask, performing appropriate hand hygiene and maintaining a clean, disinfected environment, you are protected from exposure risk. **Eliminate your exposure risk by always wearing a mask and using eye protection when within 6 feet of any individual unless a solid barrier is in place.**

If you have experienced an **unprotected** exposure to a COVID positive patient or another employee:

- Notify your manager and complete an ART Form.
- Monitor yourself diligently for temperature $\geq 100^\circ$ or any symptoms. **If any symptoms develop, do not report to work.** If you call out sick for any shift, the person you speak with will ask you if your absence is due to COVID-19-like symptoms. If you answer yes, you will be reminded to get tested ASAP and may be directed to call the Southcoast COVID-19 Scheduling Line at 508-973-2035.
- Essential personnel (healthcare workers providing direct care), not experiencing any symptoms, are able to continue coming into work, but when not working must quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure to the person. While in quarantine at home, wear a mask at home and distance yourself from household members.
- **If you test positive for COVID-19, the Southcoast Health Infection Prevention team needs to know.** We are required to consider/conduct a tracer to determine if any COVID-19-positive health care worker has

come into contact with their colleagues and/or patients. Call Infection Prevention (ext. 35497) with any questions.

- Follow up with Employee Health.

Please know that Employee Health and our COVID-19 Results team will notify Infection Prevention if a test performed at Southcoast Health results as positive.

If you are tested outside of Southcoast Health and receive a positive result, the expectation is that you will notify Infection Prevention at 508-973-5497 or utilize the Page Operator (or SmartWeb) to page the Infection Prevention person on call.

For detailed information on occupational exposure, see the [Healthcare Personnel: Occupational Exposure & Return to Work Guidance, Revised May 7, 2020](#) issued by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center.

Visitation restrictions across Southcoast locations

Due to increasing COVID-19 community spread, and in order to keep our patients, staff and providers safe, beginning today, Monday, November 16, visitation restrictions are in place across Southcoast locations, including our hospitals, Emergency Departments and other clinical areas.

At Charlton Memorial, St. Luke's and Tobey, inpatient visitation is limited to the following exceptions:

- Patients on CMO, at end-of-life/imminent death
- Birth partners
- Parents/Guardians of patients under the age of 18 years old
- Attorneys or legal representatives of patients
- Patients with intellectual and/or physical disabilities

In all Emergency Departments, no visitors will be allowed except for a guardian or essential companion as determined by the care team.

For the visitation guidelines at these and other clinical areas, please click on [Visitation Policy](#).

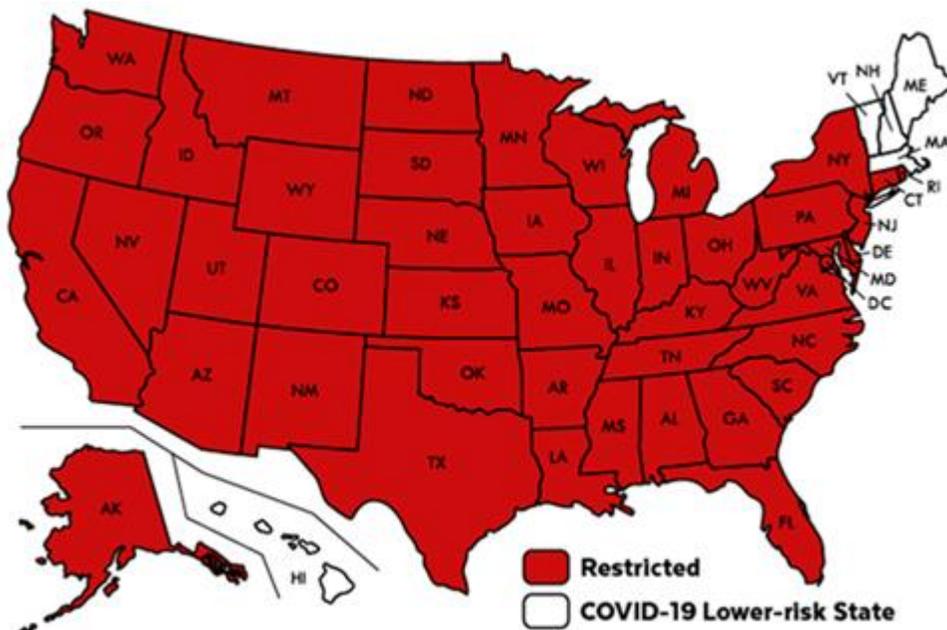
We are in the process of informing the public through our website and social media channels. Additionally, new signage is being installed.

Thank you for all that you do to keep our patients, the public and each other safe.

State risk level

The District of Columbia, New York and Washington State were removed as lower-risk states, effective 12:01am on November 14, 2020.

High risk states in red. Low risk states in white.



Status report: COVID-19 cases

- We currently have 66 patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 hospitalized across our system – 10 of those in Intensive Care Units.
- In addition, we currently have 56 patients under investigation (PUI) currently hospitalized across our system – 5 of those in ICU.

The COVID-19 dashboard is available [here](#).

Southcoast's dashboard of COVID-19 data, generated by Epic, is updated daily and is [available on our intranet](#).

For the latest updates, guidance on PPE, video messages, employee assistance and more, please [visit the Southcoast intranet](#).

Questions? Please email them to faq@southcoast.org.

Thank you, and be well.