

SUBJECT:VISITATION AND MASKING POLICY	PAGE:1
DEPARTMENT: HOSPITAL WIDE	OF: 5
APPROVED BY: BIG BEND HEALTH ALLIANCE	EFFECTIVE: 1/6/2022
POLICY REPLACES: SAME	REVISED: 11/15/2022
	ORIGINAL DATE:1/6/2022

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to inform visitors of Calhoun Liberty Hospital (CLH) the guidelines with respect to patient visitation to common areas and clinical units (Medical Surgical Unit, Emergency Department (ED), outpatient treatment areas.

POLICY

At Calhoun Liberty Hospital (CLH), it is our desire to create an environment that fosters supportive patient- and family-centered care, positive health outcomes and the safety and security of patients, their families, guests, our colleagues and community while promoting a healing environment for our patients. We recognize having care partners and family support is vital to the healing process and encourage family and guests to visit patients, subject to patient and family preference and in accordance with the guidelines described below.

ATTACHMENTS:

[SB 988 No Patient Left Alone Act](#) (F.S. 408.823)

[CDC- Community Levels](#)

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **“CDC Guidelines”** means applicable guidance for healthcare settings published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- B. **“Family”** is a group of individuals with a continuing legal, genetic and/or emotional relationship with the patient including but not limited to a spouse, domestic partner (including same sex partner), children, parents, siblings, grandparents, other family member or family friend. Patients define their “family” or “essential caregiver” and how they will be involved in care, care planning and decision-making. CLH respects and values family as integral partners in providing excellent care.
- C. **“Guest”** is a visitor of the patient or family.
- D. **“Mask”** is defined as surgical mask, KN95, N95 or H600 when providing direct patient care.

II. GENERAL

- A. The number of people welcomed at the bedside at any one time will be determined in collaboration with the patient, family and interdisciplinary care team.
- B. In situations where there are shared rooms, this decision will include input from both patients and their families. To ensure safety, considerations will also be given to the physical limitation of the space.
- C. The patient has the right to receive Family members and Guests whom they designate and may

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withdraw or deny such consent at any time.

- D. COVID-19 positive patients under isolation status are not allowed visitors. Exceptions will be made for patients who are underage, at end of life or have extenuating circumstances.
- E. Family members and Guests will not be restricted on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.
- F. Family members and Guests who are feeling unwell, have an infection or have symptoms of respiratory illness or flu-like illnesses should not visit patients in the hospital. In this instance, the interdisciplinary team may support family presence through other means using available technology (e.g. telephone, internet).
- G. For the safety of our patients, Family members and Guests are required to perform hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub upon entering and leaving the patient’s room.
- H. Children under the age of 12 years will not be permitted except under special circumstances. All children over age 12 must be accompanied by an adult. The patient being visited may not serve as the responsible adult for child visitors. If the hospital level is “high”, no children will be allowed.
- I. There may be interruptions to Family member and Guest presence to protect the privacy rights of other patients or to maintain safety and security.
- J. Individuals who have concerns regarding the application of this policy and procedure should refer the issue to a member of the unit based charge nurse or designee. If the issue cannot be resolved at the unit level, it may be referred to Risk Management or the Administrator on Call as needed.

PROCEDURE

I. VISITING HOURS

- A. Main Hospital: Family members and Guests are encouraged to visit between the hours of 7 am and 9 pm, according to patient/family preference.

II. HOSPITAL ACCESS

- A. The Emergency Department (ED) entrance is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can be accessed via the Emergency Department parking lot on Charlie Johns Street. Family members and Guests are required to check in at the ED Registration Desk to obtain access to visit a patient.
- B. The Infusion Center entrance is open during business hours, Monday - Friday from 8 am – 4:30 pm and can be accessed via the front parking lot on the west end of the building.
- C. The outpatient registration entrance (for patients seeking outpatient labs or radiology) is open from 7 am - 4 pm daily and can be accessed via the parking lot on the north side of the building behind the dumpsters.

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D. The employee entrance, located on the east end of the building near the helipad is only open to colleagues with an employee badge.

