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**For Immediate Release**  
**April 6, 2023**

## **Masking Optional in all Doshier Hospital and Clinic Locations Effective April 7, 2023**

SOUTHPORT - On Friday, April 7th at 7am, all Doshier hospital and clinic locations will lift universal masking requirement for all patients, visitors, and team members.

While universal masking will no longer be required, certain exceptions may apply, such as:

- You have symptoms of respiratory illness or have a known exposure to the COVID-19 virus
- Masking is your personal preference
- You are in close contact with a patient who is considered high risk by our care team.

In addition, patients will have the option to request that their provider wear a mask while being treated.

“The decision to lift our universal masking policy was made with prudent review of public health data and with consideration to the impact this change in policy will have on our patients, staff, and visitors,” said Dr. Thomas Holland, Doshier Chief Medical Officer. “Many factors went into this informed decision, including the widespread availability of COVID vaccines as well as a steady decline in both reported COVID cases and COVID-19 hospital admissions since January throughout our county.”

As community levels of COVID-19 as well as threats from other respiratory illnesses evolve, hospital and clinic leaders will continue to assess the universal masking policy. Should additional safety measures be needed per guidance from the CDC or NCDHHS or other national, state, or local data or trends, Doshier may update masking requirements accordingly.

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