



Updated September 24, 2021

**OASAS Guidance on COVID-19 Mask Wearing Requirements
in Certified, Funded or Otherwise Authorized Settings**

NOTE: This guidance supersedes the **Post COVID-19 State of Emergency Guidance to OASAS Certified Non-hospital-based Inpatient and Residential Addiction Treatment Providers** dated July 22, 2021.

That document is rescinded. Please note that the **COVID-19 Infection Control Summary for Non-hospital-based Inpatient and Residential Addiction Treatment Providers** is still in full effect and will be updated to reflect mask wearing requirements outlined in this document. This document offers guidance to accompany the emergency regulation **14 NYCRR Part 808 COVID-19 Mask Wearing Requirements in Certified, Funded or Otherwise Authorized Settings** dated September 16, 2021.

The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) offers the following guidance for **all programs certified, funded, or otherwise authorized by OASAS as a provider of substance use disorder or gambling prevention, treatment, or recovery services** to continue mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in light of the continued state of emergency declared by the federal government.

- Effective immediately, all Programs shall have policies and procedures in place to ensure all staff, visitors, and individuals receiving services **regardless of vaccination status** wear appropriate masks, consistent with any directives and guidance issued by OASAS and consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
 - Staff, visitors, and clients/residents must wear a mask at all times that they are within the facility, except if they are alone in a room or office with the door closed.
 - Clients or residents who are cohorted together in a room should wear a mask when not alone in the room, including when sleeping.
 - All staff (including vendors, contractors, interns, students, etc.) must wear a mask that fits snugly and covers completely the nose and mouth.
 - Staff who have direct physical contact with patients (nurses, medical providers, medical assistants, phlebotomists, etc.) which includes the following activities (this is not an

- exhaustive list): administering medications, performing vital signs, giving injections, performing phlebotomy, performing physical exams, etc. must wear a surgical mask.
- Staff who may be exposed to potentially infectious materials or body substances (via contaminated medical supplies, devices, and equipment; contaminated environmental surfaces; or contaminated air) though not doing direct patient care (e.g., dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, etc.) must wear a surgical mask.
 - Staff who are operating vehicles in which other staff and/or clients/residents are transported must wear a surgical mask.
 - All other staff who do not meet the aforementioned criteria may wear a cloth face covering that fits snugly and must cover completely the nose and mouth in lieu of a surgical mask.
- Clients, residents, and visitors (not including visitors that meet the criteria above as staff) may wear a surgical mask or a cloth face covering that, ideally, fits snugly and must cover completely the nose and mouth.
- Exemptions from mask wearing requirements for staff, individuals receiving services, and visitors
 - Masks are not required to be worn by:
 - Children under two years of age
 - A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, for reasons related to the disability, or
 - A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by an Occupational Health and Safety Administration workplace risk assessment
 - Where a mask cannot be worn due to disability or a risk to workplace health, safety or job duty:
 - a face shield should be used as an alternative whenever practical; **Note:** face shields and/or goggles are still required for all staff doing any direct care with patients or residents requiring physical contact.
 - **Any exemption from mask wearing must be based upon proof of disability or risk which is retained in a distinct record keeping system to assist with monitoring compliance.**
- **In addition to masking, staff in OASAS certified, funded, or otherwise authorized by OASAS programs must continue to follow NYS OASAS, NYS DOH, and CDC COVID-19 guidance and utilize appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as indicated regardless of vaccination status.**
 - Patients, residents, and staff are required to wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, while being transported between OASAS certified locations or transported as part of an OASAS certified service (e.g., from a residence to a day program).
 - All high touch surfaces should continue to be cleaned and disinfected consistent with CDC guidelines.

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<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

- Hospital-based inpatient and residential addiction treatment programs should continue to follow guidance for mask wearing and physical distancing for patients, visitors, and staff issued by the hospital.
- Inpatient and residential facilities with positive cases of COVID-19 should continue to adhere to the protocols contained in the [COVID-19 Infection Control Summary for Non-hospital-based Inpatient and Residential Addiction Treatment Providers](#)
- Questions should be directed to OASAS Regional Offices, PICM@oasas.ny.gov or Legal@oasas.ny.gov.

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