

COVID-19 Resources

Face Coverings



The CDC has established recommendations for wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. The use of cloth face coverings may slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Face coverings are not a replacement for six-foot social distancing, frequent hand washing, other hygiene practices, cleaning protocols, and remaining at home when not conducting essential activities. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age two, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

It is important to note that the CDC's recommendations are not to use surgical masks or N-95 respirators for face coverings, which must be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders.

The following are general suggestions on wearing face coverings in the workplace. If you have questions, consult with your agency's legal counsel or contact your [assigned risk manager](#):

- If your county requires visitors to wear face coverings, ensure that proper signage is posted at entrances and in public areas.
- Assess whether wearing a face covering creates a safety hazard. If so, employees may be exempt from wearing a face covering.
- Employers should evaluate individual employee requests for exemption from wearing a face covering.
- Employers should provide employees with instructions or training on how to wear, maintain, and clean face coverings. See resource links below for content.
- Face coverings should be worn in areas where there is interaction with the public or co-workers. This includes at times when no one is present (ex: reception areas, public counters, restrooms, conference rooms, common work areas such as copy rooms, etc.).
- Wear face coverings where others are working nearby. If working in a private office where the public or co-workers do not enter, an employee may not need to wear a face covering.
- Employees working outdoors should also wear face coverings when working with others and interacting with the public.
- When employees are driving alone or with others, consider wearing face coverings to prevent the spread of respiratory droplets in carpool vehicles.
- Masks or washable fabric face coverings or reimburse employees that make or purchase their own (non-employer provided) face coverings.
- Employers should advise employees that face coverings must be work appropriate and not include offensive images or content.

- Cal/OSHA has not taken the position whether face coverings are personal protective equipment. A statement on this may be issued soon. In counties where face coverings are mandatory for essential workers, it can be legally argued that employers are required to pay for employees' face coverings. It is recommended that employers provide employees with an adequate supply of non-N95 disposable face
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Resources:

[CDPH Face Coverings Guidance](#)

[CDC Cloth Face Coverings: Questions and Answers](#)

[CDC Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission](#)

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