



General Surgical Mask Requirements for all Group Home Locations Protocol

Effective April 12, 2020

NOTE: This Protocol applies to locations that are NOT currently in an Outbreak with COVID -19.

For locations in OUTBREAK, please refer to the *Personal Protective Equipment Protocol for Home in Isolation/Self-Isolation* document

Each staff will be given one surgical mask per shift as per the new directives from York Region Public Health.

No other masks are to be worn at the location – no personal masks. This is critical for safety and to avoid cross-contamination.

Masks need to be worn properly over the mouth and nose for the entire shift in order for it to be effective.

Household set up

- Ensure that a specific number (per shift/per day) of the “**clean**” surgical masks are in a designated area as close as possible to the front door as well as a container of hand sanitizer
- Ensure the “**When and How to Wear a Mask**” poster is posted at the front entrance of the location as well as in the washroom and where staff take breaks
- At the front door will be a lined- bin for “**dirty surgical masks**” (this is NOT a garbage bin, but will be used for dirty surgical masks only)
 - Each home has a different entry – it is important to provide as much distance between the **clean** and **dirty** surgical mask areas while still having it in close proximity to the front door



- Again, the **dirty** surgical mask area will include a lined- bin. This will be used to discard **only dirty surgical masks** (**Note:** these are being collected by public health – do not throw any other garbage in this bin).

Entering the Location: All staff

- All staff will use hand sanitizer and then enter the location after the phone screening is complete with no positive symptoms.
- After entering the location, perform hand hygiene again. Use hand sanitizer (rub on hands and allow to dry) or if a washroom is close to the front door, use soap and water for 15 seconds as per hand hygiene protocol
- Pick up one surgical mask from the “clean surgical mask” area
- Refer to the “***When and How to Wear a Mask***” poster for details
 - Hold mask by loops and secure the elastic loops of the mask around your ears
 - Cover your mouth and nose with the mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
 - Do **not** touch the front of the mask while you wear it.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you accidentally touch your mask.
- Complete the inventory list that you have taken one surgical mask for your shift
- The Inventory list will be closely monitored

At break or mealtime:

- Proceed to the designated area in your location where you can have a meal or take a break ensuring that you are away from others in the location
- You must be at least **2 meters** away from other staff and supported individuals
- You must have a clean surface to place your mask before your meal or break
- Before you take off your mask, use the disinfectant cleaner in the home to clean the table or counter where you will place your mask,
- Then take a piece of paper towel and place it on the clean surface for your mask
- Review the poster “***When and How to Wear a Mask***”
 - Perform hand hygiene (wash your hands for 15 seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitizer by applying to hands, and allow to air dry completely)
 - Do **not** touch the front of your mask to remove it.



- Remove the mask by the elastic loops from around your ears
- Hold only the loops and place the mask on the clean table or counter
- Perform hand hygiene (wash hands 15 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitizer)
- Have your meal or take your break and then replace your mask as above:
 - Perform hand hygiene – it is best to use the washroom and wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use hand sanitizer if you cannot use the washroom
 - Secure the elastic loops of the mask around your ears.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with the mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Continue with your shift

At the end of your shift:

- Go to the front door where the “dirty” surgical mask bin is located
- Review the poster **“When and How to Wear a Mask”**
- Do not touch the front of your mask to remove it.
- Remove the mask by the elastic loops from around your ears
- Hold **only the loops** and place the mask in the **“dirty surgical mask”** bin (do not place mask in the garbage)
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after you have discarded your mask.

Note: Surgical masks are only good for a maximum of one shift and should be discarded into the **“dirty surgical mask bin”** when your shift is completed. Surgical masks may need to be replaced sooner if it becomes wet, contaminated or damaged during the shift.

Important: The surgical mask should **NEVER** be worn or taken outside of the location. This could cause cross-contamination to others you may come in contact with from outside of your work location. Discard the mask before leaving your shift.

Recycle – Surgical Masks

- Once the bag of surgical masks in the **“dirty surgical mask”** lined bin is full, secure and close the bin and label with a sign **“Do Not Use”**
- Store in a **secured and locked** area in the location and not near the “clean” mask area