	<b>Environmental Health and Safety</b>
<b>Safety Guideline</b>	<b>Face Coverings</b>
	Effective Date: August 30, 2021

### **Background**

The COVID-19 vaccines are effective in preventing infection, disease, and spread. Unvaccinated persons are more likely to get infected and spread the virus which is transmitted through the air and concentrates indoors. The guidance aligns with CDC recommendations and provides information about higher-risk settings where masks are required or recommended to prevent transmission. When people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask correctly, they protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors.

### **Mask Guidance for Individuals (regardless of vaccine status)**








Effective August, 2021 face coverings must be worn over the mouth and nose – regardless of vaccination status – in all campus buildings.

Individuals are not required to wear face coverings in the following circumstances:



- You are not required to wear a face-covering if you are alone in a room with the door closed or when eating or drinking.
- If you are not fully vaccinated, you should avoid eating indoors in crowded settings, choose outdoor dining options and use to-go options as much as feasible, or when those options are not available, you should maintain 6 feet of physical distance while eating and drinking.
- Face coverings are not required if you are performing a task that cannot be performed while wearing a face covering.
- Face coverings do not have to be worn by a residential student while in their own living space (e.g., room, suite, apartment, etc.) regardless of vaccination status.
- Please note that individuals with an approved medical or religious exemption are still required to wear a face-covering while indoors.

## How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

DO choose masks that	DO NOT choose masks that
 <p>Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric</p>	 <p>Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl</p>
 <p>Completely cover your nose and mouth</p>	 <p>Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape</p>
 <p>Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps</p>	 <p>Are prioritized for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators</p>
 <p>Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask</p>	

## Special Considerations

Gaiters & face shields	
 <p>Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers</p>	 <p>Not recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.</p>

## How to wear

Wear a mask correctly and consistently for the best protection.

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on a mask
- Do NOT touch the mask when wearing it.

## How to Take Off Mask



①

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



②

Handle only by the ear loops or ties



③

Fold the outside corners together



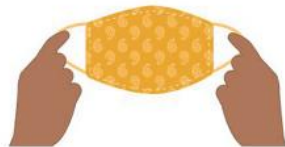
④

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing



①

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



②

Handle only by the ear loops or ties



③

Fold the outside corners together



④

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

## How to Clean a Mask

Reusable masks should be washed daily or whenever dirty. Disposable masks should be discarded after wearing it once.

### Exemptions to masks requirements

The following individuals are exempt from wearing masks at all times:

- Persons younger than two years old. Very young children must not wear a mask because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a mask could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.
- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

References:

[National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)

[CDC Guide to Masks](#)