



COVID-19 and Returning to Campus Safely Face Covering FAQs

What exactly is a face covering?

"Face Covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face. A Face Covering can be made of a variety of synthetic and natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen. Ideally, a Face Covering has two (2) or more layers. A Face Covering may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. These Face Coverings are not intended for use by healthcare providers in the care of patients. "Surgical Mask" means American Society for Testing and Materials ("ASTM") Level 1, 2, or 3 approved procedural and surgical masks. An N95 respirator approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health ("NIOSH") (or a respirator from another country allowed by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, the Food & Drug Administration, or the CDC) is not recommended for general public use or use in public settings, as it should be reserved for healthcare providers and other medical first responders in a health care setting. A face shield that covers the nose and mouth are also considered to be face coverings.

The CDC recommends keeping these criteria in mind when wearing a face covering:

- Keep the mask snug but comfortable against the sides of the face
- The mask should be secured with ties or ear loops
- Face coverings should be made with multiple layers of material
- The masks must allow you to breathe without restriction
- Cloth masks should be machine washable and dry without changing the shape

Cloth face coverings may prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading respiratory droplets when talking, sneezing, or coughing. If everyone wears a cloth face covering when out in public, such as going to the grocery store, the risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 can be reduced for the community. Since people may spread the virus before symptoms start, or even if people never have symptoms, wearing a cloth face covering may protect others around you. Face coverings worn by others may protect you from getting the virus from people carrying the virus.

Will the college provide me with a face covering?

With the statewide face covering requirement outlined in Executive Order 147 we expect that most individuals coming to campus would have procured a cloth face covering. However, in the event someone does not have their personal face covering with them, or they have not yet procured one, we do have disposable masks available for students, employees and campus visitors. It is critical to note that these are a limited supply and we all want to be good stewards of this resource. If you do need one of the disposable face coverings please contact

Security at 828-734-5410 and they will bring you one. Please allow deliver time of up to 20 minutes. We expect that we will be wearing face coverings for a while. To that end, we would suggest procuring one or more cloth face coverings in the event the supply of disposable masks decreases.

How many times may I use a paper (disposable) face covering?

You may use a paper face covering until it becomes damaged, dirty or wet. We would encourage you to dispose of them and get a fresh one every couple of days, depending upon how frequently you use it during the day.

Do I really have to wear a face covering all the time? Is it required?

Haywood Community College is requiring face coverings to be worn when physical distance of six feet or more cannot be maintained. Even in those instances where physical distance of six feet or more exists, individuals on campus are encouraged to wear face coverings.

If you are in a private office with the door closed, then you do not have to wear a face covering. If you leave your office then your mask should be donned because the possibility exists that upon exiting your office you may have contact with someone where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

I have a health condition that makes it hard for me to wear a face covering. Do I still need to wear one?

Please reach out to the Human Resources Director and/or Director of Student Services to discuss potential accommodations. If a health condition makes wearing a mask intolerable, you will not need to wear one. The use a face guard in lieu of a face covering would be explored and suggested. A face covering does not need to be worn by an individual who meets one of the following exceptions:

- Should not wear a face covering due to any medical or behavioral condition or disability (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance);
- Is under eleven years of age;
- Is actively eating or drinking;
- Is strenuously exercising;
- Is seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible;
- Is giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience;
- Is working at home or is in a personal vehicle;
- Is temporarily removing his or her face covering to secure government or medical services or for identification purposes;
- Would be at risk from wearing a face covering at work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
- Has found that their face covering is impeding visibility to operate equipment or a vehicle; and/or
- Is a child whose parent, guardian, or responsible person has been unable to place the face covering safely on the child's face.

No proof or documentation is required if an individual falls into an exception category.

What should I do if I see a student or an employee not wearing their face covering?

It is certainly possible that you may encounter a visitor, student or coworker who is not wearing a face covering. The first thing is to remain calm and recognize there is probably a reason they are not wearing one. Perhaps they do not have one and are unsure of where to find one on campus. Maybe they have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing one. It's important that we all help each other through this time, and with this new requirement, so offer to assist them by letting them know where the nearest stash of masks can be found. If they say they do not need assistance, please be respectful of that.

