

## Answers to questions on mandatory masking

### ***Why is NorthBay Healthcare requiring masks for unvaccinated workers in patient areas during the influenza season?***

Solano County's Public Health Officer will soon issue a binding order that mandates us to take this action. Influenza is a contagious respiratory virus that can cause mild to severe illness and can lead to death. An annual influenza vaccine is strongly recommended to help provide a safe environment for patients and all health care personnel and to prevent acquiring and inadvertently spreading the virus to others.

### ***Who is required to wear a mask?***

The order requires any personnel in the health care environment, whether paid or volunteer, who declines annual influenza vaccination and who has direct patient contact or who works in patient care areas.

### ***How will you determine who is in compliance with influenza vaccination and who needs to wear a mask?***

Anyone who has already received an influenza vaccination for 2015-2016 season will be given a sticker to place on their identification badge. Supervisors/Managers will be given the stickers for their staff by Employee Health. Those without out a sticker will be required to wear a surgical mask when interacting with patients during the influenza season Nov. 1, 2015-March 31, 2016.

### ***Who will enforce the masking?***

Enforcement will be up to all of us. If you see an employee without a sticker on their badge, and they are within 6 feet of a patient, politely ask that they put on a mask. Supervisors/Managers will be provided a list from Employee Health with names of individuals who have not received their annual influenza vaccination.

### ***What if I declined the vaccination this year? Can I change my mind and get a shot?***

Yes. A sticker will be given to you once you've received your vaccine by Employee Health.

### ***What if I received the vaccination at another facility, how can I get a sticker from Employee Health?***

Bring your form verification to Employee Health.

### ***I have not had the flu vaccination and have not turned in a declination form. What must I do now?***

You will need to make the decision that is right for you. Get the flu shot or wear a mask during influenza season, Nov. 1, 2015-March 31, 2016.

***What if I am not vaccinated and do not work in a clinical area?***

As a NorthBay Healthcare employee you are still required to either get a vaccination or sign a declination. If you decline, you would only be required to wear a surgical mask if your work brings you into contact with patients in the hospital or clinic.

***What if I forget my badge at home?***

You will need to wear a surgical mask for that day.

***What will happen if an employee who is not vaccinated works with patients without a mask or removes her/his mask while working with a patient or while in a patient care area?***

The employee will be in violation of NorthBay Healthcare's new masking policy and procedure, which is in compliance with the Solano County Public Health Officer's mandate, and will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.