



TO: Catholic Health Associates

FROM: Kevin Shiley, MD
Medical Director, Infection Prevention & Control

RE: Masking Update for Catholic Health Hospitals

DATE: April 20, 2023

New York State Department of Health regulations require healthcare facilities to adhere to CDC threshold guidelines regarding masking requirements for COVID-19 in hospital settings. I am pleased to report that Erie County recently dropped below the threshold requiring the use of masks for associates, patients and visitors in our hospitals. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 transmission rates in Niagara County and provide masking updates as soon as they are available.

Effective immediately, masking is not required at our hospitals in Erie County only (Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Sisters of Charity Hospital – Main Street & St. Joseph Campuses, and Kenmore Mercy Hospital). Mount Saint Mary’s will still require masking until the CDC’s “Community Transmission” metric drops below the required threshold in Niagara County. Catholic Health long term care facilities will continue to require masking per their policies and regulatory requirements.

Respiratory protection remains a critical part of universal precautions. Healthcare workers should use appropriate PPE when interacting with anyone who exhibits signs or symptoms of a potentially contagious respiratory condition, including COVID-19.

Masking is still needed for anyone entering our facilities who has ended isolation for COVID-19 up to 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

Lastly, healthcare workers may continue to mask at their own discretion when working in any Catholic Health facility.

Thank you for everything you do at Catholic Health to protect the health and safety of our patients and one another.