

Facial Covering Policy

Required Standard

Policy

In an effort to ensure health care choices for residents and visitors, in accordance with state statute FS 408.823, Our assisted Living community implements a facial covering policy (mask policy). While recognizing that Florida law provides for exceptions to the business prohibitions on face coverings, this policy takes into account the exception provided for in law for health care related facilities. It is the policy of our assisted living community to allow residents, families, and guests to have the freedom to make their own choices to live a free and unrestricted life here at Palm Cottages Assisted Living Facility. In doing so, we will continue to provide a policy that provides for choice and independence in accordance with Florida law.

Procedure

Facial coverings shall be required only when a resident is in a common area and exhibiting signs or symptoms and/or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission. A health care practitioner and/or health care providers may choose to require a resident to wear a facial covering under the above circumstance. A common area is an area within a health care facility where residents are not treated, diagnosed, or examined. Residents must be permitted to opt-out of wearing facial coverings.

- i. Our community may require Visitors to wear a facial covering when the visitor is:
 - (1) exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission,
 - (2) in a sterile area or an area where sterile procedures are being performed,
 - (3) in an in-resident or clinical room with a resident who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or
 - (4) visiting a resident who has been determined to have a compromised immune system increasing their risk of infection or whose practitioner has determined a mask is necessary for the resident's safety. Visitors must be permitted to opt out of wearing a facial covering.
- ii. Our community may require Staff to wear to wear a facial covering when the staff is:



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- (1) exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission,
 - (2) in a sterile area or an area where sterile procedures are being performed,
 - (3) providing care in a resident or clinical room with a resident who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or
 - (4) visiting a resident who has been determined to have a compromised immune system increasing their risk of infection or whose practitioner has determined a mask is necessary for the resident's safety. Visitors must be permitted to opt out of wearing a facial covering.
- iii. Our community encourages assisted living residents, visitors and staff to follow the policies for facial coverings. However, state regulations allow Residents, Visitors and Staff to opt-out of wearing facial coverings. Residents are permitted to opt-out of wearing a facial covering as per the Department of Health Regulation F.S. 381.026.
 - iv. The Patient Bill of Rights are applicable, which includes consideration for:
 - (1) the resident's right to make decision in an informed manner,
 - (2) the resident's right to have their individual dignity respected, and their responsibility to respect the reasonable and responsible expectations of the provider or facility.
 - (3) The resident's right to file a complaint with the appropriate agencies.
 - v. Our community posts a complaints poster in the common area and is included in the admission package.
 - vi. Our community offers alternatives to facial coverings, which may include social distancing, outdoor visitation, transparent physical barriers, or other alternative types of facial covering.
 1. Opt Out Provisions for Facial Coverings or masks:
 - a. Residents at our community can opt-out of wearing a facial covering.



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- b. Visitors in our community can opt-out of wearing a facial covering if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available.
 - c. An employee of our community shall be allowed to opt-out of facial covering requirements unless the employee is involved in the situations listed above in section ii.
- vii. Common definitions used in this policy:
- 1. Employee- refers to any person under employment or contract of a health care setting, including health care practitioners, administrative staff, maintenance staff, aides, contractors, students, and volunteers.
 - 2. Health Care setting- refers to any place where health care practitioners and/or health care providers practice their profession or provide services
 - 3. Resident- refers to a person receiving services from a health care practitioner or health care provider
 - 4. Sterile areas- refers to locations where surgery is conducted or where procedures that require aseptic techniques are performed.
 - 5. Visitor- refers to a person in a health care setting who is not an employee or resident of the health care setting.
 - 6. Provider- means any activity, service, agency, or facility regulated by the agency and listed in 408.802FS