



## ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY FACIAL COVERING POLICY

Effective Date: July 28, 2023

### 1. Purpose:

This policy is in accordance with Chapter 2023-043, Laws of Florida, which mandates the Agency for Health Care Administration to adopt emergency rules to implement section 408.824, Florida Statutes. The policy establishes facial covering requirements for health care practitioners, health care providers, and assisted living facilities (ALFs) to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents, visitors, and employees during infectious disease outbreaks.

### 2. Facial Covering Requirements:

#### **2.1. Residents:**

2.1.1. No resident will be required to wear a facial covering, except when mandated by their health care practitioner/health care provider. The requirement applies only when the resident is in a common area and exhibiting signs or symptoms of an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.

#### **2.2. Visitors:**

2.2.1. No visitor may be required to wear a facial covering, unless it is mandated by a healthcare provider, in the following circumstances:

a. The visitor exhibits signs or symptoms of, or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.

b. The visitor is in a sterile area of the health care setting or an area where sterile procedures are being performed.

c. The visitor is in an in-patient or clinical room with a patient who exhibits signs or symptoms of, or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission.

d. The visitor is visiting a resident whose healthcare provider has diagnosed the resident with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system. This condition is known to increase the risk of transmission of an infection from employees without signs and symptoms of infection to a resident. The resident's healthcare practitioner has determined that the use of facial covering is necessary for the resident's safety.

### 3. Opt-Out Requirements:

#### **3.1. Residents:**

3.1.1. Residents have the right to opt out of wearing facial coverings, even if required by their healthcare provider, provided there is no risk to their health and safety or the safety of others in the facility.

3.1.2. To opt out, residents must submit a written request to the facility management, acknowledging the potential risks and consequences associated with not wearing a facial covering.

3.1.3. The facility will respect the resident's decision and take necessary measures to accommodate their choice.

#### **3.2. Visitors:**

3.2.1. Visitors have the option to opt out of wearing facial coverings if an alternative method of infection control or infectious disease prevention is available and approved by the facility management.

3.2.2. Visitors who wish to opt out must inform the facility staff upon entry and adhere to any additional safety measures in place.

#### **3.3. Employees:**

3.3.1. Employees may opt out of wearing facial coverings in the following situations:

- a. When conducting sterile procedures.
- b. When working in designated sterile areas.
- c. When working with a resident whose healthcare provider has diagnosed the resident with or confirmed a condition affecting the immune system, necessitating a facial covering for the resident's safety, as determined by the resident's healthcare practitioner.
- d. When working with a resident on droplet or airborne isolation.
- e. When engaged in non-clinical potentially hazardous activities that require facial coverings to prevent physical injury or harm in accordance with industry standards.

### 4. Implementation and Compliance:

4.1. This policy is effective immediately and must be communicated to all residents, visitors, and employees.

4.2. Facility management will ensure that appropriate signage is posted throughout the facility to inform individuals of the facial covering requirements and opt-out provisions.

This policy is designed to protect the health and safety of all individuals within our assisted living facility during infectious disease outbreaks. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact (850) 990-2150.