

## Holland Bloorview's masking policy – Updated August 10, 2023

Effective June 30, 2023, clients and families, staff, students, volunteers, vendors and visitors are **no longer required to wear a mask in non-clinical areas of the hospital or where brief interactions may take place**. These changes are in alignment with other hospitals and the Toronto Region COVID-19 Hospital Operations Table. You can access the full list of spaces where masking is optional below.

**Clients and families** are still required to wear masks during all appointments and/or in all spaces where they are receiving direct care or in prolonged contact with a staff member for any reason. This includes waiting areas where other clients and families are present and/or hallways where client care is provided. Prolonged contact is defined as an interaction lasting 15-minutes or longer.

**Vendors and visitors** must wear a mask when providing services of any kind in spaces where direct or prolonged contact with clients or families is required.

**Staff, students and volunteers** will continue to wear masks in clinical spaces, during appointments and in any instance where direct and/or prolonged contact with clients and families is required.

We continue to be a mask-friendly organization and masks can be worn in areas where it is optional. Please continue to respect the choices of others and be respectful of each other's personal space.

[An FAQ is available](#) for those with additional questions about masking, mask hygiene and safety.

**Please see below for a list of spaces where masking is optional:**

- When entering and moving around public areas of the hospital including:
  - Coriat Atrium
  - Tim Hortons
  - Cafeteria
  - Pool waiting areas
  - Elevators and stairwells
  - Hallways where client care does not occur
  - Washrooms
  - Family Resource Centre
- Bloorview School Authority Integrated Education Therapy (IET) classrooms
- Holland Bloorview nursery schools
- Offsite and onsite community programs involving outpatients only (examples include wheelchair basketball, community aquatics, robotics and Fit and Flex).
  - If the program is onsite and has inpatients/day patients participating (e.g. pet therapy), then masking is required.
- While in the pool with inpatients, community groups and other Holland Bloorview staff
  - When we consider the reduced effectiveness of the masks when wet, and the nature of the work (in the water), this is an exception to our usual practice of masking in clinical interactions. **Staff must remain masked while on the pool deck.** We will continue to monitor this risk and reassess as needed.
- Bloorview Research Institute programs which do not involve the participation or presence of inpatient clients
- All outdoor activities
- During brief media interviews and/or photo opportunities with clients and families

While additional restrictions may be required again in the future, these changes support the return to more normal operations while keeping our core safety

measures in place. Masks remain an important tool to mitigate transmission spread and we thank you in advance for your continued efforts to keep our community safe.