

# CITY OF TORRANCE INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: November 24, 2020

**TO: ALL USERS**

**FROM: Aram Chaparyan, City Manager**

**SUBJECT: Administrative Order to All Employees on Using Face Coverings**

On November 16, 2020, in response to significant increases in the incidence rates of COVID-19 in the state, the California Department of Public Health issued updated guidance concerning the use of face coverings. The updated guidance requires that individuals wear a face covering at all times when outside of the home, unless one of the eleven exemptions applies (nine exemptions apply to the City of Torrance workplace). This guidance concerning face coverings is now mandatory.

As City Manager, I am issuing an Administrative Order that all employees comply with this state mandate. You must wear face coverings in the workplace, unless one of the exemptions below applies.

## **Specific situations when employees are exempt from wearing face coverings:**

- Persons in a car alone or solely with members of their own household.
- Persons who are working in an office or in a room alone.
- Persons who are actively eating or drinking provided that they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet away from persons who are not members of the same household or residence.
- Persons who are outdoors and maintaining at least 6 feet of social distancing from others not in their household. Such persons must have a face covering with them at all times and must put it on if they are within 6 feet of others who are not in their household.
- Workers who are required to wear respiratory protection.
- Persons who are specifically exempted from wearing face coverings by other CDPH guidance.

## **Employees who are exempt from wearing face coverings at all time:**

- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance. Such conditions are rare. *Should this exemption apply to you, please contact your Department's Human Resources representative to submit the appropriate documentation for a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents you from wearing a face covering.*
- 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 face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

**Your face covering must cover your nose and mouth.** Please see the attached documents from the California Department of Public Health and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health for face covering options, and recommendations for maintaining the face covering.

The City will continue to keep employees updated with the latest guidance from the State and LA County regarding COVID-19.

Please stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aram Chaparyan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aram Chaparyan  
City Manager

Attachments: CADPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings (November 16, 2020)  
LA County Department of Public Health Guidance for Face Coverings (Updated July 17, 2020)



**Sandra Shewry**  
*Acting Director*  
**Erica S. Pan, MD, MPH**  
*Acting State Health Officer*

State of California—Health and Human  
Services Agency  
**California Department of  
Public Health**



**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
*Governor*

November 16, 2020

**TO:** All Californians

**SUBJECT:** Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings

**Note: The following guidance supersedes face coverings guidance released on June 18, 2020. This updated guidance mandates that a face covering is required at all times when outside of the home, with some exceptions.**

## Background

The risk for COVID-19 exposure and infection remains and will continue to be in our midst for the foreseeable next several months. Since the start of the pandemic, we have learned a lot about COVID-19 transmission, most notably that there are a large proportion of people who are infected but are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic, and they play an important part in community spread. The use of face coverings by everyone can limit the release of infected droplets when talking, coughing, sneezing, singing, exercising, shouting, or other forms of increased respiration, and they can also reinforce physical distancing by signaling the need to remain apart. In addition, increasing evidence also demonstrates a cloth face covering or mask also offers some protection to the wearer, too.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information about when face coverings are required. It mandates that face coverings be worn state-wide at all times when outside of the home, unless one or more of the exceptions outlined below apply. It does not substitute for existing guidance about physical distancing and hand hygiene.

## Guidance

People in California must wear face coverings when they are outside of the home, unless one of the exemptions below applies.

## Individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings in the following specific settings:

- Persons in a car alone or solely with members of their own household.
- Persons who are working in an office or in a room alone.
- Persons who are actively eating or drinking provided that they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet away from persons who are not members of the same household or residence.

- Persons who are outdoors and maintaining at least 6 feet of social distancing from others not in their household. Such persons must have a face covering with them at all times and must put it on if they are within 6 feet of others who are not in their household.
- Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service.
- Workers who are required to wear respiratory protection.
- Persons who are specifically exempted from wearing face coverings by other CDPH guidance.

## **The following individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings at all times:**

- Persons younger than two years old. These very young children must not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance. Such conditions are rare.
- 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 face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

**Note:** Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.

### **Additional Information**

## **What is a cloth face covering?**

A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

## **How should I choose and wear a cloth face covering?**

You should select a face covering that covers your nose and mouth, goes under the chin, and does not have significant gaps around the nose or other parts of the face. Look for face coverings that have three layers, if possible, and are still easy to breathe through. Be sure that the ear loops or ties are tight enough to keep the face covering from sliding down the nose. Always wear your face covering over your nose and mouth, not under your nose or under your chin.

## **How well do cloth face coverings work to prevent spread of COVID-19?**

There is increasing scientific evidence demonstrating that use of face masks or cloth face coverings by the public during this COVID-19 pandemic helps reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19

but feels well, as well as reduce exposure for the wearer. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill or under quarantine, but they are additive when combined with these primary interventions.

## When should I wear a cloth face covering?

You should wear face coverings whenever you are outside of your home, unless one of the exceptions described above applies to you. Individuals who have significant COVID-19 exposure outside of their home, such as in the workplace, should consider wearing a mask at home, especially if vulnerable individuals are part of their household.

