



## The Use of Facial Coverings

Starling communities are required by Florida Statute 408.823 to post a policy for the use of facial coverings in the Community. The policy includes procedures for Residents, Staff and Visitors as well as procedures for opting out of facial coverings under certain conditions.

Starling requires **Residents** to wear a mask when the resident is in a common area and is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission. A common area is an area within a health care facility where residents are not treated, diagnosed, or examined. Residents must be permitted to opt-out of wearing facial coverings.

Starling requires **Visitors** to wear to wear a facial covering when the visitor is:

- (1) exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission,
- (2) in a sterile area or an area where sterile procedures are being performed,
- (3) in an in-resident or clinical room with a resident who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or
- (4) visiting a resident who has been determined to have a compromised immune system increasing their risk of infection or whose practitioner has determined a mask is necessary for the resident's safety. Visitors must be permitted to opt out of wearing a facial covering.

Starling requires **Staff** to wear to wear a facial covering when the staff is:

- (1) exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has been diagnosed with an infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission,
- (2) in a sterile area or an area where sterile procedures are being performed,
- (3) providing care in a resident or clinical room with a resident who is exhibiting signs or symptoms of or has a diagnosed infectious disease that can be spread through droplet or airborne transmission, or

(4) visiting a resident who has been determined to have a compromised immune system increasing their risk of infection or whose practitioner has determined a mask is necessary for the resident's safety. Visitors must be permitted to opt out of wearing a facial covering.

Starling encourages all residents, visitors and staff to follow the policies for facial coverings. However, state regulations allow Residents, Visitors and Staff to opt-out of wearing facial coverings. Residents are permitted to opt-out of wearing a facial covering as per the Department of Health Regulation F.S. 381.026, The Patient Bill of Rights which includes consideration for:

- (1) the resident's right to make decision in an informed manner,
- (2) the resident's right to have their individual dignity respected, and their responsibility to respect the reasonable and responsible expectations of the provider or facility.
- (3) The resident's right to file a complaint with the appropriate agencies.

Starling posts a complaints poster in a common area of each community and is included in the admission package.

Starling also offers alternatives to facial coverings, which may include social distancing, outdoor visitation, transparent physical barriers, or other alternative types of facial covering.

Starling allows Staff to opt-out of wearing a facial covering unless they are:

- (1) conducting sterile procedures,
- (2) working in a sterile area,
- (3) working with a resident who has been determined to have a compromised immune system increasing their risk of infection or whose practitioner has determined a mask is necessary for the resident's safety, (4) with a resident on droplet or airborne isolation, or
- (5) engaging in non-clinical potentially hazardous activities that require facial coverings to prevent physical injury or harm in accordance with industry standards.