III. VISITATION

A. CLH monitors a number of local indicators and data from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s (CDC) “COVID-19 Community Levels” to determine the prevalence and risk of communicable diseases. Using this data and applying CDC Guidelines for healthcare settings, CLH will assign a Visitation and Masking Response Level, which defines family and guest access and masking requirements in the hospital. The level will be updated periodically as the data are revised.

IV. MASKING

A. Here is a guide to each level and how it will impact the mask and visitor policies.

i. **High”**

- Visitation is limited to one person (either Family member or Guest) at a time.
- A hospital inpatient may have one visitor stay overnight if the visitor is checked in through the screening process.
- A sitter hired by the patient or patient’s family is not deemed a visitor, but part of the care provider team serving the patient.
- A member of clergy or a religious leader may visit a patient in addition to one visitor per day.
- No visitors under age 16, barring extenuating circumstances.

ii. **“Medium”**

- There are no limitations on the number of visitors.
- A hospital inpatient may have one visitor stay overnight if the visitor is checked in through the screening process.
- A sitter hired by the patient or patient’s family is not deemed a visitor, but part of the care provider team serving the patient.
- A member of clergy or a religious leader may visit a patient in addition to one visitor per day.

iii. **“Low”**

- There are no limitations on the number of visitors.
- A hospital inpatient may have one visitor stay overnight if the visitor is checked in through the screening process.
- A sitter hired by the patient or patient’s family is not deemed a visitor, but part of the care provider team serving the patient.
- A member of clergy or a religious leader may visit a patient in addition to one visitor per day.

B. MASKING REQUIREMENTS

i. **HIGH**

Mask Required

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Colleagues, Family members, Guests and Visitors are required to wear masks in all CLH facilities.	
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ii. MEDIUM

MAIN HOSPITAL: Colleagues, Family members, Guests and Visitors must practice masking as outlined below.

Mask Required	
When colleagues and providers are providing direct patient care or transporting patients.	Examples: Patient rooms, nurse's stations, all procedure rooms, when transporting patients, caring for immunocompromised patient.
Public Spaces	Examples: Waiting rooms, atriums, lobbies, hallways, elevators and stairwells.
Upon patient request	
If you have cold-like symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, sore throat	
*At the discretion of leadership, a department may be required to wear a mask for a certain period of time.	
Personal Choice to Wear a Mask	
Meeting Areas	Examples: Colleagues' offices, conference rooms, the Auditorium.
Non-Patient Care Areas	Examples: Any area not frequented by the public or patients.
Seated at a table eating	

OUTPATIENT PRACTICES AND EDUCATIONAL CLASSES: Colleagues, Family members, Guests and Visitors must practice masking as outlined below.

Mask Required	
Caring for an Immunocompromised Patient	Any patient with a weakened immune system which can be caused by certain medicines, treatments, diseases or conditions, such as AIDS, cancer, diabetes, malnutrition and certain genetic disorders.
Infusion Center	
CLH Primary Care Clinic	
Upon patient request	
If you have cold-like symptoms	
Personal Choice to Wear a Mask	
All other areas not listed above.	

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iii. LOW

CLH will continue [Standard Precautions](#) for all patients.

MAIN HOSPITAL: Colleagues, Family members, Guests and Visitors must practice masking as outlined below.

Mask Required	
Upon patient request	
If you have cold-like symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, sore throat	
*At the discretion of leadership, a department may be required to wear a mask for a certain period of time.	
Personal Choice to Wear a Mask	
Public Spaces	Examples: Waiting rooms, atriums, lobbies, hallways, elevators and stairwells.
Meeting Areas	Examples: Colleagues' offices, conference rooms, the Auditorium.
Non-Patient Care Areas	Examples: Any area not frequented by the public or patients.
Seated at a table eating	

OUTPATIENT PRACTICES AND EDUCATIONAL CLASSES: Colleagues, Family members, Guests and Visitors must practice masking as outlined below.

Mask Required	
Caring for an immunocompromised patient	Any patient with a weakened immune system which can be caused by certain medicines, treatments, diseases or conditions.
Upon patient request	
If you have cold-like symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, sore throat	
Personal Choice to Wear a Mask	
All other areas not listed above.	

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Administrators, Department Directors, and Managers are responsible for assuring that this Policy is disseminated to all workforce members and that all workforce members comply with its contents.