Applicability
This guidance is in accordance with the Alberta Health Services (AHS) Use of Masks During COVID-19 Directive, PPE FAQ and current CMOH Orders and is applicable to home care home living, home care clinics and all congregate living settings (long term care, designated supportive living, hospice, seniors lodges, group homes, and other supportive living facilities licensed under the Supportive Living Licensing and Accommodation Act).

Healthcare Worker (HCW), any setting
Routine Practices
- Follow Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols including hand hygiene and the use of additional personal protective equipment (PPE) when delivering resident care according to the AHS PCRA and Respiratory Illness (ILI) Algorithm. For contact with a resident who is requiring contact and droplet precautions, this includes a surgical/procedure mask, eye protection, gown and gloves.
- **Don PPE correctly. Doff PPE correctly.** Risk of infection and cross contamination increases when these steps are not done correctly. Practice and have a co-worker observe to provide feedback.
- An N95 respirator should be worn for a resident on contact and droplet precautions who requires an Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures (AGMP).

Masking Requirements and other COVID-19 specific safety measures
- HCW’s shall wear a surgical/procedure mask (mask) at all times and in all areas of their workplace in accordance with the AHS Use of Masks During COVID-19 Directive.
- The mask should be immediately changed and safely disposed of whenever it is soiled, damaged or wet, whenever the HCW feels it may have become contaminated and after care for any resident on additional precautions (e.g. contact and droplet precautions for suspected or confirmed influenza-like illness or COVID-19).
- Hand hygiene must be performed immediately before and after donning or doffing PPE/mask/eye protection.
- When taking a break, or eating a meal, the wearer should dispose of the mask and perform hand hygiene. Physical distancing must be maintained when a mask is not worn (i.e. while eating/drinking during break). A new mask should be applied before returning to work.
- After care for any residents with additional precautions (such as contact and droplet precautions for COVID-19 or influenza-like illnesses), remove/doff all PPE upon exiting the resident room, or at the exit of a residence.
- Put on a new mask prior to entering a resident care area or congregate setting.
• For HCW travelling between residences, put on a new mask prior to entering a resident’s home/personal residence.
• When assisting residents with showering or bathing follow IPC guidance on PPE for Assisting Patient to Shower or Bath.
• Refer to Guidance to help make continuous masking work for you.
• When assisting residents with communication challenges consider appropriate Options and Adoptions.

Eye Protection
• Eye protection remains an important component of Contact and Droplet precautions in addition to a medical mask, gloves and gown. Continuous eye protection must be used when providing care or services within two meters of a patient with COVID-19, suspected COVID-19 or who is experiencing symptoms consistent with a respiratory tract infection.
• Eye protection is recommended for all persons, at all times and in all areas of the workplace, in addition to a mask, if the congregate setting has a confirmed COVID-19 outbreak and there is evidence of transmission (see guidance for Congregate Settings).
• For individuals who are fully vaccinated*, continuous eye protection may be discontinued in all other instances (e.g. no outbreak). Those who are fully vaccinated can continue to work following contact with COVID-19 if not wearing eye protection, as long as they remain asymptomatic.
  *Fully vaccinated – Individuals who have received the prescribed number of doses of any vaccine approved by Health Canada and is, at minimum, two weeks after the completion of the recommended vaccine series (e.g., 2nd dose of a 2-vaccine series).
• Additional guidance on use of masks and eye protection can be found in the Bring My Own PPE to Work and PPE FAQ resources.

Residents, any setting
• Residents (inclusive of the term client/patient) in all continuing care settings may choose to wear a mask.
• Residents can request that visitors wear a mask when they are visiting in shared rooms in accordance with the current CMOH Order.
• Residents who are required to be within two (2) metres of a HCW while receiving services/care may be asked to wear a mask if deemed appropriate based on completion of a Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA).
• For residents receiving services in their home (home care home living):
  o Other household members/visitors to the home should be asked to maintain adequate physical distancing of two (2) metres or to be in another room while HCW are present.
  o Household members/visitors who are required/requested to assist with care provision will be asked to wear a mask.
Anyone in the home with symptoms must report this to the HCW prior to the HCW entering the home.

Additional Setting or Staff Specific Directions

Staff who have no direct contact with residents or resident items, including but not limited to administration and office staff

- Refer to the AHS Directive: Use of Mask during COVID-19 for guidance on mask wearing for individuals that have no direct contact with patients or patient items.
- In administrative settings (e.g., Southport Tower, Seventh Street Plaza) staff may choose to wear a non-surgical/procedure mask (e.g., their own clean cloth mask).

Home care staff in a private home/apartment/condominium or non-designated supportive living setting (e.g., lodge, private assistive living etc.)

- When the staff member arrives at a resident’s home or clinic, always do an AHS PCRA.
- If any individuals are experiencing symptoms, initiate contact and droplet precautions. Don appropriate PPE for entry to the residence.
- To dispose of PPE appropriately when completing a home visit:
  - When you’re calling residents to complete the pre-screening, ask them to place a small garbage can with 2 black garbage bags by the front door so you can doff and dispose of your PPE safely. Let the resident know they’ll need to dispose of your PPE including mask and eye protection.
  - Before you doff your PPE, make sure to ask residents and anyone else in the home to remain two (2) metres back.
  - Put mask in black garbage bag in resident’s garbage can.
  - Double bag all garbage, tie/close garbage bag and complete hand hygiene.
  - If any of these steps cannot be done, remove PPE once you’re outside of the resident’s home. Dispose of the PPE/masks by double bagging black garbage bags (available in PPE kits or from supply carts at home care office). Further information is available in the Provincial Guide: Community Based Services Waste Disposal.

Congregate Settings

Congregate settings with a COVID-19 outbreak where there is evidence of continued transmission (defined as at least 2 confirmed COVID-19 cases)

- Consult with the Medical Officer of Health or designate, or IPC for facility specific advice:
  - If you have suspect or confirmed COVID-19 residents in your facility and there is evidence of transmission despite IPC measures already in place;
If you have specific questions about continuous eye protection in relation to outbreak measures already in place; or
If you want to confirm the recommended approach for use of continuous eye protection in your setting.

**Note:** Every scenario is unique and guidance cannot be provided for every possible scenario. For sites/units on outbreak, follow the guidance being provided by IPC/MOH.