

VOA has mandated masking in our facilities since March 2020 to protect patients, visitors, and staff from COVID-19. Community infection data shows it is now safe to lift masking mandates since respiratory virus burdens have eased.

The success of COVID-19 vaccinations has helped us reach this point. Staying up to date on your booster shots will help maintain our return to normal life.

What this means for patients and visitors

Masks are optional. While masks are no longer required in the VOA setting, VOA still recommends masks for our immunocompromised and symptomatic patients.

- Masks continue to be a key tool for infection prevention and control. Patients with symptoms of any illness are strongly encouraged to wear a mask while inside our facilities to protect patients, staff, and others.
- **When to Wear a KN95 or N95 Mask**
 - **If you have COVID or respiratory symptoms**
 - If you are caring for someone with COVID-19
 - If you are immunocompromised in a crowded indoor setting when physical distancing is not possible
 - If you are immunocompromised during extended travel, including on a train or bus.
 - If you are immunocompromised
 - When vaccination status of those around you is unknown AND people around you are not masking
- **Patients with a fever will continue to be screened and assessed in the urgent care setting.**
 - The urgent care setting provides swift evaluation and testing for respiratory infection.
 - We will adjust this policy based on changes in the community transmission rate.
- **In an abundance of caution due to our patient population, our staff will wear masks when it is best for patient safety.** This includes settings where patients are prepared for surgery/procedures and recovering from procedures. Staff will continue wearing masks while delivering cancer treatment and cellular therapy.
- **Please respect those around you who choose to wear a mask.** VOA continues to encourage masking for our immunocompromised and ill patients and respects those who wear masks to protect themselves and others.