



Health Care Setting Masking Requirements FAQ *(Updated March 1, 2022)*

Below are answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) [333-019-1011](#), Masking Requirements to Control COVID-19 in Health Care Settings. These FAQ may be updated intermittently.

Q: Is the mask requirement in health care settings going to be lifted on March 11?

No. Masks will still be required in health care settings under OAR 333-019-1011.

Q: Does a health care setting include a part of a health care facility or medical office, or a building operated by a health care provider or health system where there are no patients and no health care being delivered?

If a health care provider or a health system has a stand-alone building where no health care is delivered and no patients are allowed to enter, it would not be considered a health care setting. If there is a part of a health care facility or medical office where no health care is delivered and no patients are allowed and it is physically separated from areas where patients are allowed or health care is delivered, with walls from floor to ceiling and a door that remains closed when not being used, that space would not be considered a health care setting. If individuals are permitted to be in these non-health care setting areas without a mask, face covering or face shield, they must still wear a mask, face covering or face shield within any area that is a health care setting.

Q: Does a health care setting include a place where home health or in-home care is being provided?

If the place where in-home care services or home health services are being provided is in an individual's own home, the individual's home is not a health care setting. Providers of in-home care, home health services, or hospice must wear a mask or face covering when providing services to patients or clients in accordance with OAR 333-019-1011 regardless of where they are providing care.

Q: Does a health care setting include senior centers or independent living facilities?

No. Senior centers that do not provide health care services and serve in a recreational capacity are not considered a health care setting. Independent living facilities are not considered a health care setting. Owners and operators of these settings may continue to apply and enforce mask, face covering and face shield guidance and physical distancing requirements at their discretion. When in-home

care, home health care, or hospice services are being provided in independent living facilities, providers must still wear a mask or face covering in accordance with OAR 333-019-1011.

Q: Does a health care setting include settings like adult foster homes?

Some facilities licensed by the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) are exempt from OHA’s rule requiring masking in health care settings, such as adult foster homes, developmental disability foster homes, residential training homes and residential training facilities, but ODHS has established their own masking requirements for many of these settings.

For face covering requirements in these facilities, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/COVID-19/Pages/LTC-Facilities.aspx>.

Q: Does a health care setting include a pharmacy department in a retail store?

The pharmacy “area” is a health care setting but not the entire retail store. If there is a pharmacy inside a retail store, the following areas related to the pharmacy are considered a health care setting:

- Any area where pharmacy staff are engaged in the pharmacy activities, including but not limited to preparing prescriptions, interacting with patients, and administering vaccines.
- Any area where patients are waiting to interact with pharmacy staff, including but not limited to waiting in a line or in a designated waiting area for the pharmacy.
- Any area where a patient is interacting with pharmacy staff, including but not limited to dropping off or picking up a prescription or consulting with the pharmacist.

For more information from the Oregon Board of Pharmacy about requirements in pharmacies, [click here](#).

Q: Is a “closed door” pharmacy, such as a mail order pharmacy or a pharmacy in an office setting that does not directly serve or interact with the public or patients a health care setting?

If a pharmacy is in a stand-alone building or office setting/suite within a building where the public or patients are not directly served or interacted with, it would not be considered a health care setting.

If a pharmacy is in a part of a health care facility or medical office that is a health care setting where the public or patients are not directly served or interacted within the pharmacy “area” and it is physically separated from areas where patients are allowed or health care is delivered, with walls from floor to ceiling and a door that remains closed when not being used, that space would not be considered a health care setting.

Q: Are behavioral health residential programs considered health care settings?

Yes. Behavioral health residential programs are health care settings similar to hospital or long-term care facilities.

Q: Are offices of licensed professional counselors in private practice considered healthcare settings and subject to the mask guidance for healthcare offices?

Yes. Settings where behavioral health services are offered are considered health care settings.

Q: Are recovery centers or settings where behavioral health services are offered, such as counseling services and therapy considered health care settings?

Yes, settings where behavioral health services are offered are considered health care settings.

Q: Why is OHA lifting mask requirements in schools and in public indoor spaces and not in health care settings?

Universal masking as part of layered mitigation strategies is important in health care settings. Health care workers are at increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to the nature and setting of their work. Individuals with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 often seek care in these settings. In addition, health care settings are spaces that frequently have people with underlying conditions that put them at risk for more severe illness from COVID-19. Masking, along with other mitigation strategies protects all patients, providers and staff and support protection of the general community.

Q: Does OHA provide a sign with mask requirements for healthcare settings to post?

Yes. OHA provides signs at [this link](#).

Q: What is considered a health care setting?

Under OHA's rule for masking requirements in health care settings(OAR 333-019-1011), a health care setting means any place where health care, including physical, dental, or behavioral health care is delivered and includes, but is not limited to any health care facility or agency licensed under ORS chapter 441 or 443, such as hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, birthing centers, special inpatient care facilities, long-term acute care facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, inpatient hospice facilities, nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and residential facilities, behavioral health residential facilities, home health care, hospice, pharmacies, in-home care, vehicles or temporary sites where health care is delivered or is related to the provision of health care (for example, mobile clinics, ambulances, non-emergency medical transport vehicles (NEMT), secure transportation, and street based medicine),outpatient facilities, such as dialysis centers, health care provider offices, dental offices, behavioral health care offices, urgent care centers, counseling offices, school-based health centers, offices that provide complementary and alternative

medicine such as acupuncture, homeopathy, naturopathy, chiropractic and osteopathic medicine, and other specialty centers.

Q: If I work in a long-term assisted living facility, do I have to wear a mask when at work?

Some facilities licensed by the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) are exempt from OHA's rule requiring masking in health care settings, such as adult foster homes, developmental disability foster homes, residential training homes and residential training facilities, but ODHS has established their own masking requirements for many of these settings.

For ODHS COVID-19 information for long-term care facilities, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/COVID-19/Pages/LTC-Facilities.aspx>.

Q: Who are considered health care personnel?

Under OHA's rule for masking requirements in health care settings(OAR 333-019-1011), health care personnel are individuals, paid and unpaid working, learning, studying, assisting, observing, or volunteering in a health care setting providing direct patient or resident care or who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients, residents, or infectious materials, and includes but is not limited to any individual licensed by a health regulatory board as that is defined in ORS 676.160, unlicensed caregivers, and any clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, student and volunteer personnel.

Q: Does the health care provider masking rule apply in veterinary clinics?

No. The rule applies in healthcare settings. A veterinary clinic is not a healthcare setting and therefore the rule does not apply to veterinarians who provide care to animals in a veterinary care setting.

Q: If I am fully vaccinated and boosted, am I still required to wear a face covering in a health care setting?

Yes.

Q: If I am a school nurse, will I still be required to wear a mask after the school mask requirement is lifted on March 31?

Yes. School-based health centers are health care settings and therefore masks are required for health care personnel, patients and visitors in these settings.

Document accessibility: For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact the COVID-19 Communications Unit at 1-971-673-2411, 711 TTY or COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhs.oha.state.or.us.