



COVID-19 Update #49

June 10, 2022 – 12:30 pm

Dear Registrant,

On Wednesday the Ontario Government [announced](#) that effective Saturday June 11, 2022, the current [Directives](#), including the Operational Requirements: Health Sector Restart document that require masks and screening in health care settings will be revoked. The government further indicated that it will be issuing guidance for health care workers to replace these Directives, including guidance on when masks should be worn in health care settings. As of today's date, however, this guidance has not yet been released. We will provide more information on this guidance as soon as it becomes available, which will likely be after this weekend.

In the interim, the COO's board of directors has approved updated [COVID-19 Practice Guidelines](#) for Registered Opticians. These guidelines have been developed in anticipation of remaining mask and screening mandates being lifted in the province and come into effect on June 11, 2022. Under the guidelines, opticians must continue to assess the continued risks posed by COVID-19 and take steps to comply with the [Standards of Practice](#) on Safety and Infection Control in the practice environment. Opticians must also continue to comply with any further laws, orders, directives or other guidance that may be issued by the government or public health authorities going forward, including relating to masks.

We know that many of you have questions about how to navigate patient care in the coming days and weeks. We have included answers to some of the most pressing questions below, but please continue to check our website regularly as we work to update to our COVID-19 information hub and FAQ page. In addition, be sure to follow the COO on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) for the latest updates.

The COO recognizes the incredible efforts that opticians have made since the onset of the pandemic to ensure that Ontario patients continue to have access to safe and high quality opticianry services and we will continue to offer support and guidance to the best of our ability.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please reach out to us at practiceadvice@collegeofopticians.ca

Kind Regards,
Fazal and the COO Team

Q: Who will be required to wear a mask in the dispensary environment as of June 11, 2022?

A: Effective June 11, 2022, the directives that require opticians and patients to wear masks in the dispensary environment will be revoked. The Ontario Government has indicated that they will be issuing guidance on when masks should continue to be worn in health care settings, but this guidance is not yet available. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.



Q: Can I still implement a mask policy in my dispensary?

A: Yes. Individual businesses are permitted to implement their own policies for use of masks in the dispensary environment. Opticians must continue to offer reasonable accommodations to patients who are unable to wear a mask due to a disability or who qualify for other recognized exemptions (e.g. children under 2 years of age).

Q: What should I do if a patient is unable or unwilling to wear a mask?

A: Opticians have a duty to offer reasonable accommodations to patients who are unable to wear a mask due to a disability or who qualify for other recognized exemptions (e.g. children under 2 years of age). Opticians should consider ways to accommodate the patient in a way that will keep themselves, staff and other patients safe (e.g. offering to schedule an appointment when other patients will not be present, or offering to provide services remotely).

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.