



## COVID-19 Safety Measures

Effective 7/6/2021

Community Habilitation (Self-Hired and Agency Supported), Self-Hired Respite, Companion Care,  
Broker and Fiscal Intermediary Services

Advocates' guidance below applies to Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) **uncertified** services within OPWDD **uncertified** locations only.

- Examples of OPWDD **uncertified** services that the guidance below applies to include: All services provided by Advocates including Community Habilitation (Self-Hired and Agency Supported), Self-Hired Respite, Companion Care, Broker and Fiscal Intermediary Services. Examples of OPWDD uncertified locations include within the community and within private homes.
- Examples of OPWDD **certified** services and locations include: OPWDD Day Habilitation Programs, IRAs/group homes, certified Family Care homes, etc.

The guidance below is in accordance with a combination of the most recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC), NYS Department of Health (DOH) and OPWDD guidance as of 7/6/21.

### Masks / Face Coverings for Employees

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

- Employees are provided with cloth face coverings and/or disposable masks.
- Email [supplies@advocatesincorporated.org](mailto:supplies@advocatesincorporated.org) to request additional PPE.

Guidance on Masks/ Face Coverings	If you are fully vaccinated	If you are not fully vaccinated
Indoors	<p>In general, <b>employees who are fully vaccinated</b> are not required to wear a mask indoors or outdoors while providing services.</p> <p>See the exceptions listed under the “Whether you are fully vaccinated or not fully vaccinated” section below.</p>	<p><b>Employees who are not fully vaccinated</b> must wear a mask in indoor public places while providing services.</p> <p>Employees should encourage <b>individuals receiving services who are not fully vaccinated</b> to wear a mask in indoor public places if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask.</p>
Outdoors	<p>See above.</p> <p>Reminder: For employees to be considered “fully vaccinated”, it must be at least 2 weeks from the last dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and proof of vaccination must be on file with Advocates Human Resources (Image of employee's vaccination card can be submitted to HR via <a href="mailto:hrsecure@advocatesincorporated.org">hrsecure@advocatesincorporated.org</a> or via postal mail).</p>	<p>In general, <b>employees who are not fully vaccinated</b> are not required to wear a mask in outdoor settings while providing services, with the following exceptions:</p> <p><b>Employees who are not fully vaccinated</b> must wear a mask outdoors when providing services within 6 feet of an individual who has a medical condition that makes them more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19* <b>if the individual receiving services is not fully vaccinated.</b></p> <p>* Per CDC, medical conditions that make people more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 include: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html</a></p>

**Whether you are fully vaccinated or not fully vaccinated:**

- If the community setting or private home requires a mask for entry, all employees are required to follow the mask policy of the location that they are in while providing services. Employees should encourage individuals receiving services to do the same if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask.

- **Regardless of vaccination status, employees are required to defer to the instructions of the individual receiving services/their household members regarding mask requirements when working within the individual's private home.**
  - Per CDC, "If you have a condition or are taking medications that weaken your immune system, you may need to keep taking steps to protect yourself, like wearing a mask, even if you are fully vaccinated. Talk to your healthcare provider about steps you can take to manage your health and risks". **Employees should defer to any medical advice given to the individual receiving services/family to determine if the employee should encourage an individual receiving services who is fully vaccinated to continue to wear a mask or not.**
  - In general, employees should encourage **individuals receiving services who are not fully vaccinated** to wear a mask in outdoor settings within 6 feet of others if they have a medical condition that makes them more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19\* if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask, unless the individual has received other medical advice.
- \* Per CDC, medical conditions that make people more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 include:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

### **Guidance on Community & Group Activities During Services**

- Low risk, outdoor activities are encouraged whenever possible.
- If the person receiving services **is not fully vaccinated**, employees should encourage them to practice social distancing.

### **Transportation During Services**

Regardless of vaccination status:

- Prior to providing services vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected.
- Per CDC and DOH: Masks are required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations. Travelers are not required to wear a mask in outdoor areas of a conveyance (like on a ferry or the top deck of a bus). CDC recommends that travelers who are not fully vaccinated continue to wear a mask and maintain physical distancing when traveling.

### **Guidance on Providing Services Within a Mentors Home:**

To safeguard the people we support, our employees and those residing in the employee's home, services may not be provided at a Mentor's home. **This is an ongoing policy that will remain in effect beyond the COVID-19 public health emergency.**

### **NY State Travel Advisory** - <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

As of June 25, 2021, the New York State Travel Advisory is no longer in effect. As such, travelers arriving in New York are no longer required to submit traveler health forms. All domestic and international travelers should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.

### **Advocates' Instructions to Employees on Working Out of State:**

- **Prior to providing services out of state, employees must email [hr@advocatesincorporated.org](mailto:hr@advocatesincorporated.org) to request permission to work out of state.** OPWDD requires that the individual have a statement in their Life Plan regarding their desire to use their services out of state before their Mentor can provide services out of state.
- Employees may not work out of state for more than 10 consecutive days.

Reminder: Advocates Employees must immediately notify Human Resources if they have a direct exposure (directly exposed to someone who has tested positive within the last 10 days) or if the employee is pending a COVID-19 test result.

Contact information:

**Advocates COVID-19 hotline/Incident reporting cell: (315) 401-1293**

**Human Resources email [HR@advocatesincorporated.org](mailto:HR@advocatesincorporated.org)**

**Training and Support Specialists: (315) 469-9931 or email [TSS@advocatesincorporated.org](mailto:TSS@advocatesincorporated.org)**

**<http://www.advocatesincorporated.org/information-resources/>**