

## **Soma Institute Mask Policy- Spring 2023**

The WA State Department of Health issued the following statement on March 3, 2023: *Effective April 3, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) will end the [Secretary of Health Mask Order](#), which currently requires universal masking in healthcare, long-term care, and adult correctional facilities for people age 5 and older.*

Recognizing a steady decline in COVID-19, RSV, and influenza disease rates and hospitalizations, the Department of Health elected to end the universal masking requirement. The DOH continues to recommend the use of masks for patients, healthcare providers, and visitors in healthcare settings, stating they are an important tool, along with vaccinations, to keep people healthy and safe. Providers can continue to require masks at their discretion.

The Soma Institute is considered a healthcare facility due to the operation of the student clinic. The Institute has opted to continue to require masks for all instructors, student practitioners and model clients while at the Institute. Additionally, students, instructors and all visitors will continue to wear masks when at the facility. The faculty's primary concern is completion of the current training according to the established schedule. Minimizing risk of exposure to instructors and students by continuing to require masks will provide a key element in achieving completion of the training.

Please continue to follow CDC guidelines regarding return to public interaction following COVID-19 infection or significant exposure. COVID vaccinations and boosters are still highly encouraged.

Please contact the school if you need guidance regarding whether to stay home if you are experiencing any concerning symptoms.

Thank you for your understanding as we work together to graduate our current class!

*~Soma Institute Faculty*

*Updated 3/23/2023*