

# COVID-19 Guidelines for Alberta Opticians

*Effective March 1, 2022*

Following the Government of Alberta's announcement of the lifting of [public health measures](#) on March 1, 2022, the College of Opticians of Alberta will continue to provide guidance to regulated opticians regarding safe and competent provision of care. Opticians are required to follow all applicable legislation, the [COA Code of Ethics](#) and [Standards of Practice](#), and these guidelines. Opticians are in the best position to assess the risks within their own practices and to use their judgment in protecting patients, staff and themselves as the province adapts to easing COVID-19 measures.

Please note that these guidelines are in addition to any federal, provincial and municipal public health actions required for Alberta Opticians and represent minimum enforceable standards.

Recommendation	Explanation
Appointments	<p>Appointments are not required to provide care to patients.</p> <p>Opticians may choose to require appointments and/or limit walk-in appointments to reduce risk and address limitations for physical distancing in waiting rooms and throughout their practice.</p>
Masking	<p><b>Effective March 1, 2022</b>, the provincial masking requirement will be lifted.</p> <p>Provincial mask mandate will be lifted except in high-risk settings, including public transit, at AHS-operated and contracted facilities, and all continuing care settings.</p> <p>Opticians may request that patients wear a mask within their practice but cannot deny care if they refuse.</p> <p>Practitioners must adhere to any ongoing municipal bylaws in their jurisdiction including but not limited to masking, distancing, and capacity requirements.</p> <p>Employers can ask their staff to continue wearing masks and any other necessary PPE while working in the practice.</p>

Patient Screening	<p>Opticians should screen or direct staff to screen patients for symptoms and choose appropriate procedures and PPE based on the results of this screening.</p> <p>For more guidance regarding pre-screening procedures please refer to <a href="#">AHS COVID-19 Guidance for Community Providers</a>.</p>
Handwashing	<p>Practitioners must ensure hand washing stations and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizers are available, and patients should be encouraged to use them upon entering and exiting.</p> <p>All practitioners must practice effective <a href="#">hand hygiene</a> after each patient. Practitioners must perform hand hygiene using alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water as described in <a href="#">Routine Practices from Alberta Health Services</a>.</p> <p>For more information on hand hygiene, refer to the <a href="#">COA Standards of Practice</a>.</p>
Isolation and Quarantine	<p>Practitioners must adhere with provincial isolation and quarantine requirements for COVID-19.</p> <p>Isolation and quarantine requirements can be found here:  <a href="https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx">https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx</a></p>
Municipal Bylaws	<p>Practitioners must adhere to any ongoing municipal bylaws in their jurisdiction including but not limited to masking, distancing, and capacity requirements.</p>