

PURPOSE

To minimize the impact of COVID-19 in City workplaces and in the community, it is essential to maintain the health, safety and well-being of our employees. This policy establishes guidelines for the wearing of disposable non-medical masks and/or cloth masks.

GUIDELINES

The most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection include handwashing, cleaning and disinfecting of work areas, physical distancing (maintaining a distance of two (2) metres or six feet (6')) and for employees to stay at home if they are not feeling well. Masks should not be relied upon as the sole protective measure and may be considered for use as a protective measure in combination with other controls. Although BC's Provincial Health Officer has not mandated the use of face masks, it has strongly recommended their use when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Through the City's Safety Plan, various controls have been implemented in workplaces, such as:

- Reducing the number of people in the workplace and advising them not to be at work if they are not feeling well.
- Engineering controls (physical barriers).
- Administrative controls (handwashing, enhanced cleaning and minimizing high touch areas).

Each employee has the responsibility to maintain physical distancing which requires everyone to be mindful and proactive when at work.

Wearing of masks:

City Workplaces

- **Masks must be worn** in areas where physical distancing is not possible, including elevators, stairwells and City vehicles.
- **Masks must also be worn** when:
 - Staff are front facing, working with the public and not separated by a physical barrier.
 - Departments have advised staff to wear masks.
 - There is a fire drill.
 - Staff visit other floors.
- **Masks are also expected to be worn** when staff leave their immediate work areas and especially in common areas such as:
 - Hallways
 - Lunchrooms and coffee rooms

- Washrooms
- Copier rooms

As physical distancing can be inconsistent and unpredictable, it is expected that employees wear an appropriate mask when entering other public or private buildings during the course of their work activities.

Each employee has been issued 2 cloth masks and one disposable mask. Used non-medical disposable masks should be disposed of in waste containers. Employees are responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of cloth masks and they should be washed regularly. Further information on mask usage and care is provided in this document.

If an employee is unable to comply with this policy due to medical reasons, medical documentation may be requested by the employer in order to facilitate any accommodations that may be required.

This Interim Workplace Mask Policy will be reviewed and updated as needed, based on the evolution of the pandemic and guidance and direction of the Provincial Health Officer.

Putting on a Cloth Mask

Below is a step-by-step guide on how to [wear your mask properly](#).



1. Wash Hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer when soap and water not readily available
2. Use loops or ties to place mask over nose and mouth to secure it
3. Adjust mask to assure mouth and nose are covered
4. While wearing the mask avoid touching the mask

NOTE: While wearing a non-medical mask or face covering, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. You can also use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

Mask Care

- Keep your mask clean and dry. If it gets wet, it is less effective at preventing the spread of droplets to others.
- If your mask becomes wet, visibly soiled, or damaged, replace it.
- To minimize spreading germs and particles through the air do not shake dirty masks. If reusable masks have been in contact with someone who is sick, they can still be washed with other people's laundry.
- Clean your fabric mask after each use or at least daily.
- Wash cloth masks every day using your hand or with your laundry using regular laundry detergent and setting the cold or warm water setting, not hot. Store in a clean, dry place to prevent contamination.
- Practice good hygiene even if you are wearing a mask. This includes covering sneezes and coughs and washing hands. Do not touch your eyes, mouth, or mask (if you are wearing one).
- Any damage, fabric break down, or change in fit will reduce the already limited protection of cloth masks. Contact your Manager to discuss replacement of damaged mask/face covering.
- Air Dry- Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the cloth face covering in direct sunlight. Make sure to completely dry cloth face coverings after washing and before use.

Storage

- After you safely take the mask off, place in breathable paper bag or location so it can dry out from whatever moisture it collected during use.
- Store your clean mask in a sterile breathable paper bag. Remember to regularly dispose of these containers, so they do not contaminate your clean mask later.

Glasses fogging up

- Move your glasses lower down on your nose to leave more space between your glasses and your face; or
- Clean glasses with soap and water before putting on the mask. This creates a thin layer that temporarily prevents the glasses from fogging up.