

### FAQs: Stage 3 Reopening Starting July 1, 2021

#### What public health measures remain in effect after July 1?

The Alberta Government has outlined what [stage 3 reopening](#) involves, including:

- Isolation and quarantine requirements for symptomatic individuals, confirmed cases of COVID-19 and close contacts remain in effect. Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 10 days.
- Medical clinic staff must continue to follow [CPSA's Infection Prevention and Control general standards](#)

#### Can medical clinic staff be required to wear masks?

The general indoor provincial mask mandate was lifted on July 1, 2021. However, clinic managers and employers can ask their staff to continue to wear masks and any necessary PPE while working within the clinic.

#### Can patients be required to wear masks?

In the absence of a provincial or municipal mask mandate, physicians and clinic staff can recommend mask use to patients while in the clinic. If a patient will not mask, or if they have a medical note for a mask exception, care cannot be refused. Instead, physicians can take proven steps to reduce risk, such as:

- Limiting walk-ins by asking patients to make appointments (in-person or virtual) whenever possible
- Using transparent barriers
- Maintaining physical distancing in waiting rooms and throughout the care space
- Limiting the time spent interacting with an unmasked patient
- Performing pre-screening and point-of-care risk assessments
- Enhancing hand hygiene and environmental cleaning
- Having clinic staff wear masks and other PPE
- Ensuring staff who are sick stay home
- Designating clinic space and specific times for unmasked patient assessments

#### What should I do if a patient behaves inappropriately when asked to wear a mask?

If a patient becomes abusive to you, your staff or other patients, they may be asked to leave the premises. Physicians are not expected to tolerate this type of behaviour and have the right to immediately discharge patients who act in this manner from their practice under the [Terminating the Physician-Patient Relationship](#) standard of practice.

If a patient poses a safety risk to you, your staff or other patients, contact your local police department for assistance.

### **Do physicians or clinic staff who are double-vaccinated need to wear masks?**

Vaccination status should not be used as criteria on whether to use masks or other PPE. Preliminary research indicates even those fully vaccinated can still acquire, carry and transmit COVID-19.

### **What other measures should be in place within medical clinics?**

The heightened infection prevention and control measures taken during the pandemic to slow the spread of COVID-19 also reduced the spread of other viruses, such as influenza and the common cold. Medical clinics are expected to continue applying what they have learned during the pandemic, as well as CPSA's [Infection Prevention and Control general standards](#) to help prevent viral transmission.

### **Do physicians and staff have to quarantine after return from international travel?**

On July 5, quarantine requirements were amended for returning, fully-vaccinated Canadians. If a physician or clinic staff member meets the re-entry requirements set out by the federal government, they can return to work within the 14-day window after their arrival. Heightened caution in this period is advised such as maintaining physical distancing from patients and staff, working from home, continuous use of a medical mask, postponement of assessments in favour of virtual appointments.

Those who are not successful in meeting the federal re-entry requirements must observe a 14-day quarantine in accordance with federal requirements.

### **Can I require my patients or staff to be vaccinated?**

Immunization will remain voluntary for Albertans and clinics cannot refuse treatment to an unvaccinated patient.

While there is no provincial mandate to exclude unvaccinated staff and volunteers from work, individual employers can require employees to be immunized as part of a clinic's occupational health and safety policy. Discuss the benefits of vaccination with staff and facilitate opportunities for staff to obtain vaccination.

### **Questions?**

Email [covid19@cpsa.ab.ca](mailto:covid19@cpsa.ab.ca).