If you have any questions or concerns, or notice someone repeatedly not wearing a face covering, please contact the Director of Human Resources.

Barring any medical accommodation, not wearing a face covering will be in violation of our guidelines and is subject to disciplinary action.

I am an Instructor and I have a student that refuses to wear a face covering while in class and/or on campus. What should I do?

Talk with them. Educate them on our approach and why we felt it important to implement the use of face coverings. Ask them why they desire to not wear a face covering. Offer a face shield as an alternative. If they continue to refuse, or, cite a medical reason, remind them of the other precautions that must be taken:

- Maintaining a minimum of six feet of distance at all times
- Washing hands often or using hand sanitizer

I have a cloth face covering. How should I wash it?

If you are using a cloth face covering, we recommend washing once a day by hand or machine using detergent. The face covering should be fully dry before using. We suggest having a few cloth face coverings to rotate between washes.

Here are some more tips from the CDC on washing your face covering: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

I had COVID-19 and have recovered. Do I still need to wear a face covering?

Yes. You should still wear a face covering regardless of whether or not you have recovered from COVID-19.

If we wear face coverings, can we gather together more often?

Face coverings are a supplement to all of the other precautions we are taking and will continue to take. Wearing a face covering does not ensure elimination of risk of exposure. Therefore, all of the guidelines for continuing to meet remotely where possible, limiting in-person interactions, sanitizing often, and washing hands should continue.

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:

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer, every time you put on and take off your mask. If you are unable to clean your hands, be very careful to not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Do not put face coverings where others can touch them or where germs trapped in your face covering can touch other surfaces, such as a desk, counter top or table.
- Do not throw your face covering loose in a bag or backpack. Keep a plastic bag with you to store your face covering if you will be taking it off while outside your home.
- Properly discard of used paper face coverings in the garbage.

I find it hard to communicate when wearing a mask, or talking with someone wearing a mask. Any tips?

Facial coverings and masks can make it difficult for some people to communicate. People who are deaf or hard of hearing and rely on facial cues may not understand you when your face is covered.

If you cover your face to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, be aware that you may inadvertently create a situation where another person may no longer understand you.

Here are some tips for communicating when using face coverings and masks:

- If you are with someone who doesn't seem to understand you, consider that they may be missing important cues to communicate.
- If you cannot temporarily remove your face covering to communicate, try writing or typing on a smartphone
- If there is space and it is safe, remove your mask while talking on conference calls or video chats
- If you or someone in your life struggles to understand people wearing facial coverings, consider creating a written script before leaving the house or programming information into a text-to-speak smartphone app.

I'd like to make my own reusable cloth face covering. How could I do that?

There are many patterns and tutorials available online for making a face covering. Here is a link for instructions on creating a no-sew and sewn mask from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html>

The tighter the weave and the thicker the cloth, the better it will fit your face and provide protection. It shouldn't be TOO thick, or it will be uncomfortable.

When choosing a face covering, look for:

- Tightly woven, 100% cotton fabrics such as bed sheets, curtains, woven shirts

- At least 2 layers
- Make sure you can breathe through it
- Elastic loops or ties to hold it in place
- A sewn-in, washable metal nose piece, for a snug fit (a plastic coated paper clip works)

Some face coverings also have one or more filter layers made of fabric interfacing. A coffee filter is okay if you can remove it for washing. Do not use HEPA filter materials like vacuum cleaner bags. These may be toxic. Experiment to find the best style for you. Can you wear elastic ear loops? Or do you prefer ties around your head?

If making your own, use materials already on hand (old sheets, shirts, bandanas, tea towels). Some materials, like ¼" elastic and fabric interfacing, may be hard to find in stores.

**BE A HERO:
COVER
YOUR
FACE**



Face covering dos and don'ts

- ✓ cloth or paper mask
- ✓ bandana
- ✓ scarf
- ✗ not the hero we need right now