



# North Central Health Care

Person centered. Outcome focused.

## Updated Face Mask Guidelines for NCHC Employees Effective April 7, 2020

*\* Updated April 8, 2020*

### Defining Face Masks and Face Covers:



**Surgical Face Mask**



**N95 Face Mask  
or Respirator**



**Face Covers  
(may have elastic  
or tie straps)**

**All NCHC employees will be required to wear a surgical face mask or N95 respirator when in public spaces and shared workspaces within NCHC facilities or while engaged in any NCHC related patient care activities.**

- Surgical Face Masks should be worn by all employees unless a respirator (N95 or similar) is required because of assigned duties or approved personal medical needs.
- Each staff member will be provided one mask or respirator and a paper bag for the mask's storage at the beginning of each week.
- In order to preserve needed PPE, masks and respirators will be stored and reused for up to 5 days/shifts.
- If mask or respirator becomes visibly soiled, a replacement (along with a new paper bag for storage) may be requested.
- Masks or respirators may be removed while in private offices or in solo workspaces that are not a part of direct patient care activities.
- Face covers (homemade or community obtained face masks) are not considered PPE and may not be used as a replacement for a surgical face mask or a respirator.
- Surgical face masks and respirators should be stored on premises unless staff are working on a community assignment.
- It is not necessary for staff to wear a mask immediately upon entering the building at the start of their shift or work day. The mask may be donned in the staff's department at the beginning of their shift. Conversely the mask may be stored in their department (per each department's protocol) before leaving the facility.

**All Nursing home residents and residential clients will be provided face covers to be worn when in public spaces inside and outside of the NCHC system to abide by the CDC recommendation requesting all people wear face coverings in public settings to assist in slowing the spread of COVID-19.**

- Face coverings do not replace or negate the need for social distancing.
- Surgical face masks and respirators should not be used to meet the CDC face covering recommendation as medical PPE should remain prioritized for health care personnel.
- Face coverings may be removed for residents while eating meals and similar activities, but social distancing should be maintained during these activities.
- Residents or clients in environments with verified or suspected COVID-19 will be provided surgical face masks when outside of their rooms as outlined elsewhere in this document.
- To prevent potential unsafe situations, face covers (homemade or community obtained facemasks) are not to be worn by patients in high risk Behavioral Health settings, including the Inpatient Hospital and the Crisis CBRF/MMT unit, **or by clients in any setting when staff believe that the use of a face cover will lead to prominent client distress or safety concerns (e.g. an agitated dementia resident).**\*

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