

Northwest Community EMS System/ NCH Paramedic Program  
800 W. Central | EMS offices in Kirchoff Behavioral Health Center  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
Phone: 847-618-4482 | Fax: 847-618-4489



Date: April 11, 2024

**System Memo: #430**

To: All System members and NCH EMS students

From: Connie J. Mattera, MS, RN, PM  
EMS Administrative Director | Paramedic Program Director

RE: **Updated masking guidelines**

The numbers of those ill with colds, influenza, RSV, and Covid-19 are decreasing. There are concerns for increasing cases of measles and tuberculosis.

Based on that, we are amending our guidelines related to masking effective immediately:

### EMS Guidelines

- Masks are optional for patients, persons who accompany them in an ambulance, and EMS personnel with the following exceptions:
  - Wear a medical grade mask when caring for immunocompromised persons and use good judgement for masking around other vulnerable patients.
  - Medical grade masks must be worn by patients presenting with S&S of a cold, flu, Covid-19, RSV, or tuberculosis. EMS personnel shall wear a well-fitting medical grade mask (or N95 prn) when caring for persons with respiratory symptoms.
  - Patient presenting with fever and rash need to be masked and promptly isolated upon hospital arrival in conformity to [Measles](#) guidelines previously sent.
  - Respect patients' wishes when they ask you to mask.
- **Please stay home when you are experiencing cold or flu symptoms. Do not care for patients while ill.** Report any fever and/or S&S of respiratory illness or infection per employer/student guidelines.
- Use excellent hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette in all situations.

**We will continue to monitor regional trends and provide further updates as needed.  
Thank you for your partnership in keeping our patients, communities,  
and each other safe.**

#### References:

<https://www.ems1.com/ems-products/personal-protective-equipment-ppe/articles/quick-reference-guide-selecting-the-appropriate-ppe-pKDtWrvCvToDRkoW/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/basics/default.htm>

[https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/measles.html?gad\\_source=1&gclid=EAlaIqobChMIpb2Chcm6hQMV3I5HAR3XvQbTEAAYASAAEgIDW\\_D\\_BwE](https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/measles.html?gad_source=1&gclid=EAlaIqobChMIpb2Chcm6hQMV3I5HAR3XvQbTEAAYASAAEgIDW_D_BwE)