

TO: Valley Health All

FROM: Iyad Sabbagh, MD, Chief Physician Executive
Theresa Trivette, RN, DNP, Chief Nurse Executive

DATE: November 17, 2022

RE: COVID Update #193

Visitation Status through the week of November 21: **LEVEL YELLOW**

Based on the current conditions regarding COVID and the flu at this time, Valley Health has made several changes to its testing and masking policies, effective immediately. Although these changes amend current guidelines, we believe they will continue to keep our team members, our facilities and the surrounding community safe.

Please note: At this time, our visitation continues at Level Yellow, and visitor restrictions remain in place.

Our updated guidelines are as follows:

COVID Testing: Patients undergoing a procedure who have not had COVID symptoms in the previous 10 days will not be required to undergo pre-procedural COVID testing.

- Patients unable to reliably provide COVID history will be tested
- Behavioral Health, Winchester Rehab Center and West Virginia Skilled Nursing Facilities will continue to test patients prior to admission
- Swing bed patients will also be tested

Staff Masking: We have enacted, effective immediately, changes in our staff masking policy.

Individuals who have received the primary COVID vaccine and at least one booster and have received this year's flu vaccine no longer have to mask unless they work in the Cancer Center or with COVID-positive patients. Anyone who would like to continue masking, may do so.

The following staff are required to mask:

- Individuals who have not had the primary COVID vaccine and at least one booster

- Individuals not currently vaccinated against the flu.
 - Note: Employees still have until December 1 to get their flu vaccine or sign a declination in order to align with Valley Health policy. Until then, they must mask.
 - Individuals who decline the flu vaccine for any reason must provide a signed declination to EH and will not receive a badge sticker
 - Surgical masks will be required by staff who do not receive the annual (2022-2023) flu vaccine regardless of COVID vaccine status
- Individuals in the Cancer Center
- All staff will follow appropriate isolation precautions for any given patient
- Please note: N-95s, PAPR and protective eyewear should be used when caring for a COVID-positive patient or a patient believed to have COVID.

Masking of Others:

- Visitors may opt to mask as a personal preference. Unvaccinated visitors are encouraged to voluntarily mask
- Vendors shall remain masked at all times unless their status as vaccinated against COVID-19 and the flu has been verified by VHS
- Community clergy shall mask if they have not had the primary COVID vaccine and at least one booster, as well as the flu
- All individuals in the Cancer Center shall mask
- All individuals will follow appropriate isolation precautions for any given patient

Employee Screening

- Virtual wellness checks will be suspended, effective today
- Please perform a self-assessment prior to shift. Symptom checklists will be at time clocks.
- Report symptoms to Employee Health COVID line: 540-536-7781
- Notify Employee Health of COVID-positive employees

If you have upper respiratory symptoms:

- Do a home COVID test. If positive, do not come into work, notify the Employee Health COVID line at 540-536-7781 and work from home if that is a viable option
- If temperature is more than 100.4 F, do not work regardless of test result and contact Employee Health COVID line at 540-536-7781
- If you have no fever and you're negative for COVID based on your at-home test, you may work with a mask
 - You **MUST** mask at all times for 10 days from onset of symptoms
 - 100% in patient and non-patient care areas
 - Care taken regarding potential exposure in breaks/eating
 - May remove mask after 10 days if symptoms are improving
- **NEW:** Home COVID tests will no longer require PCR confirmation
- Home tests are available in Lawson-order # 3860500
- Tests are also available at all Employee Health locations