

## Universal Masking at University of Florida College of Dentistry

UFCD is adopting a “universal masking” protocol. Effective Monday, April 6, at 7:00 AM, all employees and patients will be required to wear a procedure mask within all UFCD care facilities. Patients will receive masks in the screening/emergency care areas. Clinical faculty, residents, students and clinical staff already have masking protocols in place. This new protocol expands mask use among all other employees in any area within our buildings where clinical care is delivered. Note that those individuals treating patients should leave their PPE, including masks, in the clinic and wear a procedure mask if walking around non-clinical areas of the building.

Since March 1, when the first COVID-19 case was reported in Florida, there has been a steady increase of positive cases and COVID-19 related illness. Parts of Florida where some of our programs are located have experienced a rapid rise of positive cases in recent weeks. Universal masking is a preventive strategy to protect our entire health care team, and also slow the spread of COVID-19. In addition, wearing of masks decreases the chance of transmission of the virus from an asymptomatic carrier to others. CDC’s Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for patients with COVID-19 continue to be followed rigorously in all of our clinical settings.

### **Effective Monday, April 6, 2020 at 7:00 AM**

1. **All** faculty, residents, staff, and patients
  - a. Must wear a mask while in or passing through any common or shared areas, including:
    - Treatment rooms
    - Waiting rooms
    - Halls
    - Entrance
    - In the stairway or elevator
  - b. Masks may be removed for eating, or if you are alone in your private office (though masking should resume if someone enters your office).
  - c. Other individuals such as visitors, delivery persons, etc. should receive a mask at the Shands security check points in the Gainesville facility.
  - d. This does not change masking recommendations for health care workers caring for COVID-19 patients, or suspected COVID-19 patients, or when performing an aerosolizing procedure. (Refer to attached **frequently asked questions** and **flow chart**).

2. One mask will be provided each day for staff who provide direct patient care or screening at the door. If it's not soiled or damaged, use your mask for up to one week. Please refer to attached tips on how to safely use a mask throughout the day. We advise everyone to keep your clean mask home, so you can have it readily available when walking into UFCO the next day.

Gainesville Location: Each N95 mask should be disinfected after 24 hours of usage time (following two 12-hour shifts or three 8-hour shifts). Masks will be identified by the unit with the mask wearer's name and the location identifier (DENTAL or DENTAL-PEDS). The masks will be collected by UFHealth sterilization dental personnel (SDP) from a soiled holding container, at 3:00 PM daily. The masks will be marked with an x by the SDP for each cycle. A maximum of 4 cycles is allowed per mask (assuming the integrity has been maintained) If a mask has been processed four times, or the integrity has been breached the mask will be discarded.

3. Masks will be available at screening tables for patients that may arrive without them and within departments for staff, residents and faculty. Additionally, department chairs or their designee may contact clinic administration at [ClinicAdmin@dental.ufl.edu](mailto:ClinicAdmin@dental.ufl.edu) or call 273-6820 to request a small supply of masks for their units (office personnel).