



GOVERNMENT OF GUAM  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**DIPATTAMTON SALUT PUPBLEKO YAN SETBISION SUSIAT**



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**August 08, 2022**

**DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2022-12 (Amendment 1)**

**RE: Implementing Mask-Wearing Requirements and Physical Distancing in Healthcare Settings Relative to Executive Order 2022-21**

This guidance document (the “Memorandum”) amends the Department of Public Health and Social Services (“DPHSS”) Guidance Memorandum 2022-12 pertinent to the operations of healthcare settings, as defined below. All other provisions of DPHSS Guidance Memorandum 2022-12 remain in effect.

DPHSS issues this guidance pursuant to Executive Order No. 2022-21 and the *Islan Guåhan* Emergency Health Powers Act, in particular, 10 GCA § 19601, which provides that DPHSS shall use every available means to prevent the transmission of infectious disease and to ensure that all cases of contagious disease are subject to proper control and treatment.

All healthcare settings shall implement a policy for proper wearing of face masks and, where it will not interfere with the provision of care, physical distancing. This document is not intended for non-healthcare settings (e.g., restaurants) and not for persons outside of the healthcare settings.

Businesses or other entities may implement stricter policies, including but not limited to, vaccination requirements and limited occupancy, subject to local and federal law. This information is not intended to serve as legal advice and should not be construed as legal advice.

This Memorandum is applicable to healthcare settings and is effective 12:00 am, August 09, 2022.

**A. Definitions**

For purposes of this Memorandum, the following terms have the meanings given below:

1. “Face Mask” shall mean a material that covers the nose and mouth and can be secured to the head with ties or straps or wrapped around the lower face. Face masks with exhalation vent(s), valve(s), or any device that allows unfiltered release of exhaled breath are prohibited.
2. “Face Shield” shall mean a personal protective equipment designed and worn to protect the wearer’s entire face from hazards or potentially infectious materials.
3. “Healthcare Personnel” or “HCP” refers to all paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or

infectious materials, including body substances (e.g., blood, tissue, and specific body fluids); contaminated medical supplies, devices, and equipment; contaminated environmental surfaces; or contaminated air. HCP include, but are not limited to, emergency medical service personnel, nurses, nursing assistants, home healthcare personnel, physicians, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, dental healthcare personnel, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted in the healthcare setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, and volunteer personnel).

4. “Healthcare settings” refers to places where healthcare is delivered and includes, but is not limited to, acute care facilities, long-term acute-care facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, home healthcare, vehicles where healthcare is delivered (e.g., mobile clinics), and outpatient facilities, such as dialysis centers, physician offices, dental offices, and others.

## **B. Universal and Correct Use of Face Masks**

1. Face masks shall be well-fitting that cover both the nose and mouth at the same time with proper filtration by all HCPs, patients, and visitors to prevent COVID-19 transmission through respiratory droplets.
  - a. Face masks shall be worn at all times, by all individuals in the healthcare settings, with certain exceptions for specific individuals, settings or activities, such as while eating or drinking.
  - b. Face masks shall be required in all areas of the healthcare settings, including waiting areas, hallways, elevators, restrooms, lobby, etc.
2. Mask policies for all HCPs, patients, and visitors must be in place and signage at all entrances and common areas must be posted to set the expectation that individuals will use face masks throughout the healthcare setting.
3. Face shields may be used in addition to, but never in lieu of, a face mask. If individuals choose to wear a face shield, ensure they fit properly and can be cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer’s directions.
4. HCPs shall provide a face mask to any individual who does not have one or who arrives to the healthcare setting without one.
5. Healthcare settings will adopt U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) guidelines for face coverings for certain populations and situations, including those with certain medical conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma (e.g., “Who Should Not Wear a Cloth Face Covering” and

“Feasibility and Adaptations”). The wearing of face shields may be one alternative for these individuals, as provided in applicable CDC guidelines.

- a. Most individuals, including those with disabilities, can tolerate and safely wear a face mask. However, a narrow subset of individuals with disabilities might not be able to wear a mask or cannot safely wear a face mask.
- b. Those who cannot safely wear a face mask for example, a person with a disability who, for reasons related to the disability, would be physically unable to remove a mask without assistance if breathing becomes obstructed—should not be required to wear one.
- c. For the remaining portion of the subset, healthcare settings should make individualized determinations as required by Federal disability laws in order to determine if an exception to the face mask requirement is necessary and appropriate for a particular individual.
- d. If an individual with a disability cannot wear a face mask, maintain physical distance, or adhere to other public health requirements.

### **C. Physical Distancing**

1. Regardless of vaccination status, all individuals in a healthcare setting must practice physical distancing of at least 6 feet provided it does not interfere with the provision of care.
2. Healthcare settings must arrange seating so that patients and visitors can maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance. This might require scheduling appointments to limit the number of patients in waiting rooms, treatment areas, or participating in group activities.
3. It is recommended to orient seats or desks in the same directions.
4. If the healthcare setting is unable to meet physical distancing requirements mentioned above, physical barriers may be used, provided that it does not interfere with the provision of care. The height of the barrier must be no less than the tallest individual (standing) occupying the adjacent seat or desk.
5. Maximize distance in the following settings:
  - a. Between HCPs, patients, and visitors, within the healthcare setting.
  - b. When face masks cannot be worn, such as eating or drinking.
  - c. In common areas such as waiting areas, lobby, dining halls, and elevators.
6. Eliminate or decrease nonessential interactions among HCPs, patients, and visitors during meetings, lunches, and other situations that could lead to transmission of COVID-19.

For further questions, please contact the Division of Environmental Health at (671) 300-9579 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, or email, [dphss-deh@dphss.guam.gov](mailto:dphss-deh@dphss.guam.gov).

  
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