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SEC-045: COVID-19 Health & Safety Requirement I Face Coverings

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Policy Type: University

Contact Office: [Emergency Management \(UVA\), Environmental Health and Safety](#)

Oversight Executive: President of the University

Applies To: Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy:

The University is committed to providing a safe environment in which to teach, perform research, work, study, and visit. Because the Coronavirus (COVID-19) can spread quickly and cause widespread illness and death, the University will implement measures it deems necessary in order to protect faculty, staff, students, contractors (vendors who have a contractual relationship with the University), volunteers, and visitors from potential exposure to this disease. The University has established requirements that adhere to the [Governor's Executive Order 63](#) as well as to guidelines that meet or exceed Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) recommendations relative to COVID-19.

Definition of Terms in Statement:

- Face Covering (Face Mask):

The most common types of masks include:

1. *Cloth Face-Coverings*: These can be purchased or made at home from cotton or other breathable and washable material. They are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health primarily to slow the spread of COVID-19 by reducing spread of the virus from the wearer to others. They are not intended to provide protection from inhalation of small particles or virus aerosols. According to CDC guidance, an effective cloth face covering will:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- Be secured with ties or ear loops;
- Include multiple layers of fabric;
- Allow for breathing without restriction; and
- Be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape

More specific guidance can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

2.

Medical/Surgical Masks: A loose fitting disposable mask (usually yellow, blue or green) made of several layers of thin fabric and designed to provide protection to others by reducing exposure to the saliva and respiratory secretions of the mask wearer. These masks are not intended to provide protection from inhalation of small particles or virus aerosols.

3.

-Respirators–(including N95s): A respirator is a tight-fitted mask designed to reduce inhalation of small, aerosolized particles, including virus particles. Fit-testing is required and respirators are subject to regulation by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration.

- **Social Distancing:**
A public health practice designed to limit the spread of infection by requiring sufficient physical space (at least six feet) between individuals.
- **Telecommuting:**
A work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace.
- **University Facility:**
Any defined space of the University, including a room, lab, series of labs, building, or controlled outdoor area.
- **University Grounds:**
The areas where administrative functions, teaching, and research facilities of the University that are used by members of the University community are located as well as athletic and recreational facilities.
- **University Property:**
Land or buildings that the University owns or leases and that is under the control of the Board of Visitors. University property also includes premises the University uses for activities of its offices, departments, personnel, or students.
- **Vendor:**
Any entity that supplies goods or services.

Policy Statement:

Face coverings **must be worn** by all faculty, staff, and students while inside a University facility or otherwise inside a building on University Grounds or on any University property when in the presence of others (e.g., common work spaces, meeting rooms, etc.). Face masks must also be worn on University transit buses. Appropriate use of face coverings or face masks is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. COVID-19 can be spread to others even if no symptoms are being displayed. **[Note: A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.]**



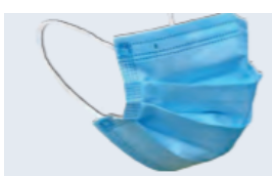

The University will provide two cloth face coverings per faculty, staff, and student working or studying in a University facility or on University Grounds. A disposable mask will be provided by the University should the faculty, staff, or student forget to bring their own. Individuals are responsible for laundering the face covering as necessary, in accordance with the guidance in [Section 3](#) below. Disposable masks must only be worn for one day and then disposed of in the trash. Individuals may provide their own face covering for their personal use.

1. Exemptions to this Policy (from [Executive Order 63](#)):

- A person eating and drinking at a food and beverage establishment on University Grounds.
- A person seeking to communicate with a hearing-impaired person, for which the mouth needs to be visible.
- Anyone with a health condition that keeps them from wearing a face covering.
- Any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
- A person in need of University or medical services may temporarily remove the face covering.

2.

Face Covering/Mask Type and Intended Use:

Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings/Masks				
Type	Cloth Face Covering	Disposable Mask	Medical-Grade Surgical Mask	N95 Respirator
				
Description	Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions.	Commercially manufactured masks that help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions	Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosols; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions when no valve is present.
use	Required for Academic Division community use in non-healthcare settings (e.g., office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas) where 6-foot social distancing cannot be consistently maintained. (Also necessary for ingress and egress of facilities.) A face covering is not required when working alone in an office but is required		These masks are usually reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazards determined by EHS. When staff are required to wear these masks for protection, they are considered Personal Protective Equipment and the use is subject to regulation by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration.	

	<p>when in the presence of others.</p> <p>Cloth face coverings may be unsuitable for some work activities involving certain hazards or materials; use disposable masks instead. Contact the University's Environmental Health & Safety for assistance.</p> <p>Replace daily.</p>	
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Note: Face coverings and N95 mask styles that feature an exhalation valve allow for external air flow and **must not be worn**.

3. Use and Care of Face Coverings:

a. Putting on the Face Covering/Disposable Mask:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering/disposable mask.
- Be sure the face covering/disposable mask fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face covering/disposable mask properly with the nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable).
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
- Throughout putting on the face covering/disposable mask, AVOID TOUCHING THE FRONT OF THE FACE COVERING/DISPOSABLE MASK.

b. Taking off the Face Covering/Disposable Mask:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering/disposable mask.
- When taking off the face covering/disposable mask, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear or untie the straps.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

c. Care, Storage, and Laundering:

- Keep face covering/disposable mask dry and stored in a bag when not in use.
- Cloth face coverings **should be washed after each use by the wearer** (per [CDC guidelines](#)). Cloth face coverings should be replaced immediately if damaged (e.g., ripped, punctured).
- Disposable masks must **not be used for more than one day** and must be disposed of in the trash at the end of the work shift or when it is soiled, wet, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material), or visibly contaminated.

4.

Travel to/from and Work/Study off University Grounds:

Faculty, staff, and students traveling to/from sites off University Grounds for work or study are expected to wear a face covering if in a vehicle with other individuals. Once at the work or study site, you should comply with the locale's requirements for wearing a face covering.

5.

Contractors, Volunteers, and Visitors:

Any contractor (vendors who have a contractual relationship with the University), volunteer, or visitor to the University must wear a face covering while inside a University facility or otherwise inside a building on University Grounds or on University property unless they meet the exemptions listed in [Section 1](#) above.

6.

Effective Term of the Policy:

This policy will remain in effect indefinitely until federal, state, local, and/or University directives deem a face covering is no longer necessary or recommended to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

7.

Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with relevant University policies.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Emergency Management \(UVA\)](#) or [Environmental Health and Safety](#).

Related Information:

[Commonwealth of Virginia Executive Order 63](#)

[Face Coverings](#) (EHS website)

[CDC | Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[HRM-003: Employment of Administrative or Professional General Faculty Members](#) (Section IV.D.)

[HRM-014: Standards of Conduct for University Staff Employees](#)

[STAF-003: Statement of Students' Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Policy on Disciplinary Suspension or Termination of Academic Faculty](#)

State Policy [1.60: Standards of Conduct](#)

Major Category: Safety, Security and Environmental Quality

Next Scheduled Review: 06/01/2023

Approved by, Date: President of the University, 06/01/2020

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