

# COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees  
of Southcoast Health

June 15, 2021

*Greetings, Southcoast Colleagues.*

In this Bulletin, you will find the following:

- **Face covering and screening in healthcare settings**
- **American Red Cross emergency need appeal for donors**
- **Latest status report on COVID-19 hospitalizations**

And be sure to visit Southcoast's [COVID-19 Employee Hub](#).

Thank you.

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## **UPDATE: More guidance on masking and screening in healthcare settings**

According to the last guidance effective June 14, 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has stated that healthcare providers should continue to "Require staff wear masks while in the clinical facility or office, consistent with the Commonwealth's mask order."

**In addition, the "Update to Universal Screening and Testing for Hospital Admissions" dated [June 9, 2021](#), *has been revised to accept ED staff assessment of COVID-19 vaccination status.*\***

Attempts should be made to verify vaccination status of patients vaccinated outside of Southcoast, if and when possible.

With that, Southcoast offers the following direction for our staff:

**Southcoast Health employees, providers, and patients working in clinical facilities (hospitals, surgery center, ambulatory practices, etc)**

- Regardless of vaccination status, all those in clinical facilities must wear a mask.

**Southcoast Health employees in non-clinical facilities (e.g. South Coast Business Center [SCBC] areas) who are FULLY VACCINATED**

- Staff who are fully vaccinated may remove their masks when eating, drinking, or congregating in break rooms or other non-clinical spaces.
- Vaccinated employees should be masked when entering the administrative (i.e., non-clinical) spaces, but can remove their mask when situated in their workspace working with colleagues who have also been vaccinated.

**Southcoast Health employees who are NOT FULLY VACCINATED**

- Unvaccinated employees should be masked when entering any Southcoast facility/area and remain masked (unless eating, drinking, or alone in their workspace) and maintain social distancing.
- Where we may have vaccinated and unvaccinated staff working together, in non-clinical facilities (SCBC, etc.), *everyone* should wear masks when social distancing is not possible.

**Other important PPE guidance to keep in mind**

- ***Eye protection:*** Per Massachusetts DPH, “Healthcare personnel must wear eye protection in the clinical care areas and for the care of all patients except those who are COVID-19 recovered from prior COVID-19 infection. Even if COVID-19 is not suspected in a patient presenting for care, HCP may encounter asymptomatic patients with COVID-19.”

- **N-95s:** Use for all COVID-19 patients under investigation (PUI) and confirmed patients. Extended use of N-95s for 1 day or 1 shift. If mask is removed for any reason, it is discarded and replaced. Discard after AGPs.
- **Procedural/surgical mask use:** Universal masking for all staff and all patients when they leave their room or when staff are within 6 feet. Extended use is for 1 day or 1 shift; change if compromised. If it is removed for any reason, it is discarded and replaced. Discard and don a new mask after exiting room or after caring for/contact with any patient on precautions.

**Please note that Southcoast Health is still required to continue with employee screenings and we want to remind everyone to not come into the office if you are experiencing any COVID-like symptoms.**

Thank you for your continued cooperation and understanding.

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### **NEW: Emergency need appeal from the American Red Cross**

This week, the American Red Cross launched a nationwide emergency need appeal for blood and platelet donors.

With less than half a day supply of Type O blood, there is a severe national blood shortage.

**Please schedule your next available donation appointment by visiting [redcrossblood.org](https://redcrossblood.org).**

If an appointment isn't readily available due to strong response to the appeal, please schedule several weeks out or try again in a few days as new drives may have been added.

Most assuredly, there will be a need for your life-saving donation whenever you donate. Thank you.

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## **STATUS REPORT: COVID-19 cases**

Currently, as of midday, we have 14 patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 hospitalized across our system – with no positive cases in ICU.

In addition, we currently have 12 PUI currently hospitalized across our system – with no PUI in ICU.

COVID-19 daily dashboards, generated by the Southcoast Analytics Team, are available [here](#).

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*Thank you, and be well.*