Facial Covering for Infection Control Standards

I. Purpose
To establish a Broward Health policy regarding facial covering requirements for healthcare practitioners and healthcare providers, in compliance with the Emergency Rule titled 59AER23-1, 59AER23-2, and F.S. 408.824.

II. Definitions
A. Common Area: areas in a healthcare setting where patients are not treated, diagnosed, or examined.
B. Department: Department of Health
C. Employee: any person under employment or contract of a healthcare setting, including healthcare practitioners, administrative staff, maintenance staff, aides, contractors, students, and volunteers.
D. Facial Covering: cloth or surgical mask, a face shield, or any other facial covering that covers the mouth and nose.
E. Healthcare Practitioner: someone who is licensed to practice medicine in the state of Florida.
F. Healthcare Provider: any activity, service, agency, or facility regulated by the Agency for Health Care Administration.
G. Healthcare Setting: refers to any place where healthcare practitioners and/or healthcare providers practice their profession or provide services.
H. Office: an office maintained for the practice of a healthcare practitioner’s profession, as provided in his or her practice act.
I. Patient: person receiving services from a healthcare practitioner or healthcare provider.
J. Sterile Areas: locations where surgery is conducted or where procedures that require aseptic techniques are performed.
K. Sterile Procedure: aseptic procedures with the goal of minimizing the risk of microbial contamination to reduce the rate of invasive or surgical site infection.
L. Visitor: any person in a healthcare setting who is not an employee or patient of the healthcare setting.

III. Policy
A. Broward Health may choose to require that patients wear a facial covering only when:
   1. The patient is in a common area of the facility and is exhibiting signs and symptoms of an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
   2. The patient has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
B. Broward Health may choose to require that visitors wear a facial covering only when:
   1. The visitor is in a common area of the facility and is exhibiting signs and symptoms of an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.
   2. The visitor is in sterile areas of the facility or in an area where sterile procedures are being performed.
   3. The visitor is in a patient or clinical room, with a patient who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of, or has been diagnosed with, an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or
   4. Visiting a patient whose treating healthcare practitioner has diagnosed the patient with, or has confirmed the presence of, a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase the risk of transmission of an infection from employees, without signs
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and symptoms of an infection, to a patient and whose treating practitioner has determined the use of facial coverings is necessary for the patient’s safety.

C. Broward Health provides that ability for patients, visitors, and employees to opt-out of wearing facial coverings.

5. A patient may opt-out of wearing a facial covering if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available.

6. A visitor may opt-out of wearing a facial covering if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available.

7. An employee may opt-out of wearing a facial covering unless the employee is:
   a) Conducting sterile procedures
   b) Working in a sterile area
   c) Working with a patient whose treating healthcare practitioner has diagnosed the patient with, or has confirmed the presence of, a condition affecting the immune system in a manner which is known to increase the risk of transmission of an infection from employees, without signs and symptoms of an infection, to a patient and whose treating practitioner has determined the use of facial coverings is necessary for the patient’s safety.
   d) Working with a patient on droplet or airborne isolation precautions, or
   e) Engaging in non-clinical, potentially hazardous activities that require facial coverings to prevent physical injury or harm, in accordance with industry standards.

IV. References

- Florida Statute 456, Chapter 001
- Florida Statute 408, Chapters 803 and 824
- Florida Statute 381, Chapter 026
- Florida Emergency Rule 59AER23-1 and 59AER23-2
- Broward Health Visitation Policy GA-001-350
- Infection Control Surveillance Plan CS-003-024