

**July 28, 2020**

**HIGH IMPORTANCE**

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**Tulane**  
Health System



Dear Tulane Health System colleagues,

As you know, everyone in our facilities – from staff to providers to patients to visitors – is required to wear a mask to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

All caregivers who treat confirmed COVID-19 patients or highly suspected patients under investigation for COVID-19 (or who perform high-risk aerosol generating procedures), wear hospital-issued N-95 masks to protect themselves from possible exposure. Everyone else wears a Level 1 surgical mask or cloth face covering, which helps stop them from unknowingly spreading infectious disease to others.

We have noticed, though, that some individuals are wearing **N-95 respirators that have exhalation valves**. According to recent CDC guidance, these masks do not protect others from potential exposure from the wearer. Therefore, they are **not appropriate for any use within our facilities**, including wear by visitors as part of our universal masking policy.

As we have done throughout this pandemic, we are meeting and, where possible exceeding, CDC recommendations to equip our teams to provide safe, effective care.

We will continue to closely monitor the pandemic, our PPE supplies and our local response, and we will adapt as needed to ensure the safety of our colleagues and patients. Thank you again for your cooperation and service to those in need, and for modeling good masking and social distance behaviors both here in the hospitals and throughout the community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brandon Mauldin

Chief Medical Officer

Tulane Health System