



COVID-19 UPDATED MASK GUIDANCE

Update: August 24, 2020

Overview:

This document serves as an update to the general information and guidance on the use of and care of mandatory face masks. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Pennsylvania Department of Health wearing a face mask, maintaining social distancing and washing your hands often are necessary preventative measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Recently, in studies conducted about the effectiveness of face masks, it was noted that single-layer facemasks, including neck gaiters are less effective in protecting against respiratory droplets. It is required that all faculty, staff and students wear masks that are in accord with the guidelines outlined by the [CDC](#) and [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Evidence for Effectiveness of Masks

Make sure your mask:

- fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- completely covers the nose and mouth
- is secured with ties or ear loops
- includes **multiple layers of fabric**
- allows for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

Face Shields:

- The CDC **does not currently recommend** use of face shields as a substitute for masks.

Wear your Mask Correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent

How to Clean Masks (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Washing machine

- You can include your mask with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask.

Washing by hand

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection.
 - Use bleach containing 5.25%–8.25% sodium hypochlorite. Do not use a bleach product if the percentage is not in this range or is not specified.
 - Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
 - Ensure adequate ventilation.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
 - 4 teaspoons of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Soak the mask in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
- Discard the bleach solution down the drain and rinse the mask thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.
- **Make sure to completely dry the mask after washing.**

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Best Practices for Homemade Masks

The best practices for making and wearing fabric or cloth masks include:

- Consider buying materials online to avoid exposure in public places;
- Purchase masks made by small businesses, saving medical masks for health care workers;
- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- The mask should fit snugly around the mouth and nose;
- If the mask has a metal wire it should be fitted snugly to the bridge of the nose.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it, if you do wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub;
- Made out of two layers of tightly woven 100% cotton fabric;
- Be discarded or washed after every use;
- Should not be worn damp or when wet from spit or mucus;
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind, do not touch the front of mask;
- The wearer should immediately wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing the mask.