



## FACE MASKS / COVERINGS POLICY GUIDANCE FOR PROTECTION AGAINST COVID-19

Approved 6.2020\_sg

The Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven has developed policies and methods to help protect our employees against COVID-19 with the use of face masks/coverings.

- It is mandatory that protective face coverings/masks be worn in all common areas of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven/JCC Campus unless you are in your own workspace, or eating, and able to maintain social distancing.
- If, due to circumstances such as health-related conditions, you are not able to wear protective face coverings/masks, please notify your supervisor prior to entering the facility.

Common areas include, but are not limited to:

- Hallways
- Elevators
- Lobbies
- Bathrooms
- Copy / Mail Area

We request that employees and guests bring and wear their own clean face masks/coverings, however the JFGNH / JCC will provide face masks/covering to employees and visitors to our facility in the event they do not have one. The masks are not respirators however they may provide some protection to employees from exposure to airborne droplets of the virus.

*On the next several pages, detailed information about masks and use of mask follows. PLEASE READ this information and return a signed copy of this memorandum to your supervisor indicating that you have read it.*

**I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Proper Usage of Face Masks/Coverings to Protect Against COVID-19 Document, and that non-compliance with these procedures can result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.**

---

Print Name

---

Signature

---

Date

## PROPER USAGE OF FACE MASKS/COVERINGS TO PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19

The following is to provide guidance and recommendations on the proper use of face masks/coverings used to cover the mouth and nose to either protect the wearer or protect people to which the wearer is exposed. Some of these face coverings are tools that can be used to prevent the spread of disease. However, it is important to recognize that the best way to prevent exposure to the new coronavirus is through a combination of good practices, including hand hygiene, physical (social) distancing and use of a face covering when appropriate. Use of a face mask/covering MUST NOT take the place of proper hand hygiene and physical distancing but be used in addition to these critical practices.

The World Health Organization (WHO) currently “encourages the general public to wear masks where there is widespread transmission and physical distancing is difficult, such as on public transport, in shops or in other confined or crowded environments”.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends "wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain...especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Recent studies found that a significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms ('asymptomatic') and that even those who eventually develop symptoms ('pre- symptomatic') can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in proximity - for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing - even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms."

**The cloth face coverings recommended by CDC are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.**

Given these recommendations, the JFGNH / JCC is implementing standard operating procedures for guidance intended to assist in proper usage and disposal of face masks/coverings.

### GENERAL PURPOSE OF FACE MASKS/COVERINGS

Face masks that cover the lower face (“half-mask”), including nose and mouth, are one type of personal protective equipment (PPE) used to protect the wearer from airborne particles and liquids that can contaminate the lower face and/or mouth, nose, and lungs. Similarly, some face masks can prevent the wearer’s respiratory droplets from being released, thereby limiting exposure to others. Given the limited supply of many types of face masks during the current COVID-19 crisis, particularly, surgical and N-95 type masks, there are many cloth and homemade, Do-it-Yourself (DIY) face coverings being made and used that do not meet the same standards of protection as surgical and N-95 masks.

A face mask/covering is a tool to help avoid and/or contain illness. It does not guarantee that the wearer will not acquire illness. Therefore, someone wearing a face covering should not decrease the frequency of handwashing and should not expose themselves to potentially sick individuals unnecessarily because they think that the mask will protect them. The wearer should take all precautions they would normally take if they were not wearing a mask.

### SURGICAL -TYPE MASKS

Surgical masks are generally loose-fitting, **single-use** devices that create a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and the immediate environment but are NOT designed to provide a tight fit around the nose and mouth. Surgical masks used in the U.S. are regulated by the Food and Drug

Administration. Surgical-type masks can be labeled as surgical, isolation, dental, or medical procedure masks. They might also have ear loops, ties, or bands and are typically designed to fit loosely (though some styles are made to fit tight over the face). Additionally, they might have a face shield to cover the eyes and other parts of the face. Surgical face masks do not provide complete protection from germs and other contaminants because of the loose fit between the surface of the face mask and the wearer's face.

## **CLOTH/DIY FACE COVERINGS AND WHEN TO WEAR THEM**

Government agencies and health professionals strongly urge individuals to not report to work when they are ill. Additionally, FDA's Good Manufacturing Practices, 3rd party audits, and most companies' policies explicitly restrict ill workers. In general, authorities recommend individuals wear a face mask/covering if they are sick, although an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 should be isolated and not allowed in the workplace until they are cleared to return.

There is increasing public concern that potentially pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic individuals can unknowingly transmit the virus to others.

Due to the shortage of surgical/N-95 face masks, face coverings made of cotton or other fabrics are being produced commercially and by also by individuals, and can be used as an additional means to protect wearers from exposure to the coronavirus or reduce potential transmission from the wearer to other individuals.

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in settings where social (physical) distancing measures are difficult to maintain. The use of a face covering could slow the spread and transmission of the coronavirus between individuals; however, wearing a face covering should NOT take the place of other critical measures such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing measures. CDC provides additional guidance on cloth and DIY face coverings.

