

Policy Title:	Required Face Coverings for Public Health & Safety
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Governing Body:	Southern Oregon University	Policy Number:	FAD.088
Policy Contact:	Environmental Health and Safety Manager	Date Revised:	September 2021
Custodial Office:	Environmental Health and Safety	Date Approved:	September 2021
Approved By:	President	Next Review:	November 2023
Related Policy:			

Revision History

Revision Number:	Change:	Date:
	Initial version	September 2020
1	Revision (revise definition of face coverings and guidance on use of face shields)	November 2020
2	Revision per current order of the governor.	September 2021

A. Purpose

To define the times and locations that face coverings are required to maximize the safety of students, faculty, employees, and visitors.

B. Definitions

- Face coverings are personal protective equipment that are made of cloth, polypropylene or paper or other face coverings that cover the nose and the mouth and rest snugly above the nose, below the mouth and on sides of the face and are used to help prevent the spread of airborne particles and respiratory droplets (e.g., surgical masks; cloth, paper or disposable masks; gaiters made of at least two layers of fabric; or other alternative face coverings that meet this definition).
- Surgical mask or respirator is a medical-grade mask reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders as recommended by current Centers for Disease Control guidance.
- Not acceptable face coverings include shirts; scarves; bandanas; gaiters made with a single layer of fabric; masks with valves; mesh or lace masks; and those with openings, holes or visible gaps in the design or material. Face shields are generally not considered appropriate face coverings in normal circumstances; exceptions are addressed in paragraph 4 below.

C. Policy Statement

1. To promote the safety and wellbeing of the campus community, Southern Oregon University requires all staff, faculty, students, and visitors to use face coverings (as defined in this policy) when physically present in enclosed

public or common areas. Face coverings should be worn in combination with other protective measures, such as physical distancing, hygiene etiquette, and proper hand washing. Individuals requiring accommodations are strongly encouraged to contact Human Resources or Disability Resources, as detailed in paragraph 5, in advance of their presence on campus as some services may not be available if accommodations are not in place prior to coming to campus.

2. Situations that require face coverings are very fluid and require the ability to adjust to changing guidance and circumstances very quickly. Other sections of this policy communicate what constitutes an acceptable face covering, appropriate exceptions to the requirement, approaches to enforcement, and other detailed and valuable information about the face covering requirement. Those elements of the policy are intended to be fixed and continuing so that everyone knows what is expected and how to comply.

Nonetheless, there are times when the University President will need to quickly change the times, places, or activities covered by the other requirements of this policy, usually in response to changing public health authority guidance. For this reason, the section of this policy in **BLUE** immediately below provides a regularly updated list of the campus settings that presently require the use of a face covering under this policy. The settings are subject to frequent modification on short notice. The section in **BLUE** below will be promptly updated every time law, regulation, executive order, or open announcement from the University President require a change to the times, places, or activities for which face coverings are required. At the present time, the places requiring a face covering are:

- **All indoor spaces and university activities, on or off campus, including but not limited to:**
 - All indoor spaces
 - Any outdoor space if the individuals cannot or do not consistently maintain at least six feet of distance from individuals not in their household.
- Any activity, indoor or outdoor, where the University President or vice president determines that the safety and operational needs of the activity favor use of a face covering
- Any activity or area on campus that is requiring the use of a face covering as a reasonable accommodation.
- Any spaces or university activities where masks are expressly required by law, regulation, executive order, or any other mandate with the full force and effect of law.

3. N95 and cloth masks are preferred face coverings as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the face covering coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. Permissible alternatives to such face coverings (as defined above) should be considered in the following limited circumstances:

- Those with specific health conditions, including people with difficulty breathing
- Those with a heightened sensitivity to having something placed over their face
- Activities where the use of such face coverings may hinder clear communication (e.g., teaching, advising, and engaging with deaf or hearing-impaired persons)

4. Use of a face shield alone (without an additional approved face covering) can be used only on a very limited basis such as:

- When a person has a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a mask
- When people need to see mouth and tongue motions in order to communicate
- When an individual is speaking to an audience momentarily and clear communication is not otherwise possible (audience should wear masks)

If a face shield is being used as a face covering, the administration reserves the right to require other personal protective equipment or protective measures be used in conjunction with the face shield.

