As of August 31, 2021, face coverings are required for all employees in all indoor City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities and workspaces (including City vehicles). For a list of exceptions for the temporary removal of a face covering, see the FAQ section, below. For the most up to date information, visit the COVID-19 One City page for updates.

COVID-19 & RESPIRATORY ILLNESS -- FACE MASK QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

This document will provide guidance for employees who are required to wear a face covering / mask to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses in the workplace. This reference guide will help you in understanding the different types of masks, what they are used for, and how and when to use them. It must be noted that face masks are not to be used as an alternative to staying home when sick. Employees are to complete a Pre-shift Screening Form before leaving for work and are encouraged to stay home and contact their supervisor if feeling unwell.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mask type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>Examples of when to use</th>
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| Non-Medical Mask  | Acts as a barrier device only to catch pathogens (i.e. viruses, bacteria) shed in liquid droplets and aerosols from the wearer's mouth and nose. These masks are subject to testing and design standards. | - Non-medical masks are required as a control associated with a hazard assessment  
- Requires accompanying hygiene, donning/doffing and disposal practices  
- Facial hair, in most cases will not interfere with use and these may be worn by persons having facial hair  
- Masks with exhalation valves are not recommended because they may allow infectious droplets or aerosols to potentially leave the mask  
- Alberta Health and Health Canada recommend non-medical masks be made of three layers. | When inside City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities and workspaces (i.e. when arriving at the work location, using the elevator and stair wells and when accessing shared spaces such as washrooms and lunchrooms).  
When using public transit (including ride shares, taxis, motor coaches and shuttles), when on transit stations/platforms, and when riding in City vehicles with others. |
| Cloth Face Covering | Typically handmade, sewn or assembled from fabric and used to entrap and contain respiratory droplets and aerosols expelled from the wearer. | - Risks, limitations and quality vary widely due to no testing or design standards  
- Cloth face coverings should not be worn in place of non-medical face masks issued as a control associated with the hazard assessment  
- Facial hair, in most cases will not interfere with use and these may be worn by persons having facial hair  
- Alberta Health and Health Canada recommend cloth face coverings be made of three layers with one | When inside City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities and workspaces (i.e. when arriving at the work location, using the elevator and stair wells and when accessing shared spaces such as washrooms and lunchrooms).  
When using public transit (including ride shares, taxis, motor coaches and shuttles), when on transit stations/platforms, and when riding in City vehicles with others. |
| N95 Filtering Respirator | Protects the wearer from airborne particle hazards by filtering particles from the air. These respirators are intended to seal tightly to the wearer’s face and are subject to testing and design standards. | • Requires fit testing and health screening before use  
• Requires accompanying hygiene, donning/doffing and disposal practices  
• Facial hair will interfere with respirator seal, and wearers must be clean shaven to wear N95  
• Masks with exhalation valves are not recommended because they may allow infectious droplets or aerosols to potentially leave the mask. | Related to COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses, N95 respirators should be used for high-risk & close contact situations identified through a hazard assessment, particularly when there is a risk of exposure to biological aerosols. N95 respirators are most commonly used for workplace particulate respiratory hazards such as dust and silica. |
| Face Shield | A type of PPE that aims to protect the wearer’s face (or part of it) from hazards such as flying objects, chemical splashes, or potentially infectious materials. | • Face shields do not provide adequate protection from the sides and the underside  
• Face shields cannot be used as an alternative to a non-medical mask | Related to COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses, face shields are typically used for high-risk & close contact situations, and are worn with additional respiratory protection such as an N95 respirator. |
| Bandanas, Neck Gaiters and Scarves | Bandanas, neck gaiters (neck warmers) and scarves are not recommended face coverings because they do not fit securely, are not multiple layers and are difficult to remove without contaminating yourself. | • These items are intended to protect against the weather elements and colder temperatures and are not considered an acceptable alternative to non-medical mask or face covering | For the control of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness, use other types of acceptable non-medical mask, face covering or filtering respirators. |
| Mouth Shield Mask | Mouth shield masks are a hybrid device made from a face shield that has been modified to fit more like a mask or face covering. | • These devices are not considered an acceptable alternative to non-medical mask or face covering because they do not effectively contain the respiratory droplets and aerosols expelled from the wearers mouth and nose | For the control of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness, use other types of acceptable non-medical mask, face covering or filtering respirators. |

