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An Affiliate of  
Rochester Regional Health

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Policy Area:	COVID-19
Key Phrases:	
Applicability:	St. Lawrence Health system-wide content

# COVID-19 Testing for Elective Outpatient Surgeries and Procedures at St. Lawrence Health

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to update pre-elective procedure and surgery testing requirements across St. Lawrence Health to include vaccination status and recent recovery from COVID-19 infection while keeping St. Lawrence Health in compliance with OSHA's COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard. This policy supersedes the health system's COVID-19 Directive Regarding the Resumption of Elective Outpatient Surgeries and Procedures at St. Lawrence Health dated May 5, 2020. Furthermore, this policy acknowledged the expiration of, and replaces, the June 13, 2020 directive "COVID-19 Directive Regarding the Resumption of Elective Outpatient Surgeries and Procedures in General Hospitals in Counties and Facilities Without a Significant Risk of COVID-19 Surge" and the May 19, 2020 guidance "COVID-19 – Resumption of Elective Outpatient Surgeries and Non-Urgent Procedures (Deferred Procedures) in Ambulatory Surgery Centers, Office- Based Surgery Practices and Diagnostic and Treatment Centers in Counties Without a Significant Risk of COVID-19 Surge.

## SCOPE

All St. Lawrence Health (SLH) affiliate entities and all workforce and non-workforce members including, but not limited to, physicians, contractors, and volunteers.

## DEFINITIONS

**Fully vaccinated** is defined as being two or more weeks after receiving the final dose (e.g., second of a two dose series, only dose of a one dose series) of the vaccine approved by the FDA or authorized by the FDA for emergency use.

**Recently recovered** is defined as recovered from laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 by meeting the criteria for discontinuation of isolation within the three-month period between date of elective surgery or procedure and either the initial onset of symptoms related to the laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infection or, if asymptomatic during the illness, the date of the laboratory confirmed test.

**COVID-19 test** is defined as a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or antigen test.

**Screen** means asking questions to determine whether a person is COVID-19 positive or has symptoms of COVID-19.

# POLICY

Pre-elective procedure testing no more than five (5) days prior to elective surgeries and procedures using a PCR or antigen test for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 is required for:

- Patients who are not fully vaccinated;
- Unvaccinated patients; and
- Patients for whom COVID-19 screening has identified potential risk/need for testing before procedures.

Pre-elective procedure testing is not required for patients who are fully vaccinated or have recovered from laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 during the previous three months. There is no need to test asymptomatic recently recovered patients to prove they are now negative. However, pre-elective procedure testing remains encouraged by NYSDOH for all symptomatic patients scheduled for elective surgery/procedures.

COVID-19 test results must be received and reviewed before conducting the elective surgery or procedure. Such testing is not required before non-scheduled emergent surgeries or procedures, which are not defined as elective. However, a thorough screening and history should be taken, as well as other appropriate precautions, prior to non-scheduled emergent surgeries and procedures.

A COVID-19 test should be performed as soon as possible, in accordance with this guidance, and if positive, may result in the need for health care worker exposure protocols to be followed. SLH hospitals do not have to perform the test; it is allowable to accept a third-party test, provided it is a PCR or antigen test as described above and is performed by a laboratory with any required permits and approvals.

Any unvaccinated or symptomatic patient will continue to require a COVID-19 Test.

# PROCEDURE

Regardless of vaccination status, patients who are not required to have a COVID-19 test, will be contacted **3 days prior** to their scheduled procedure to be screened for COVID-19 symptoms.

## Attachments

No Attachments

## Approval Signatures

**Approver**

**Date**

Jeremy Slaga: Chief Administrative Officer      7/6/2021

## Applicability

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Canton-Potsdam Hospital, Gouverneur Hospital, Massena Hospital, St. Lawrence Health System

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