

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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**Required Masking Reinstated at Henry County Medical Center and Its Facilities**

**Paris, TN** – Effective July 22, 2022, Henry County Medical Center and its affiliated clinics and facilities will reinstate our masking policy.

Regrettably, we have seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in our surrounding community, an increased number of staff impacted by COVID-19 and a very slight uptick in hospitalizations. Henry County’s positivity rate is now at 27.69 and increasing. The case rate in the county is in the High category and the amount of COVID-19 cases is increasing. The United States is once again leading the globe in the spread of COVID-19 cases with 3.2 million cases and 10,467 deaths over the last 28 days. The current strain is considered hypercontagious and represents 65% of the cases according to the CDC.

“We do understand how frustrating it is to have to re-mask,” said Kim Bentley, Interim CNO at HCMC. “As always, we do PROMISE to keep abreast of the trends and patterns within our community and adjust our decisions accordingly. Please be understanding as we move forward with reinstating this change,”

According to the CDC, when the risk is high the following guidelines should be followed:

The new guidelines for masking released by the CDC are as follows:

* High
  + Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status or individual risk (including in K-12 schools and other community settings)
  + If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness
  + Wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection

Henry County Medical Center and Henry County Healthcare Center and its associated Clinics are requiring masks to ensure the safety and health of our patients, families (per recommended guidelines).

The best way to protect yourself is to continue to be aware of the situation. If you're not vaccinated, get vaccinated. If you're not boosted and eligible for a booster, get boosted. Continue to wear a mask, and continue to practice social distance, particularly in crowded indoor environments. There are things that can be done by everyone to minimize the risk of infection.

Hospitals and health systems have aduty to prioritize the health and well-being of their patients, many of whom are immunocompromised and/or severely sick and weakened and are at risk for the development of COVID-19. The science overwhelmingly shows that masking, vaccination and social distancing helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19~~.~~

At Henry County Medical Center, we will continue to follow the science and take the steps necessary to protect our patients, especially the most vulnerable. Until guidelines and recommendations change, please bring your masks with you to HCMC, HCHC, HCMC Medical Clinics, and our ancillary services. On behalf of our staff and leadership we ask that you be kind and understanding; our primary goal is to do all we can to protect everyone.

For more information, go online at [www.hcmc-tn.org](http://www.hcmc-tn.org).

**About Henry County Medical Center**Located in Paris, TN, Henry County Medical Center is a progressive, integrated healthcare organization committed to serving the healthcare needs of Henry County and the adjoining region. Including a 142-bed hospital and other facilities, the medical center provides a variety of outpatient services, as well as inpatient care. Additionally, HCMC owns and operates 8 provider clinics in various specialties. Henry County Medical Center is a county-owned and operated nonprofit institution. For more information: [www.hcmc-tn.org](http://www.hcmc-tn.org).