**Mask Safety & FAQ’s**

Please follow guidance from the Government of Alberta on *How to use a mask* to ensure safe and effective use of face coverings in the workplace. The following is a list of precautions to protect yourself and others when using face coverings:

- Wash your hands immediately before putting on a face covering and immediately after taking it off (in addition to practicing good hand hygiene while wearing it);
- Ensure it fits well over the nose and chin, and provides minor gaping;
- Avoid touching your face mask while using it;
- Change a cloth mask as soon as it gets damp or soiled; and
- When removing the mask, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and try to remove the mask by only touching the straps.
Q. Where are employees required to wear masks or face coverings?
The mandatory requirement to wear a face covering in City of Edmonton owned & operated facilities applies to all employees & contractors in all locations where workers are present. All workers should expect to wear a mask at all times, except during limited times when an exception applies (below):

- The person is alone at a workstation and separated from others;
- The person is separated from every other person by a physical barrier that prevents droplet transmission;
- The person is consuming food or drink [they must be 2 metres away from others];
- The person is unable to wear a face mask due to a mental or physical health concern or limitation [this must be confirmed with Disability Management];
- The person is a lifeguard on active duty;
- The person is an aquatic instructor in water during a lesson; or
- A hazard assessment determined the person’s safety will be at risk if they wear a mask while working.

Q. What is the difference between a face covering, a mask and a respirator?
A face covering is typically a handmade or manufactured mask made of cotton or similar fabrics. They are used to contain and prevent the spread of fluids from the mouth or nose, in the form of respiratory droplets, to others and environmental surfaces. A mask is a medical-grade or non-medical grade face mask (also known as a surgical or procedure mask) that does not seal tightly to the face to act as a filter to protect the wearer. They have the same purpose as a face covering, but are subject to testing and design standards to ensure they perform as intended. A filtering facepiece respirator (N95) protects the wearer by filtering particles from the air the wearer breathes. These respirators are intended to seal tightly to the wearer’s face and are subject to rigorous testing standards. Refer to the Face Masks Quick Reference Guide for more information.

Q. As a supervisor, what should I say to frontline employees who do not want to wear cloth face coverings?
All employees are required to wear a mask or face covering in all indoor public spaces and workplaces subject to limited exceptions as listed above and/or if a hazard assessment has identified appropriate controls are in place and a face covering is no longer required. This is a mandatory workplace requirement.

Q. I have an underlying health condition, will wearing a face covering affect my health?
Some medical conditions could prevent an employee from safely wearing a face covering. Any person with a pre-existing medical or health condition that could impact their ability to wear a face covering is strongly encouraged to consult with a qualified health care professional to ensure wearing the covering does not place their health or immediate safety at risk. If an exemption to the mandate to wear a face covering in City of Edmonton owned and operated facilities, workspaces and vehicles applies to you, then you will be connected with a Disability Management Consultant to initiate the Duty to Accommodate process.

Q. Do face coverings replace my existing PPE?
Face coverings, masks and respirators should be used in addition to other engineering and administrative hazard controls to protect you and others from COVID-19 and other identified respiratory hazards. If a specific type of respirator is required for a job or task, wear that respirator instead of a cloth face covering as outlined in your hazard assessment or respirator code of practice. The reason for this is that respirators protect against other airborne contaminants and hazards that may be present such as silica or welding fumes that a cloth face covering does not. When that task is completed, a cloth face covering can be otherwise used.