

# COVID-19 UPDATE

## Keeping You Safe



To: All Staff, Professional Staff, Learners and Volunteers

From: Dr. Peter Voros, EVP In-Patient Care Programs

Date: July 13, 2021

RE: **Physical Distancing and Mask Wearing Guidelines – Revised for Response Level GREEN**

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Physical distancing remains a key component to preventing the spread of COVID-19. With the Provincial reopening plans and the Hospital's move to level Green, Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Capital Planning have updated the Physical Distancing Guidelines for our Hospital.

Please carefully review and adhere to the following for the safety of all.

### PPE: **NOTE CHANGES**

Please see the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance document which has been updated and issued separately.

### Public Transactional Desks and Queuing Lines: **NO CHANGES**

- Routine public check-in areas will be equipped with a physical barrier.
- Back-office areas that have limited public access will not be equipped with a physical barrier.
- Nursing stations will not be equipped with a physical barrier.
- All staff and patrons should be wearing a mask, even if they are behind a physical barrier.
- Public areas will be equipped with floor decals for distancing while queuing.

### Waiting Rooms: **NOTE CHANGES**

- Capacity of waiting rooms should be primarily managed by scheduling to limit wait times.
- Seating in waiting rooms should be occupied to **enable people to sit 2 meters apart if possible**.
- If capacity becomes constrained, other options must be considered – such as waiting in cars, a callback process, etc. – **and when not practical or possible, distancing can be reduced as long as everyone is wearing a mask**.
- All occupants of a waiting room must wear masks, as per Hospital policy.

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### Administrative Work Areas: **NOTE CHANGES**

- An employee in a private office or space does not need to wear a mask.
- **An employee in a shared administrative work area who is fully vaccinated, with documentation provided to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), does not need to wear a mask when they are within their workspace. The employee must don a mask when they move about the shared space. Some examples of administrative areas are Health Records, Finance, Information Technology, and Decision Support.**
- **Please note that employees wishing to remove their mask when they are within their workspace in an area not open to the public must provide proof to OHS that they are fully vaccinated and they must be willing to consent to have OHS notify their manager of their status. Managers will then be allowed to grant this option to the employee. Without this consent and proof, employees must continue to don their mask at their workstation.**

### Service and Clinical Work Areas: **NO CHANGES**

- Employees will maintain a 2-meter physical distancing as able; and will wear masks.
- Masks will be of the type suitable for the work involved as per Hospital PPE policy.

### Patient Care Areas: **NO CHANGES**

- Staff will wear appropriate PPE.
- Patients and Care Partners/Essential Care Partners will wear masks as per policy – unless alone in room or alone in an area contained by a barrier (i.e. curtain or divider).

### Staff Lounges & Lunchrooms: **NO CHANGES**

- Furniture and layouts of the spaces must be used and remain as set-up.
- Physical distancing should be maintained at 2 meters, unless physical barriers are in place.
- Masks do not need to be worn in lunch and breakrooms while eating and if the above criteria are met.
- Employee breaks and lunchtimes should be staggered as able.
- Cafeteria should be used if department capacity is of concern.
- Additional meeting room space has also been set-up to accommodate overflow
- Individuals with assigned workspace, not in clinical areas, can eat at their workspace.
- Communal food is not allowed; if food is provided it is to be in individual servings.

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### Meeting Rooms: *NO CHANGES*

- **In person meetings are to be minimized at this time. In person meetings that are necessary may continue but must follow room capacity limits and masking requirements.**

### Meetings, Walkabouts, Leadership: *NOTE CHANGES*

- **Technology should be leverage to complete all meetings or interactions virtually (i.e. phone, Webex etc.), when appropriate.**
- **Walkabouts may continue, with a needs and risk assessment completed prior to participating.**
- **Aside from front-line leaders, additional leadership presence in departments may continue when essential. However, a risk assessment is to be completed prior to executing.**

### Training & Education: *NOTE CHANGES*

- Physical distancing should be maintained at 2 meters, unless masks will be worn during the training due to the nature of the session, or if there is a need for additional capacity.
- **Room capacity should not exceed 50% even if occupants are wearing masks.**

### Elevators: *NO CHANGES*

- Regular elevator occupancy will be a two-person limit and occupants will wear masks. Exceptions are possible if proper PPE is worn (signage is posted).
- Trauma elevator will be used based on clinical needs and capacity – with occupants wearing appropriate PPE.

### Change Rooms and Bathrooms: *NO CHANGES*

- Occupants of multi-use bathrooms **will wear masks** and will maintain physical distancing and limit occupancy to two persons per bathroom (signage is posted).
- For change rooms, staff will **wear masks and limit occupancy** to maintain physical distancing (signage will be posted if not already in place).

### Hallways, Stairwells and Public Spaces: *NO CHANGES*

- Will remain 'two-way' as per status quo.
- **Masks will be worn at all times.**

Clinical managers should ensure scheduling processes are leveraged to ensure physical distancing can be optimized.

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Other physical distancing solutions such as virtual visitation, call-back, or alternates will also be considered on an ongoing basis.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of all. For questions or concerns, please contact John Ross ([rossj@tbh.net](mailto:rossj@tbh.net)) or Anne-Marie Heron ([herona@tbh.net](mailto:herona@tbh.net)).

All Hospital COVID-19 updates and resources are also available on the iNtranet at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>.