

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Protocol for UCOE Healthcare Sites

Coronavirus Background:

COVID-19 belongs to a family of viruses called coronaviruses. This family of viruses is associated with respiratory illness, and can range from very mild, such as a cold, to severe diseases like Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Modes of Transmission:

Early reports suggest person-to-person transmission most commonly happens during close exposure to a person infected with COVID-19, primarily via respiratory droplets produced when the infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets can land in the mouth, nose, or eyes of people who are nearby or possible be inhaled into the lungs of those within close proximity. The contribution of small respiratory particles, sometimes called aerosols or droplet nuclei, to close proximity transmission is currently uncertain. The period at which a person infected with COVID-19 can transfer virus to others starts 48 hours before the onset of their symptoms and ends 10 days after the onset. Currently, airborne transmission from person-to-person over long distances is unlikely. [CDC.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control)

Employee Daily Screening:

Employees are required to complete a [daily screening](#) form twice daily, per the CCFMG Employee Daily Screening Procedure effective 3/30/20.

Patient and Visitor Screening:

Staff will call patients a day before their appointment to screen the patient for COVID-19. Patients & Visitors will be screened upon entering UCOE sites using the **COVID-19 Daily Screening: Patients and Visitors Screening Form**. Anyone who screens positive should not enter UCOE facilities and be referred to follow up with their primary care physician.

Workplace Protocols:

- **Physical Distancing** – All staff must abstain from physical contact and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart when feasible. Rearrangement of workstations may be necessary in order to maintain physical distancing requirements.

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- **Face Covering** - All staff are required to wear a mask at all times except when alone in a private office. Face covers must cover both mouth and nose (cloth and surgical are acceptable) and is not a substitute for—but rather something that is done in addition to—maintaining appropriate physical distance. When interacting with patients, staff will don both a mask and eye protection.
- **Hand Washing/Hygiene** - All staff must practice good hand hygiene by washing their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or longer. Hand sanitizer is available during times when soap and water is not available by applying a significant amount to palm and rubbing thoroughly until dry for 20-30 seconds. Staff should avoid touching their face, mouth, nose, or eyes. When sneezing or coughing, staff should cover their face with their elbow and face away from other staff or patients.
- **Workspace**
 - Your Local Space** - Workstations may need adjustment to allow physical distancing. Mark “Do not use” on stations that should not be shared. Consult with your manager if any workstation requires evaluation.
 - Physical Barriers** - No physical barriers will be in place at this time since distancing and masking will adequately prevent the spread of COVID-19 between staff. Staff can request a physical barrier for areas that conduct direct patient care and transactional areas such as check-in desks.
- **Common Areas and Shared Property** -
 - Kitchens/Breakrooms** - Break rooms may be used only if occupants can comply with physical distancing guidelines. Kitchen areas with high touched surfaces, such as refrigerator handles, microwaves, cabinets and sink fixtures should be disinfected by EPA-approved products several times a day. To avoid many of these high-touch surfaces, we suggest you bring meals that do not require refrigeration or heating. A self-contained cooler bag is recommended. Staff should avoid bringing food to share.
 - Meeting Rooms** - Continued use of RingCentral, Zoom and Skype conference calls is strongly encouraged in lieu of in-person meetings. When virtual meetings is not available and an in-person meeting is scheduled
 - Sit every other chair or, if practical, arrange chairs six feet apart
 - Wipe down tabletops and chair arms before and after your meeting
 - Wipe down audio equipment and speakerphone control panels before and after your meeting

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Patient Care Areas

- **Physical Distancing** - Set up lobbies to allow patients to be at least six feet apart. Place visual alerts, such as signs and posters in appropriate languages, at entrances and in strategic places. Reduce crowding in lobbies by asking patients to remain outside if feasible. The installation of physical barriers (e.g. plexiglass) implemented at check-in & check-out areas.
- **Face Coverings** - Patients & Visitors must wear a face covering before entrance. If a patient arrives to their appointment without a mask, UCOE will provide a surgical mask.

- **Infection Prevention**

Hand Hygiene - Hand sanitizer is available at locations with greater likelihood of contact with people, and at entrances.

Environmental Infection Control—Office Managers will assign staff to disinfect waiting areas several times the day with an EPA-approved disinfectant. High touch payment systems are disinfected between each use.

Direct Patient Care—Staff & Providers must wear a mask (e.g. surgical mask or N95) **AND** eye protection (e.g. goggles or face shield) during every close and prolonged patient encounter. Cloth masks are not appropriate for medical personnel to use in the course of a clinical encounter. Respirators (N95-type masks) are the best for protecting health care workers and should be used in any high-risk aerosolizing procedure. Surgical masks are approximately 40-50% efficient at filtering viral particles and should be used by providers and staff for source control.

References:

<https://www.jhsph.edu/covid-19/articles/the-right-mask-for-the-task.html>

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/04/commentary-masks-all-covid-19-not-based-sound-data>

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6914e2.htm?s_cid=mm6914e2_x

<https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/Home/ShowDocument?id=42424>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/non-us-settings/overview/index.html>