



## COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

While keeping a physical distance of at least six feet from other people, practicing good hygiene measures (e.g., frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, covering coughs and sneezes), and staying home when ill are the best-known protections against COVID-19, growing scientific evidence supports that wearing a face covering that covers the nose and mouth can help protect you and others from the virus.

Because many cases of COVID-19 are mild or asymptomatic and COVID-19 can be transmitted days before an individual with the virus is symptomatic, our community is best protected when all individuals mask up. It is the shared responsibility of the entire SU community to protect not only their health but the health of those who are most vulnerable for serious illness and death from COVID-19.

Accordingly, Seattle University requires all persons to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose anywhere on SU property or leased facilities. This includes classrooms, restrooms, open office and common spaces, hallways, elevators, meeting rooms, libraries, and other indoor spaces. Face coverings are also required when outdoors on the SU campus. It is difficult to maintain distance from others even while outdoors on a busy university campus. Wearing face coverings outdoors on campus will help slow the spread of the virus.

For purposes of this policy, a face covering must:

- Fit snugly against the sides of the face
- Completely cover the nose and mouth
- Be secured with ties, ear loops, elastic bands, or other equally effective methods
- Cloth face coverings should include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be capable of being laundered and machine dried without damage or change to the shape
- Note: N95 respirators with exhalation valves are not effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and are not permitted to be used as a face covering. No vented masks of any kind are acceptable face coverings.

This face covering policy is in compliance with federal and state workplace safety requirements and with state and local public health directives. The policy is in effect until otherwise communicated.

## **APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to **all Seattle University faculty, staff, students, contractors, volunteers, vendors, and visitors**, on-site at any **Seattle** University location, unless specifically exempted below.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

### Job-specific PPE requirements:

Face coverings do not replace required job-specific PPE, such as medical/procedure masks, face shields, or respirators.

### Medical or health risk:

Face coverings are *not* required when:

- A medical professional has advised that wearing a face covering may pose a health risk to the person wearing the covering or impair their breathing; or
- Wearing a face covering would create a safety risk to the person as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines; or
- The person is physically unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance; or
- The person is deaf or hard of hearing and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication; or
- The person is a child aged 12 years or younger. Children age two and under must not wear a face mask due to the risk of suffocation. Children age three to 12 are not required to wear a face covering, but if they do, they should be supervised by an adult.

Additional accommodations will be determined on a case-by-case basis with Human Resources and the Student Health Center. Individuals may be required to provide documentation to substantiate their need for an exception or accommodation.

### Independent workspaces, outdoors, private residential unit:

#### **Face coverings are not required when:**

- Indoors in a single enclosed private office with your door closed
- Engaged in physical activities or recreation in a distanced manner or participating in university-sanctioned “high intensity” athletic practice activity or competition. Regardless, people are recommended to have a face covering with them and readily accessible when exercising, even if they’re not wearing it at that moment.
- Operating a single-occupancy vehicle
- Teleworking (i.e., not reporting on-site to a University work location)
- Inside a private on-campus residential unit

- Eating or drinking; a six-foot physical distance between people is required when eating and drinking and during breaks. Removing face coverings is not permitted in classrooms, which means that eating or drinking will not be allowed during class. Those needing to eat, drink or take medication during in-person classes should take a break to do so outside of the classroom.

## **UNIVERSITY AREA RESPONSIBILITIES**

Work areas or departments are required to conduct an assessment to determine the required PPE for their employees. Units are required to provide all employees working on-site at their SU work location with a face covering or job required PPE and replace them when necessary. However, employees are responsible for laundering their University-issued reusable cloth face coverings and may use a personally purchased alternative face covering as appropriate.

Employees must be trained on the proper use, care, storage, and disposal of face coverings and PPE.

## **POLICY ENFORCEMENT**

### *In the Workplace:*

Employees are expected to comply with the face covering requirement as a condition of employment, as well as for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, and the SU community. Area or department supervisors are required to ensure all of their employees have a thorough understanding of these requirements. Employees who do not comply should be reminded of the policy by their supervisor and provided additional education and training as needed.

If, after additional education and training, an employee refuses to comply, contact HR to initiate the appropriate corrective action or standard of conduct process.

If an employee states they are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition, refer the employee to the accommodation request process. Campus employees with concerns that other employees are not complying should speak with their supervisor or report it to HR.

### *Students:*

Students are expected to follow face covering requirements at all times when on campus. If a student is without a face covering in accordance with this policy, a polite verbal request for compliance should be made to educate, encourage, and persuade individuals to wear face coverings. Students do not need to wear a mask when inside a private on-campus residential unit.

If a student refuses to comply with the policy, the student should be referred to the Dean of Students. It is not appropriate to notify law enforcement.

Additional training and guidance regarding student enforcement will be available in fall 2020.

*Members of the public, and visitors on campus:*

Seattle University is committed to maintaining a respectful, productive, inclusive, and equitable workplace, and discrimination and other conduct that is inconsistent with our values will not be tolerated. If you see someone without a face covering in accordance with this policy, you should not confront them beyond a polite verbal request for compliance to educate, encourage, and persuade individuals to wear face coverings. It is not appropriate to notify law enforcement.

**RESOURCES**

- [\*Public Health- Seattle & King County Directive to Wear Face Coverings\*](#)
- Governor Inslee's [\*Safe Start plan\*](#)
- [\*Washington State Labor & Industries Requirements for COVID-19 Prevention in the Workplace\*](#)