GUIDANCE FOR WHEN A PERSON REFUSES TO WEAR A MASK UPON ENTERING CLEVELAND CLINIC FACILITIES:
RESPOND WITH H.E.A.R.T.:

HEAR:
It sounds like you are worried about the mask. Can you tell me more about that?
I appreciate you sharing that [spoken with warmth and genuine appreciation followed by a pause, then genuine curiosity] … help me understand the concerns you have with wearing a mask.
Others have shared similar concerns … help me understand what concerns you most about wearing a mask.

EMPATHIZE:
I know wearing a mask can feel uncomfortable. It can also make it difficult to hear what people are saying.
This has to be so stressful for you.
Many patients are nervous about coming in as it is — I don’t want to add to your stress.

APOLOGIZE:
Masks are <uncomfortable/frustrating/etc.> and I am sorry.
I am sorry you have to go through this when you are trying to care for your loved one/while experiencing your health concerns.
I wish there was an easier way to keep everyone safe.

RESPOND:
We are asking everyone to wear masks while in our facilities to help keep our caregivers and loved ones safe. There is no way of knowing who has or doesn’t have COVID-19 by looking at them. Your safety — our patients’ and caregivers’ safety — is most important.
We’ve heard from our patients that having everyone in a mask makes them feel most comfortable.
We’ve made the masks readily (conveniently) available. I have one here for you and can help you if needed.
Encouraging everyone to wear a mask over their nose, mouth and chin helps us reduce the spread of infection.
For your safety and the safety of all, we ask that you wear a mask to enter our facilities.

THANK:
I want to thank you for keeping us all safe. Your cooperation means a lot to us.
I appreciate your help with this. Thank you for trusting us with your care.

If a person still refuses to wear a mask:
I certainly respect your rights to not wear a mask, and I know you will respect our right to do what we believe is necessary to keep everyone safe.
If you will not wear a mask, we ask that once your loved one is where they need to be, that you leave the premises.
If you would like to file a complaint about our policy, you can contact the Ombudsman Office at 216.444.2544 or ombudsman@ccf.org.

(OVER)
Exceptions to masks as possible for:

- Exceptions are made at the discretion of clinical teams.
- Possibilities:
  - Children under age 2.
  - Anyone who has trouble breathing and for whom a mask exacerbates the breathing difficulty.
  - Anyone who is incapacitated, or for whom the mask is a swallow risk.
  - Anyone who is unable to tolerate a mask, or who cannot remove a mask without help.
  - Anyone trying to enter the Emergency Department because they will need a medical screening exam (EMTALA) before being turned away.

Exceptions based on this article: https://health.clevelandclinic.org/unsure-about-actually-wearing-a-face-mask-heres-how-and-why-to-do-it/?_ga=2.5638003.1382701724.1588347043-1400266521.1555506931