

# COVID-19 Safety Measures

Revised on March 1, 2022

As a special safety measure during the COVID-19 emergency, South Cove Community Health Center is adopting additional safety measures recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Some of these guidelines are part of South Cove's existing guidelines but are further additionally stated to reiterate their importance. These measures will be in place until further notice.

## **General:**

1. All staff must wear a mask while in the clinics (a minimum of a level 1 surgical mask). Level 3 surgical masks if you are within 3-6 feet of a potentially infected person. An N95 mask if in close contact for an extended amount of time.
2. Please limit the amount of healthcare workers in a treatment room to 2 unless necessary.
3. Staff are to be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 symptoms prior to work or entering the facility via self-monitoring. Any person exhibiting symptoms will contact their supervisor and not be allowed to enter the facility. The person should contact a Nurse or Physician and be notified immediately for next steps.
4. Social distancing should be practiced by keeping 6 feet between staff when not necessary and masks should be worn when 6 feet can not be maintained.

## **Patient Safety:**

1. Patients and companions must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering the facility. Any person exhibiting symptoms will not be allowed to enter the facility. The recommended screening process for patients will be via telephone when scheduling appointments and during appointment reminders if the visit will be an on-site appointment.
2. Patient companions should only be allowed into the health center if the patient is unable to act independently either physically or mentally or if a companion is needed for interpreting or other necessary service. Children under the age of 18 may enter with one parent or guardian.
3. Patients should be encouraged to arrive on time for their appointment and leave immediately after. Patients arriving early should be asked to wait outside until their appointment time.
4. All patients and companions must wear a mouth and nose covering consistent with DPH Guidelines. If a patient or companion does not have a mask the health center will provide one.

5. Persons entering the facility without a scheduled appointment must wear a mask and be screened immediately.

**Infection Control:**

1. Social distancing must be practiced to maintain a safe environment for patients and staff.
2. Staff should ask patients to wait outside if they show up to their appointment more than 30 minutes prior to an appointment or if there is an extended wait time.
3. The use of telehealth should be implemented whenever appropriate for the patient visit. In person visits should be spaced appropriately to limit the amount of patients waiting and increase social distancing abilities.
4. Signage has been placed in clinics to remind staff and patients of social distancing, coughing etiquette, face coverings/masks, and hand hygiene.
5. Staff should practice and enforce South Cove's cleaning policy (refer to Clinical Policy).