

FACT SHEET: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The County continues to use the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for determining what level of PPE is required for job functions. With the exception of public safety and medical positions, most County job functions fall into a low or moderate risk category. Departments and the County's Occupational Safety Manager have worked to identify PPE required for positions; DGS and departments have worked to procure required PPE (including items for a "return-to-work" kit) with the intent of maintaining at least a 30-day supply of needed equipment (including masks) with additional capacity available should a resurgence of the virus occur in the fall.

In addition, the following items must be considered with PPE:

- Selected based upon the risk to the worker
- Properly fitted and periodically refitted as applicable (e.g., respirators)
- Consistently and properly worn when required
- Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced as necessary
- Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment. For laundering the cloth mask, the employee should follow the manufacturers' instructions for frequency and method of washing.

Employees in a high-risk category must consult OMS for any special Personal Protective Equipment request.

Employees are encouraged to wear County-provided PPE. However, if an employee chooses to wear their own cloth face covering in place of those provided by the County, they are allowed to do so, provided that the face covering must not contain graphics or images that are or may be potentially offensive, insensitive, inappropriate, or intimidating.

Employees are not permitted to bring any additional type of PPE that is not provided by the County (face masks are not covered under the Respiratory Protection Standard and are technically not PPE).

Federal regulations at 29 CFR 1960.10(b) state "Employees shall use safety equipment, personal protective equipment, and other devices and procedures provided or directed by the agency and necessary for their protection."

Facial Coverings ("Masks")

On June 18, 2020, the County Health Officer issued a Health Officer Directive and Order Regarding Face Coverings (copy attached at the end of this Fact Sheet, link provided here: [health officer directive](#)). That Order requires all County residents over the age of two to wear face coverings whenever they are in public and social distancing is not possible. This includes County employees and residents the County serves.

There are some circumstances where employees are NOT required to wear a mask. These include instances where an employee is alone in a private space with more than 6 feet of space such as in a private office or in a large maintenance bay with no other staff, or as dictated by a labor agreement. To avoid spreading the virus, employees are required to wear masks whenever they are in common areas

(copier rooms; bathrooms; break rooms; lobbies; elevators; hallways; etc.). If employees have a medical condition that makes it impossible to wear a mask, they should contact OMS (240-777-5118, or MedicalInfo.OMS@montgomerycountymd.gov) for evaluation. All other employees who are required to wear a mask and choose not to will be asked to leave the office, to use leave, and may be subject to disciplinary proceedings. If an employee observes a situation where they believe another County employee is not wearing a mask in conformance with County guidance (or is not complying with physical distancing requirements) they should report the matter to their supervisor (or to another management official, as appropriate).

Employees will be required to sign for receipt of the masks (or other PPE issued to them) and they must take the training required by OSHA. The receipt covers the face covering and confirms the training has been completed. This requirement applies even to employees that never stopped working and already have the PPE. Employees have to log-in and complete the form when they get the mask and have reviewed the instructions on how to wear the mask. This Risk Management form is on the e-Portal site: <https://ex01.montgomerycountymd.gov/eportal/cloth-mask-receipt-form/>.

We recognize that “one-size does not fit all,” so if an employee’s County-issued mask does not fit properly, they should contact their worksite safety coordinator, who will determine if an appropriately-sized mask is available from the department’s supply. If not, the worksite safety coordinator can contact DGS to get a different size mask. Employees should not return the prior mask into stock, and should not share masks with another employee. If an employee needs additional masks (e.g., to replace masks originally supplied) for their use, they should contact their worksite safety coordinator.

“Return-to-Work” Kits

DGS is working with departments to ensure departments have the required components for the return-to-work kits (two masks and hand-sanitizer for each employee, disinfecting supplies for cleaning, etc.). Supplies are provided in bulk to departments, and departments will then be responsible for appropriate distribution based on need at each worksite. Departments are expected to ensure they have an adequate supply and have been advised to request needed kit components through the DGS ordering link already provided to them.

Public’s Use of Facial Coverings

The County has posted signs at the entrances to County buildings advising the public that they must wear a facial covering when entering a County building. (NOTE: Any exceptions to these requirements based on nature of services provided to patients (e.g., dental patients during appointments, small children, etc.) would be handled by the department at the service site.)

What if someone from the public refuses to wear a mask? We want to ensure we are balancing providing required services to our residents with minimizing risks to our employees and other residents. If someone from the public refuses to wear a mask, we recommend the following steps:

- Staff should point out the requirement for a mask as noted on signs in each County facility.

- If the customer still refuses to wear a mask, the staff should escalate the issue to the onsite manager to determine if or how services could be provided to the individual through an alternative means.
- If services cannot be provided safely to the customer and/or the customer becomes belligerent or abusive, the onsite manager should ask them to leave the building until they can come back wearing a mask, in compliance with the Health Officer Order.
- If the customer refuses to leave, the onsite manager should contact security or MCPD for assistance.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Raymond L. Crowel, Psy.D.
Director

**HEALTH OFFICER DIRECTIVE AND ORDER
REGARDING FACE COVERINGS**

Pursuant to State Executive Order 20-06-10-01

June 18, 2020

I, Travis A. Gayles, M.D., Ph.D., Health Officer for Montgomery County, Maryland, as a designee for Robert R. Neall, Secretary of Health for the State of Maryland, finding it necessary for the prevention and control of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (“SARS-CoV-2” or “2019-NCov” or “COVID-19”) and for the protection of the health and safety of patients, staff, and other individuals in Montgomery County, Maryland, hereby authorize and order the following actions for the prevention and control of this infectious and contagious disease under the Governor’s Declaration of Catastrophic Health Emergency.

I. Definitions.

- a. “Face Covering” means a covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, but is not a Medical-Grade Mask. The term “Face Covering” includes, without limitation, scarves and bandanas.
- b. “Medical-Grade Mask” means an N95, KN95, surgical, or other mask that would be appropriate for a health care setting.
- c. “Social Distancing” means a distance of at least six-feet between persons who are not in the same family or household.

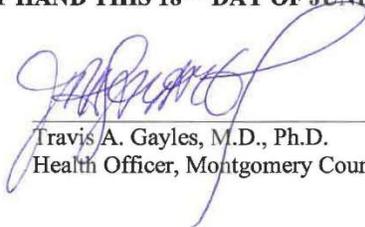
II. Use of Face Coverings.

- a. All County residents over the age of two shall wear face coverings whenever they are in public and social distancing is not possible.
- b. County residents are not required to wear face coverings while seated at a food service establishment.
- c. Single-use Face Coverings shall be properly discarded in trash receptacles. It is recommended that all reusable Face Coverings be cleaned frequently (at least once per day).
- d. Wearing a Medical-Grade Mask satisfies any requirement in paragraph II.a to wear a Face Covering, but all residents of Montgomery County are urged to reserve Medical-Grade Masks for use by health care workers and first responders.

III. General Provisions.

- a. This Order remains effective until after termination of the state of emergency and the proclamation of the catastrophic health emergency has been rescinded, or until rescinded, superseded, amended, or revised by additional orders.
- b. The underlined paragraph headings in this Order are for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the interpretation of this Order.
- c. If any provision of this Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Order are severable.
- d. A person who knowingly and willfully violates this Order or any Local Order is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or both.

**THIS ORDER IS ISSUED UNDER MY HAND THIS 18TH DAY OF JUNE 2020
AND IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.**



Travis A. Gayles, M.D., Ph.D.
Health Officer, Montgomery County