

COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees
of Southcoast Health

Greetings, Southcoast Colleagues.

In this Bulletin, you will find the following:

- **Public Health Emergency Updates**
- **Masking Guidelines for Patients and Providers**
- **Updated Visitation Policy**
- **Reminder of the COVID-19 Return to Work Process**
- **Signage Updates**

Thank you.

Public Health Emergency Updates as of May 11, 2023

On May 11, 2023, the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency will end.

On the next day, **effective May 12, 2023**, Southcoast Health will implement the below changes regarding masking at all Southcoast locations.

The guidelines below are subject to change according to the prevalence of COVID-19 or other diseases within our region or organization, and/or recommendations provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Please read to the end of this bulletin for all updates and additional information.

Masking Guidelines for Patients and Providers Effective May 12, 2023

For Patients and Visitors:

- For patients and visitors **NOT experiencing** COVID-19 or other respiratory symptoms, masks are optional.

- For patients and visitors **experiencing** COVID-19 and other respiratory symptoms, masks are required. When possible, we recommend limiting interaction with others if you are not feeling well.
- For patients and visitors with an immunocompromised state, masks are strongly advised.

For Providers and Staff:

- For providers and staff who are vaccinated against COVID-19, masks are optional.
- Unvaccinated providers and staff must continue to wear a face mask to protect themselves and others from the risk of COVID-19 and should understand and assume the risks of non-vaccination, which includes serious illness.
- For providers and staff caring for patients without signs/symptoms of COVID-19, masks are optional.
- For clinical conditions requiring [droplet, airborne, or contact isolation](#), all providers and staff should continue to wear appropriate PPE.

We emphasize that all individuals may choose to continue to wear a mask based on their individual comfort level. These guidelines are subject to change and may be updated according to the prevalence of COVID-19 or other diseases within our region or organization.

Please note that in Cancer Center areas, masking will be required in certain situations.

Updated Visitation Policy Effective May 12, 2023

For the protection of Southcoast Health's patients, providers, employees, and visitors, please view and adhere to our Hospital Visitation Policy.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Reminder of the COVID-19 Return to Work Process

Reminders, even with the public health emergency ending, all staff who test positive for COVID-19 should continue to follow the return to work process and complete the [COVID Employee Return to Work Form](#).

Please visit the COVID-19 Hub for updated information.

Signage Updates

As of May 12, 2023, in all practice and patient-facing locations signs that read, “Masks Required” and “Keep a 6ft distance” can be removed.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and understanding.