



Woodstock and District Developmental Services

Memo: **RE: COVID-19 UPDATES**

Date: **April 5, 2024**

The Health and Safety Committee would like to share some exciting news!

Universal masking will be discontinued effective April 5, 2024. However, if there was to be a significant increase in COVID-19, flu or respiratory illnesses masking may be reinstated.

The following changes will take place **effective immediately**:

1. Masking:

- Masking is no longer required on a daily basis outdoors or indoors unless staff is providing personal care (i.e. showering/ bathing, using the washroom, etc.).
- Staff who have cold or flu-like symptoms are required to wear a medical mask upon their return to work until their symptoms have been improving.
- **Masking will be required if someone we support develops cold or flu-like symptoms that are not normal for them, i.e. allergies, chronic cough etc. Staff are required to wear the medical mask until the person supported is no longer experiencing symptoms.**

2. N95 Masking:

- If a person supported contracts COVID-19, staff will be required to wear an N95 mask for 14 days from the person supported COVID-19 symptom on-set or positive test.
- A staff who is returning to work after contracting COVID-19 will be required to wear an N95 mask for 14 days from COVID-19 symptom on-set or positive test.

3. Rapid Antigen Testing:

Staff:

- If a staff develops two or more symptoms that are not typical for them they are to complete a RAT immediately. If the RAT is negative they can come into work and wear a medical mask until symptoms are improving. If the RAT is positive they will follow the processes already in place and notify the On Call Scheduler and Supervisor for direction. Positive and negative rapid antigen testing results are to be recorded on the COVID-19 APP.

- Staff with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms may return to work once they no longer have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (respiratory) or 48 hours (gastrointestinal).
- Unvaccinated staff will no longer be required to complete weekly rapid antigen testing every Tuesday and Friday. They will only be required to complete a RAT if they develop symptoms.

People Supported:

- If a person supported develops two or more symptoms that are not typical for them. They should isolate immediately and staff should notify the On Call Supervisor. The On Call Supervisor will come over and complete a rapid antigen test. If the RAT is negative they will not need to isolate but should avoid close contact with others until symptoms are improving. If the RAT is positive, the person will continue to isolate until symptoms are improving for 24hrs for respiratory and 48hrs for gastrointestinal. Once this occurs the person supported no longer has to isolate. The other people in the home will only be tested if they develop symptoms and are not required to isolate unless they develop symptoms.

4. Screening:

Staff:

- All staff must continue to self-monitor for symptoms and report to the On Call Supervisor and Scheduler immediately if they develop symptoms and test positive for COVID-19.

People Supported:

- If symptoms develop or someone in the home tests positive on a rapid antigen test, daily screening and temperature checks are required to be completed until symptoms have fully improved. If symptoms are worsening staff are to report this to their supervisor/ on call supervisor and may need to seek medical attention.

Visitors:

- If a visitor is symptomatic they are not able to visit and should reschedule their visit when their symptoms have improved.

5. Physical Distancing:

- No longer required at any WDDS site or in vehicles but people are encouraged to respect other's personal space whenever possible.

6. PPE Kits and checklists:

- For locations who provide personal care, the PPE kits should be stored in each bathroom where staff would be providing personal care. If required for other bathrooms, a smaller plastic storage bin should be purchased to ensure staff have access to PPE for personal support needs.
- Locations that do not provide personal care, the PPE kit should be stored in the front hall. If a location does not have a front hall closet another location will be determined in consultation with the Supervisor.
- The monitoring of PPE supplies is completed on the Case Manager and Supervisor month end duties.
- If any staff are utilizing the PPE and notice that supplies are getting low, they should notify the Case Manager so more supplies can be picked up.

7. Enhanced Cleaning Checklist:

- The enhanced cleaning checklist will need to be implemented at times when someone we support develops cold or flu-like symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, Influenza, H1N1 etc.
- Sanitizing of high contact surfaces (i.e. door handles, light switches, kitchen areas etc.) should still be completed at least once per shift or more if required ie. after each person uses the washroom/ has a bath or shower etc.

8. Meeting Rooms:

- Physical distancing is no longer required.
- Spaces no longer need to be sanitized prior to sitting down, however, please ensure the area is clean before leaving.
- There will be sanitizing wipes available in all meeting rooms when required.

9. Agency Vans:

- No masking is required, but windows should be cracked open to provide adequate air flow.

10. Staff's Personal Vehicles:

- Staff are encouraged to use Agency vehicles, busing or walking whenever possible.
- Use of personal vehicles are a last resort and staff need to have prior approval prior to each use by the location Supervisor.
- No masking is required, but windows should be cracked open to provide adequate air flow.

Everyone is still required to follow respiratory etiquette and complete regular handwashing and sanitizing when handwashing is not possible in order to prevent the spread of germs.

Although masks are no longer mandatory at all times, if people feel more comfortable continuing to wear masks they should continue to do so.

Sincerely,

Your Health and Safety Committee

WDDS

Woodstock and District Developmental Services

*'A community where **everybody** belongs'*