## How should I care for a cloth face covering?

It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to keep cloth face coverings in until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face. Discard cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric

For additional information and resources regarding masks and face coverings, including types of recommended and not recommended masks, see the CDC Face Coverings Website.

California Department of Public Health  
PO Box, 997377, MS 0500, Sacramento, CA 95899-7377  
Department Website ([cdph.ca.gov](http://cdph.ca.gov))



Page Last Updated : November 16, 2020

# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

### Guidance for Cloth Face Coverings

**Recent Updates:**

7/17/20: Masks with one way valves should not be used

6/26/20: Individuals who are exempt from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition and who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others must wear an alternative such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge.

6/19/20: Those instructed not to wear a cloth face covering by a medical provider are exempt from having to wear one.

This document provides public health information on how members of the general public can safely use cloth face coverings when they need to leave their home for a short period of time to obtain essential goods or services. Members of the general public should use a clean face covering anytime they will be in contact with other people who are not household members in public or private spaces. It is important to note that face coverings are not a substitute for always practicing physical distancing and frequent handwashing.

Our best community and individual defense against COVID-19 is to wash our hands frequently, avoid touching our eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, avoid being around sick people and practicing physical distancing, especially by staying at home. Face coverings are not a replacement for these evidence-based strategies for slowing the spread of disease; they are just an additional tool that can protect others from possible exposure to respiratory droplets that may come from our mouth when we talk, sneeze or cough.

Cloth face coverings are not intended for use by healthcare workers, first responders, and others whose work requires close contact with people who are ill.

#### What is a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

#### Why wear a face cover?

Recent information has indicated that covering your nose and mouth can slow the spread of COVID-19 because:

- Individuals can be contagious before the onset of symptoms. You may be contagious and do not know it. If you have covered your nose and mouth, it can limit the spread of COVID-19.
- We touch our face less when our face is covered. Touching your face after touching something contaminated with COVID-19 increases your chances of getting sick with COVID-19.



### How well do cloth face coverings work to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

There is limited evidence to suggest that the use of cloth face coverings by the public during a pandemic could help reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing and washing hands and staying home when ill, but they may be helpful when combined with these primary interventions. If you plan to use a face covering it is important to keep your nose and mouth covered. Lowering the covering from your nose and mouth while talking defeats the purpose of wearing the face covering since you can spread virus while you talk.

### Why might I cover my face now, when a face covering was not recommended before?

The face covering was not previously recommended for the general public for protection from getting COVID-19. We are learning that individuals may be contagious and spread COVID-19 without their knowledge, even if they do not have symptoms. This new information suggests that a face cover may protect others from infection. Wearing a face cover may help prevent the spread of droplets that might be infectious.

### When should I wear a cloth face covering?

You are asked to wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth when you must be in public and there are others nearby. If you are in a solitary area you do not need to wear a face covering. Wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to physically distance yourself from others and to wash your hands frequently. Please see the various guidance documents on the [public health webpage](#) to know when face coverings might be required in specific places.

### What are my face covering options?

Acceptable, reusable face covering options for the general public include:

- Bandana
- Neck gaiter
- Homemade face covering
- Scarf
- Tightly woven fabric, such as cotton t-shirts and some types of towels

### Do children need to use cloth face coverings as well?

Children under the age of 2 (including infants) should not wear cloth face coverings. Those between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them but under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation. Children with breathing problems should not wear a face covering.

### Can I use a N95 respirator or surgical mask instead?

**Purchasing a respirator or surgical mask intended for the healthcare setting and health workers (including N95 respirators and surgical masks) is strongly discouraged.** Medical respirators and surgical masks are worn for protection by healthcare staff and those workers who provide care to a person who might have COVID-19 or other communicable diseases.

Those who are ill with COVID-19 symptoms should not be going out of their home, but if they must leave the home for medical visits, they may also use surgical masks but can use face coverings if surgical masks are unavailable. **It is important to note that if a mask is used it should not have a one way valve.**

In contrast, the face covering recommended for the general public is intended to prevent COVID-19 transmission to others by someone who might not know they are infected. Since the intent of the face cover is to primarily protect others rather than the person wearing the cover, a N95 respirator or surgical face mask is not necessary. Medical respirators and surgical masks are in short supply and will be increasingly needed to safely provide care for persons with COVID-19, it is critical that these medical items not be used outside of the healthcare setting.

### Is a face cover required?

Everyone is asked to wear a face covering when they are interacting with others who are not members of their household in public and private spaces. Face coverings are an additional tool that individuals should use to help slow the spread of COVID-19 but does not replace other social distancing requirements. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2 or anyone who is unconscious and should not be used by anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove the face covering without assistance. Those instructed not to wear a cloth face covering by a medical provider are also exempt from wearing one. Individuals who are exempt from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition and who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their medical condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred.

### How should I care for a cloth face covering?

It's a good idea to wash your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily. Have a bag or bin to store cloth face coverings until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face. Discard cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric