

## Updated Guidance for Team Member Masking at Duke Health Facilities

As many are aware, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its [guidance](#) for persons who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 as follows:

- Fully vaccinated people may visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing a mask or physical distancing.
- Fully vaccinated people can visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing a mask or physical distancing.
- Fully vaccinated people do not need to quarantine or undergo testing for COVID-19 exposure if they are asymptomatic.

Notes:

- The guidelines released are specifically designed for **non-healthcare settings**.
- People are considered fully vaccinated when more than two weeks have passed since receiving the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Duke Health is making the following clarifications to its masking policy in light of the recent updates to CDC guidance.

**We all must continue to be sensitive to the fact that not all team members are vaccinated and that it is inappropriate to ask individuals about personal health information, including vaccine status. If you are unsure about another team member's vaccine status, please remain masked and do not ask.**

### **Patients and visitors**

Fully vaccinated patients and visitors must continue to wear masks while visiting a Duke Health facility consistent with our existing policies.

### **Team members**

#### ***Public settings***

Some examples of public settings include hallways, patient rooms, waiting rooms, work rooms, nursing stations, lobbies, cafeterias, courtyards, shared conference rooms, classrooms and any other shared spaces. Essentially, all spaces that are not private offices with a door should be considered public settings.

Fully vaccinated team members must remain masked at all times unless eating or drinking when in public settings at work. When eating and drinking, team members should continue to maintain 6 feet of physical distance.

### ***Private Settings***

In private settings (i.e., private offices with a door), fully vaccinated team members may remove their masks as long as all team members in the room are fully vaccinated and comfortable with being unmasked and the door is closed.

While vaccination is a positive update on our path to end the pandemic, we strongly encourage all of our team members to take proper precautions in non-work public settings, including wearing a well-fitted mask and physically distancing from others, and avoiding medium and large in-person gatherings.

### **No Changes to Other Patient and Employee Policies Related to Patient or Team Member Vaccination Status**

Duke Health leaders are actively reviewing additional policies and protocols and will use available data on employee and community vaccination rates, rates of community COVID-19 transmission, and updated guidance from CDC and local health authorities to make changes as appropriate.

As we adjusted to the pandemic precautions, change was frequent and challenging. We anticipate re-opening to involve many sequential changes, and we will be thoughtful as to the pace of these changes and will make every effort to communicate them clearly to our entire team. Thank you for your patience as we change together and celebrate each step towards more normal times!

At this time, there are no changes to the following procedures:

- Employee screening and symptom monitoring

If you have any new or worsening symptoms that could be consistent with COVID-19, stay home and call the Duke COVID-19 Hotline at 919-385-0429 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

- Patient screening and isolation procedures

We are continuing current processes to screen patients for symptoms or recent exposure to COVID and use appropriate PPE as indicated by our policies.

- Asymptomatic patient testing

There is no change at this time to current protocols for testing patients at the time of admission to an inpatient facility or prior to high-risk procedures. We are actively reviewing this practice and anticipate we may be able to adjust our practice in the coming months.

We are proud of our more than 20,000 Duke Health team members who have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination is one more way that we can step up to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our entire Duke community. We encourage our entire team to get vaccinated when it is available to them. Thank you for continued commitment to preventing the spread of infection.