



New 2023 Facial Covering Requirements Sample Protocol

SB 252 (2023 legislative session) titled “An Act Relating to Protection from Discrimination Based on Health Care Choices” prohibits businesses from requiring employees or customers from wearing facial coverings, but health care providers, physicians, practitioners, and facilities from this prohibition. However, the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Department of Health (DOH) were required to collaborate and develop joint standards for the appropriate use of facial coverings for infection control in health care settings which was released July 1, 2023. [CLICK HERE](#) to review the standards.

Next, the new law requires physicians, health care practitioners, and health care providers to establish facial covering policies and procedures IF they require any individual to wear a facial covering for any reason. Furthermore, any such policies and procedures must comply with the standards adopted by AHCA and DOH as applicable. These policies and procedures must be accessible from the home page of the practitioner or provider’s website or must be conspicuously displayed in the lobby of the health care service setting. Physicians, health care providers, and practitioners may not require any person to wear a facial covering unless the requirement complies with AHCA/DOH rules and the provider/practitioner’s own policies and procedures. Violation of this section may result in administrative disciplinary action.

To assist FAFP members who may wish to implement facial covering policies in their practices, the FAFP has developed generic protocol for use in your office as provided below. It is imperative that physicians review the standards to ensure compliance should they implement face covering requirements in their offices.

Sample Face Covering Protocol

For Patients:

Patients need not wear face coverings UNLESS:

- The patient has symptoms or a diagnosis of an active communicable disease;
- In lieu of a mask, such patients will be asked to isolate in a special area of the waiting room or may choose to reschedule their appointment.
- Patients may be required to wear masks in sterile areas or during sterile procedures.

For Staff/Employees:

Staff need not wear face coverings UNLESS:

- The staff member has symptoms or a diagnosis of an active communicable disease; or
- The staff member is participating in a sterile procedure or is in a sterile area.

Any questions should be referred to the Practice Manager.