5. Exceptions to the use of face coverings in places where it is required:

- Person is under 5 years of age
- Person has a medical condition that makes it hard to breathe when wearing a face covering and has arranged an accommodation through Human Resources or Disability Resources, as appropriate
- Person has a disability that prevents the wearing of a face covering and has arranged an accommodation through Human Resources or Disability Resources, as appropriate
- When the use goes against documented industry best practices for a specific position, or by law or regulation, including the use of standard personal protective equipment per Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards
- When working alone in an enclosed workspace, such as an office (but must be prepared to put on a face covering if someone enters your private workspace or you leave that space and go into a public space)
- When eating or drinking
- Any SOU student unable to wear a face covering should contact Disability Resources for a review of a reasonable accommodation
- Any SOU employee or student employee unable to wear a face covering should contact Human Resources for a review of a reasonable accommodation
- Any visitor unable to wear a face covering shall still be required to maintain social distance and shall coordinate with a University employee in charge of the event prior to coming to campus; in extreme circumstances, campuses may be closed to visitors.
- Private vehicles or private residence (e.g., apartments and houses)
- Any other exceptions required by law, regulation, executive order, or any other mandate with the full force and effect of law.
- Any other exceptions allowed by law or executive order, unless expressly disallowed by this policy.

6. Enforcement

- When and where a face covering is required, if a person is not wearing a face covering, they will be asked if they have a medical condition or disability that prevents them from doing so, and to respond with “yes or no” only.
 - If yes, the person will not be required to wear a face covering. Students should be referred to Disability Resources and employees to Human Resources, each for an interactive dialogue regarding the accommodation best suited to the activity.
 - If no, the person will be asked to wear or be offered a face covering.
- By way of example, if a student arrives in class without a face covering when a requirement is in effect, then the faculty member should ask the student if they have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a face covering. If they answer yes, then the faculty member should immediately send the student to Disability Resources. There, the student and Disability Resources will discuss the possible accommodations. Similar steps would apply where a supervisor would direct an employee to Human Resources. There are many accommodations that can be provided singularly or in combination to a person who cannot wear a mask (video accessibility, face shields in combination with indoor distancing, a short leave from the class period). However, a complete exemption from wearing a face covering while indoors and in proximity to others is not considered a reasonable accommodation under OHA or ADA guidance.
- When the policy is declared to be in effect, individuals who refuse to wear a face covering in the absence of an exception to the policy requirement will be referred to remote-only service, asked to return with a face covering, asked to relocate to an appropriate location, or may be refused service.

- Non-compliance with a face covering requirement is considered a violation of this policy and may be enforced in the same manner as other policy violations.
- When applicable, this policy will be enforced with regard to students under the Student Code of Conduct and violations will be followed up accordingly.

7. Additional information:

- SOU will provide members of the SOU community with one face covering if needed.
- SOU has zero tolerance for abuse, bias or discrimination of others related to their use or non-use of a face covering, including but not limited to acts of shaming persons for wearing a face covering, acts of shaming persons for not wearing a face covering, shaming individuals with health conditions that prevent wearing a face covering, or abuse of an employee, student, or other person for attempting or requesting adherence of the requirement that face coverings be worn in the manner required.
- Face coverings should be void of any content that could be perceived as inappropriate, derogatory, or offensive in nature or that violate SOU's policy on Speech Activities (AAD.043). For further information regarding the permissible time, place and manner limitations on such content, please consult the aforementioned Speech Activities Policy (AAD.043).

8. Southern Oregon University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, hearing status, color, sex, pregnancy, political affiliation, religion, creed, ethnicity, national origin (including ancestry), citizenship status, physical or mental disability, body size, age, marital status, family relationship, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, veteran or military status (including special disabled veteran, Vietnam-era veteran, or recently separated veteran), predisposing genetic characteristics, domestic violence victim status or any other protected category under applicable local, state or federal law (including Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and section 106.8(b)(2) of the Final Rule). Should there be any concerns with respect to such discrimination, please contact SOU's Director of Equity Grievance/Title IX Coordinator, Angela Fleischer. Contact information for Angela Fleischer is as follows:

Angela Fleischer, MSW, LCSW
Director of Equity Grievance/Title IX Coordinator
541-552-7079
Stevenson Union 321, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Ashland, OR 97520
fleischea@sou.edu

9. The University President shall have the authority to declare that the requirements of this policy are in full force and effect and its requirements will remain in full force and effect until the University President declares that its requirements have been lifted.

10. This policy shall remain in the policy library after the University President has rescinded their declaration of effectiveness. To assist in addressing any health or safety need that may benefit from a mask requirement, the University President may declare that that the requirements of this policy will resume upon communication to the students, faculty, and staff. This policy may be amended at any time and without notice to comply with applicable guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, other federal agencies, or state and local agencies.

This policy may be revised at any time without notice. All revisions supersede prior policy and are effective immediately upon approval.

D. Policy Consultation

Environmental Health and Safety; Student Health and Wellness Center; Human Resources; Incident Response Team; Resumption of Activities Working Group; and Policy Council were consulted on the original policy. Revision was coordinated with Policy Council. Policy was posted for community comment on November 10, 2020.

The Policy Contact, defined above, will write and maintain the procedures related to this policy and these procedures will be made available within the Custodial Office.