

Duke University School of Nursing

Policy: Caring for Patients with Covid-19 or Patients Under Investigation (PUIs)

Effective Date: January 14, 2022

Review/Revision History: none

Approval Authority: Dean of the School of Nursing

Responsible for Review: Vice Dean for Academic Affairs

The Duke University School of Nursing (DUSON) COVID-19 policy was created in alignment with the Duke University School of Medicine and Duke University Health System policies. This policy is subject to change immediately if conditions necessitate. This policy adheres to the DUSON Guiding Principles in place since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: 1) Safety First, 2) Protecting the health of our community and our ability to care for patients, 3) Advancing vital research and teaching missions, 4) Alignment with local and state ordinances and consistent with guidance from our local and national health authorities, 5) Responsive and adaptive to an evolving environment.

Guiding principles of the DUSON Caring for Patients with COVID-19 or PUIs policy:

1. The COVID-19 virus will remain in our healthcare system for the foreseeable future, and nurses need preparation to care for patients with COVID-19 effectively and safely.
2. Core chief concerns that include COVID -19 include symptoms, such as sore throat, cough, fever, etc., especially in the outpatient setting, are common.
3. Appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and vaccinations significantly reduces the risk of transmission from patient to provider.
4. Adequate PPE supplies are available to ensure safety of our students and team members.

To participate in the care of COVID-positive patients or PUI (i.e., any patient with suspected COVID who has been placed on special airborne isolation), students must:

1. Be fully vaccinated (i.e., 2 doses of Pfizer/Moderna or 1 dose J&J) with appropriate booster dosing. A student with an approved exemption for vaccination **may not** participate in the care of COVID-positive patients or PUIs.
2. Be formally fit tested for an N-95 mask or wear a Powered Air Purified Respirator (PAPR).
3. Wear the appropriate PPE for the clinical site which should include an N-95 mask for which they have been fitted (or PAPR), gown, gloves, face shield, and shoe covers at a minimum.
4. Review and demonstrate competency in the appropriate safe donning and doffing of PPE prior to caring for COVID-positive patients or PUI. Students may request observation by a team member at each site when donning/doffing PPE, if needed.
5. Consistently use the PPE provided including the properly fitted N-95 mask.
6. Only wear the N-95 for which they have been fit-tested. If their fit-tested N95 is not available, students must wear a PAPR, or if one is unavailable, the student **cannot participate** in COVID/PUI care.
7. Possess an RN license or be enrolled in the ABSN-Fourth semester.

Students should discuss specific health concerns related to providing care for COVID+ patients or PUI's with the appropriate program assistant dean or director.

This policy will be revised and updated pending developments with the ongoing COVID pandemic and overall university guidance.