

## **COVID-19 Home Care Provider Regulatory Guidelines as of 8.8.23**

There have been no recent changes to COVID-19 guidance for health care settings, but in case you missed HCP's prior reports, here are the highlights of the past several months.

The **COVID-19 vaccine mandate** for health care workers has been eliminated. The Department of Health (DOH/the Department) ceased enforcement back in May. With the publication of the mandate's repeal in the NYS Register at the end of June, providers could confidently change their policies and procedures accordingly. Remember that you are permitted to continue to require vaccinations as a company policy.

**Masking guidelines** from the Department were last released in [DAL 23-14/DHCBS 23-01](#), issued February 10, 2023, and reiterated at a recent association meeting with DOH as reported in the HCP Insider on June 30, 2023. In short, the Department's guidance is for providers to develop their own plans for mask requirements, following current CDC guidelines. These recommendations are based on local situational awareness, patient health status, symptom presentation, and exposure risk/history.

Remember that masking remains an excellent source control option, as does limiting crowding, and properly maintaining ventilation systems.

While no formal notification has been forthcoming from the Department, in our June meeting with DOH officials it was noted that passive **staff screening for COVID-19** is now allowable. Passive screening includes prominent posters and staff education about signs and symptoms, and what to do if infection is suspected (including NOT coming to work).

***HCP reminds providers that your practices must always match your policies, even when regulatory updates are released.***