## **HOW TO PROPERLY PUT ON A FACE MASK**

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Determine which side of the mask is the top. This is the edge used to mold to the shape of the nose, if applicable
  - For some masks, the top side has a stiff bendable edge
- Determine which side of the mask is the front
  - For some masks, the front of the mask is usually colored and should face away from you with the inside (white side) touching your face.
- Follow specific instructions for the type of mask you are using
  - Face mask with ear loops
    - Hold mask by the ear loops
    - Place a loop around each ear
  - Face mask with ties
    - Bring the mask to your nose level and place ties over the crown of your head
    - Secure with a bow
  - Face mask with bands
    - Hold mask in your hand with the nosepiece or top of the mask at fingertips, allowing the headbands to hang freely
    - Bring the mask to your nose level and pull the top strap over your head so that it rests over the crown of your head
    - Pull the bottom strap over your head so that it rests at the nape of your neck.

- Mold or pinch the top edge to the shape of your nose, if applicable
- Pull the bottom of your mask over your mouth and chin
- A mask is worn properly when it covers the nose, mouth and chin

### WHILE WEARING A FACE MASK/COVERING

Individuals who are not accustomed to wearing a face mask might find the mask uncomfortable or distracting. An important component of a disease-prevention strategy is to limit touching the face. An uncomfortable or poorly fitted mask could encourage touching the face, which is counter to the goal of wearing a face covering. It is critical that wearers do not inadvertently increase their exposure by continually adjusting the mask/covering and touching the face.

DO	DO NOT
✓ Wash hands before and after putting on mask	✗ Don't wear if wet or soiled
✓ Make sure the mask has no defects (e.g. tears, torn straps, or ear loops )	✗ Don't leave mask hanging off one ear, hanging around neck, or place on top of head
✓ Secure the mask around head and neck or ears	✗ Don't place mask on surfaces (e.g. countertops) to store for reuse
✓ Ensure mask is covering nose, mouth, and chin	✗ Don't reuse a single-use mask, dispose after wearing once
✓ Only touch straps/bands when removing and disposing a mask	✗ Don't touch the front or back sides of the mask, as they could be contaminated after use

### WHEN TO CHANGE A FACE COVERING

Good practices should be followed when wearing face coverings, which should be changed if they become soiled. Ideally, face coverings should be changed at every break, restroom visit, or any other reason to remove the face covering. Never wear an individual face covering for longer than one day. If an employee must use a single cloth face covering throughout the day due to supply limitations, they should limit exposure to food contact surfaces and foods and follow the recommendations in this document about putting on and removing a face mask/covering. Discard cloth face coverings that:

- No longer cover the nose and mouth
- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Have holes or tears in the fabric

## HOW TO REMOVE A FACE MASK

- Clean your hands with soap and water before touching the mask.
- Avoid touching the front and inside of the mask as these surfaces of the mask may now be contaminated
- Only touch ear loops, ties, or bands to remove masks
  - Face mask with ear loops:
    - Hold both ear loops and lift and remove the mask
  - Face masks with ties
    - Untie the bottom bow first, then untie the top bow. Pull the mask away from you as the ties are loosened
  - Face mask with bands
    - Lift the bottom strap over your head, then pull the top strap over your head.
- Dispose of single-use mask in a closed bin or garbage. Avoid shaking or other activity that may increase the possibility of dispersing droplets in the air
- Wash your hands again with soap and water

## LAUNDERING REUSABLE CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

- Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use
- For cloth coverings, washing with common laundry detergents, the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used, and complete drying at a hot temperature setting is recommended
- Washing by hand
  - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
    - 5 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) household bleach per gallon of room temperature water  
or
    - 4 teaspoons household bleach per quart of room temperature water
  - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection. Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
  - Soak the face covering in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
  - Rinse thoroughly with cool or room temperature water
- ***NOTE: Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person CAN be washed with items that have not been in contact with a sick individual***

## HOW TO DRY REUSABLE CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

- Make sure to completely dry cloth face covering after washing
- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry
- Air dry
  - Lay flat and allow to completely dry
  - If possible, place the cloth face covering in direct sunlight

## FOR PERSONS ENGAGED IN CLEANING

- Do not shake dirty laundry. This minimizes the possibility of dispersing virus in the air.
- Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry (hampers, bags, etc.) with typical cleaning products
- Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items
- Wash hands immediately after removing gloves or after handling dirty items
- Clean and disinfect hampers/carts/bags daily

## WHEN TO REQUEST A FACE MASK AT WORK

- If you forget or misplace a face mask/covering
- If it becomes soiled, damaged or in any way unsanitary

## OTHER TYPES OF MASKS/COVERINGS

**N95 masks** are respiratory protective devices designed to achieve a very close facial fit and very efficient filtration of airborne particles. The 'N95' designation means that when subjected to careful testing, the respirator blocks at least 95 percent of very small (0.3 micron) test particles. If properly fitted, the filtration capabilities of N95 respirators exceed those of surgical face masks. However, even a properly fitted N95 respirator does not eliminate the risk of illness or death. NOTE: During the COVID-19 pandemic, N95 respirator masks are reserved for healthcare workers.

**Dust masks** are designed to reduce the user's exposure to pollen, dust and other airborne nuisance particles commonly encountered when doing yard work or other activities around the home or job site. These can typically be purchased in home improvement stores but are NOT designed nor capable of providing a high-level barrier from hazardous microorganisms such as coronavirus.