

LEPMPL EMPLOYEES

CLOTH FACE COVERING SUMMARY AND FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Library staff are required to wear a face covering while at work when they have direct contact with members of the public or co-workers, and are unable to maintain a six-foot distance. If staff are using a shared workspace or working in a common area of the library they must wear masks at all times. Shared work spaces include a shared computer station, phones and other equipment that multiple staff use. Masks must also be worn when working at personal workstations that are within six feet of another work station, or when another staff member approaches their workstation. Common areas of the library include such spaces as the collection, stairwells and offices. Thanks to several library staff, there are now masks for each employee to take two so you can rotate and wash between uses.

Why wear a face covering?

There is much we are still learning about Coronavirus Disease (“COVID-19”). However, there is increased evidence that people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus and that droplets produced when breathing and speaking may spread COVID-19 from person to person.

Should I wear a face covering in the workplace if I’m sick?

No. Do not work if you are sick. You should not report to work if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever (100.4 degrees or above), cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, chest tightness, extreme fatigue, chills, loss of sense of taste or smell, diarrhea or new gastrointestinal symptoms, muscle aches, or headaches.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, stay home and contact your doctor. If you develop symptoms while in the workplace, please report them to your supervisor and go home, then contact your physician.

Do I still need to stay at least 6 feet away from people if wearing a cloth face covering?

Yes. The CDC still recommends that you stay at least 6 feet away from other people (physical distancing), avoid congregating in groups of 20 or more, frequently wash your hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and other everyday preventive actions.

Why a cloth face covering?

Disposable surgical masks and N95 respirators are in short supply and should be reserved for healthcare workers or other medical first responders. Employees providing healthcare or in law enforcement may be required to wear an N95 or surgical mask and additional PPE (personal protective equipment).

Can I wear my own handmade or purchased face covering?

Yes, as long as it properly fits (see below) and can be safely worn in your work environment.

Proper fit?

- Any face covering or mask should cover both your nose and down over your chin.
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of your face.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.

How often do I need to wash my cloth face covering?

It should be routinely washed depending on frequency of use. If worn for long periods of time during the course of a work day, then wash once a day by hand (preferred to maintain shape and durability) or in a washing machine (preferably in a mesh bag) using any regular liquid detergent. The face covering should be fully dry before using again. Air drying is preferred to extend the life of the face covering.

Are there precautions I should take with my face covering?

Using face coverings incorrectly can spread germs. For this reason, it is important to properly wear, store, and dispose of face coverings by doing the following:

- When putting on and taking off a face covering, you might touch your face. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, or if not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer every time you put on and take off your face covering. If you are not able to clean your hands, be very careful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth when putting on and taking off your face covering.
- Try not to touch the outside of the face covering, rather when removing, do so at the ear loops and fold the right side out together.
- Do not put a used face covering in places where others can touch them or where germs trapped in your face covering can touch other surfaces, such as counter tops or your desktop.

- Do not throw your face covering loose into a briefcase or pocket. Keep a bag or a small container with you to store your face covering in until it can be washed.
- Do not share your cloth face covering with others.
- Face coverings should be discarded when: have damaged ties, straps have stretched out, no longer properly cover the nose and mouth, will not stay on face, or have tears or holes in fabric.

What if I have a medical or non-medical reason not to wear a cloth face covering? Privately let your manager or Deputy Director, Kim Hennings know you cannot wear a mask. Because some employees are unable to wear a face mask, it is important that those who can, do. Additional information or medical documentation may be required in order to accommodate the request.

What if other employees are not wearing a mask? Masks may not be able to be worn for a variety of reasons by some employees. Employees are not expected to disclose those reasons to others. All employees should be respectful of their co-workers' right to privacy.

Is it acceptable for an employee not to wear or remove a face covering for operations where it would be unsafe to keep in place or to be in compliance with safety requirements?

Yes. An employee does not need to wear a mask if it impedes their vision, if they have a medical condition, or would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task. Please privately discuss your concerns with your supervisor or Deputy Director, Kim Hennings.

Are masks required while driving for work?

If you are alone in the vehicle throughout the trip, no mask is needed in the vehicle. If someone is riding with you, you should both wear masks.

Do I need to wear a face covering in my private office or work area?

No, unless you cannot meet the 6-foot physical distancing requirements. If another coworker enters your private office or work area, you should put on your face covering.

Do I need to wear a face covering while walking to another office or common area or in a public hallway? Yes.

Do I need to wear a mask in a meeting room with other employees? Yes, if it is a common area.