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Owner: John Lewis: Chief Business Integration Ofcr
Policy Area: COVID-19
Policy Tag Groups:
Applicability: UNCHCS - All owned entities (no managed)

Individual Extended Use Mask Policy

APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to the following entities (collectively referred to as "UNC Health" in this policy):

✓	UNC Health Care System / UNC Medical Center*	Johnston Health
✓	UNC Physicians Network	Lenoir Memorial Hospital
✓	UNC Physicians Network Group Practices	Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital
✓	Rex Healthcare / Rex Hospital	Nash Healthcare System/Nash Hospitals
✓	Chatham Hospital	Wayne Memorial Hospital
✓	Caldwell Memorial Hospital	
✓	UNC Rockingham Health Care / UNC Rockingham Hospital	

*UNC Medical Center includes all UNC Hospitals' facilities and the clinical patient care programs of the School of Medicine of UNC-Chapel Hill (including UNC Faculty Physicians).

I. Description

This policy describes appropriate use of face masks by all UNC Health Care System (UNC Health) employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, by means of an extended use protocol designed to conserve masks while providing protection to all employees.

All covered employees are expected to comply with this policy, and this policy prevails over any individual entity or departmental policies, as well as guidance from external organizations.

II. Rationale

The Centers for Disease Control has recommended that all Americans wear a face mask when around others. This measure is meant to protect the wearer from droplets containing the virus shed by infected people. It should also decrease the chance that the wearer will give the virus to others, if they are infected but asymptomatic.

This policy describes mask use by all UNC Health employees working for the entities listed above. Mask use is required regardless of the role of the employee in our operations, because asymptomatic patients can spread the virus, and employee-to-employee transmission has been commonly reported in other settings. In order to maximize our current mask supply, and to decrease the chances that we will run out of masks prior to the end of the pandemic, we plan for extended use of these masks, defined as up to 2 shifts of work per mask prior to replacement.

III. Policy

- A. All UNC Health employees working on-site are required to wear a mask provided by UNC Health while at work, regardless of location, role or ability to engage in social distancing.
- B. Masks will be issued by the employee's supervisor, with instructions for appropriate donning of the mask, and it is critical that employees perform hand hygiene prior to the handling of the mask. The supervisor will additionally issue the employee a brown paper bag for storage of the mask, labeled with the employee's name and the date of issuance of the mask and used for storage during any breaks, and at the end of the shift.
- C. Masks are to be worn continuously during the shift of work, except when leaving the work areas to use the restroom or taking breaks to eat or drink. During any break time when the mask has been removed, the employee is to follow social distancing guidelines, and is to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others. Masks should not leave the unit and should be stored in the paper bag provided until the next shift.
- D. During any period when the mask is removed to allow eating, drinking or use of the restroom, it should be stored. When a mask is stored, it should be carefully folded so that the outer surface (patient-facing, potentially contaminated side) is held inward and against itself to reduce contact with the outer surface during storage. The mask is then placed into the paper bag issued to the employee for the purpose of storage. Masks are not to be left out of the storage bag when not in use.
- E. Masks in good condition will be stored at the work site as directed by the supervisor. Masks will be stored folded, as noted above, and in the issued paper bag with the employee's name, and the date of issuance of the mask, written on the bag. These masks will be reused for a maximum of 2 work shifts, unless soiled or damaged. These storage requirements may be modified to suit specific work areas for shared services locations and other non-clinical sites with the approval of the area Vice President.
- F. Masks will be discarded if soiled, damaged, or become hard to breathe through. The employee should report this occurrence to his/her supervisor, who will access the clean mask supply of the unit to provide the employee with a new mask. If a new mask is issued, a new brown paper bag for storage of that mask should also be issued, and labeled with the employee's name and the date of issuance.
- G. During mask use, no home-made or additional masks may be worn; only the issued mask should be used, as using additional masks could lead to contamination from additional handling and limit breathability through the mask. Cloth or homemade masks can be worn to and from the unit, since the issued mask is not meant to leave the unit, nor is it meant for use at home or other locations.
- H. Employees who work in 2 or more locations which are in different buildings should have a mask at each location, with storage for each. Masks should not be transported from one location to

another.

- I. Exception to the continuous use aspects of this policy will be made for employees who work alone in a room with a closable door. In this situation, the employee must still wear his/her mask on leaving their office to go elsewhere, but may, when in their office with the door closed, work without a mask. This exception does not apply to offices in which multiple persons are working, nor does it apply to cubicles, or cubicle offices where to space above the cubicle is open to the more general office.

IV. Employee Responsibilities

Adherence to the instructions for obtaining, donning, storing, and disposing of masks as noted above.

V. Supervisory Responsibilities

Provision of the necessary supplies, including masks, bags, and storage bins. Availability for evaluation of mask adequacy, and replacement of masks when they become dysfunctional.

VI. Accountability

Employees and supervisors are both responsible for compliance with this policy.

Employees in the workplace without utilizing their mask will be given an initial warning and remediation regarding expected use of the mask by the supervisor. Repeated failures to adhere to this policy and comply with your supervisor's instructions may result in additional corrective action, up to and including termination.

Supervisors will be held accountable for their assigned employees who are non-compliant with mask utilization requirements

VII. Related Policies

None

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
PolicyStat System Site Administrator	Emilie Hendee: HCS Attorney Sr	04/2020
	Emilie Hendee: HCS Attorney Sr	04/2020

Applicability

Caldwell Memorial Hospital, Chatham Hospital, UNC Health Care System, UNC Medical Center, UNC Physicians

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