

## COVID-19 Update #50

June 13, 2022 – 3:30 pm

Dear Registrant,

As most of you are aware, effective June 11, 2022, the Ontario Government revoked all remaining directives relating to the health care sector, including the requirements for masks and screening in health care settings.

Over the weekend the Ontario Government provided further resources with respect to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Point of Care Risk Assessments for health care workers and health care entities. You can view the full document [here](#).

Moving forward, please refer to the latest version of the College's Practice Guidelines found [here](#). When reading this document, our Standards and FAQ's, the College uses terms such as "must" or "shall", which indicate that these points must be followed and are mandatory. Where the College uses terms such as "may", "should", "should consider" or "encouraged", while not mandatory, this type of guidance is recommended in helping safeguard the health of your patients and we leave it to your professional judgement in applying measures appropriate to your practice environment.

The College's COVID-19 FAQ's have been updated and can be found [here](#). Below you will find the top 3 FAQ's currently:

**Q: Who is required to wear a mask in the dispensary?**

**A:** Effective June 11, 2022, the directives that require opticians and patients to wear masks in the dispensary environment have been revoked. This means that it is not mandatory for opticians, staff, patients or visitors to wear a mask in the dispensary.

It is important to remember, however, that opticians remain responsible for maintaining safety and infection control standards in the practice environment. Masks remain an important way to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. It is therefore recommended that opticians continue to wear a mask that is surgical grade or higher when working in close proximity to patients, and that they require any non-optician staff to do the same. While not mandatory, opticians are also encouraged to consider implementing a mask policy for patients and visitors (with necessary provisions to accommodate those who are unable to wear a mask due to a disability or another recognized exemption). For more information please see the [COVID-19 Practice Guidelines](#).



**Q. Will I still be required to clean and disinfect frames between patients handling them after the government eases remaining mandates?**

**A.** Yes. The Standards of Practice have always required opticians to maintain protocols that mitigate the spread of infectious agents and preserve patient safety. This requirement is not a temporary pandemic related measure. Please refer to our Practice Guidelines for further guidance.

**Q: Do I still have to screen all patients/visitors, including individuals who are fully vaccinated?**

**A:** The Ontario Ministry of Health has provided the following guidance with respect to Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) for regulated health professionals:

A PCRA should be completed by every health care worker before every patient interaction and task to determine whether there is a risk to the health care worker or other individuals of being exposed to an infection, including COVID-19.

We recognize that many practice settings have a large, open display area for browsing. Dispensary operators may wish to consider the use of passive screening signage at dispensary entry points while RO's consider the use of active screening if dispensing is taking place in close proximity.

The College is committed to working with its Registrants as we navigate the changing practice environment and we will continue to update our support resources. Please feel free to connect with our Practice Advice department at [practiceadvice@collegeofopticians.ca](mailto:practiceadvice@collegeofopticians.ca) for any further clarification.

Kind Regards,  
Fazal and the COO Team