

# **Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Non-Medical Masks at the University of Toronto (Draft)**

August 10, 2020

The University of Toronto is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its faculty, librarians, staff, students, volunteers, visitors, and other community members. As part of this commitment, the Governing Council approved [the University of Toronto Policy on Non-Medical Masks or Face Coverings](#), requiring non-medical masks or face coverings to be worn indoors in University common-use spaces on its property, including, for example, in classrooms or common areas in residences.

This joint Guideline is being issued under the Policy to offer further guidance and information to the University community regarding the masks requirement. This Guideline remains in effect as long as the Policy is in effect, and is subject to change and to extension at the discretion of the University administration as public health guidance and understanding about COVID-19 evolve.

## **Masks Requirement**

Wearing non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all common-use indoor University spaces (including University-owned and leased spaces), including classrooms and residences, whether restricted-access or open to the public. Examples of common-use spaces include lobbies, elevators, hallways and corridors, stairwells, washrooms, service desks, cafeterias and lunchrooms, common areas in residences or study lounges, meeting rooms, classrooms, research and teaching labs, shared or open-space offices, and other locations used in common where practicing physical distancing may be difficult or unpredictable, such as libraries. In leased spaces, occupants may also be subject to the policies and guidelines of the building owner or manager.

## **Exceptions**

Non-medical masks or face coverings are not required:

- When an individual is required to wear personal protective equipment in lieu of a non-medical mask or face covering, as determined by the U of T Environmental Health & Safety office
- When wearing a non-medical mask or face covering would create a risk to the individual related to their work, as determined by the University's workplace safety guidelines
- While taking part in organized University community activities that interfere with mask-wearing (e.g., athletic or fitness activities, playing a musical instrument) in accordance with public health guidelines
- When eating or drinking
- Where protective barriers are in place
- In learning and teaching environments, if and when the instructor(s) recommends that non-medical masks or face coverings are not required on the basis that wearing them would materially impair the effectiveness of the learning activity, and where the learning activity can be carried out safely.

- If instructors recommend that masks are not required, they must ensure that the learning activities are carried out safely and in accordance with public health and University guidance, following the procedures outlined in the Teaching Re-Entry Planning section of the University's COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit.
- In research environments, if the approved departmental/divisional research re-entry plans allow individuals to maintain a consistent two-meter physical distance
- In administrative, office and industrial environments (e.g. server rooms, control rooms, mechanical rooms), when the physical layout allows individuals to maintain a consistent two-meter physical distance, for example, in private offices
- Inside meeting rooms, lunchrooms, and lounges when the physical layout allows individuals to maintain a consistent two-meter physical distance

### **Accommodation**

Individuals may be exempt from this Guideline in the following situations:

- If they require accommodation (e.g., for reasons of disability, religion, or other) under Ontario's *Human Rights Code*
- Children under the age of two
- If they have a medical condition including a physical condition, mental health condition, or other health concern that makes it difficult to wear a mask or face covering, including a medical condition that makes it difficult to breathe, or to put on and remove a mask or face covering without assistance, or someone who is unconscious or incapacitated
- Where the ability to see the mouth is beneficial for communication, if they are persons with hearing loss and/or deafness or if they are the person communicating with a person with hearing loss and/or deafness

Members of the community should not ask colleagues, students, or others at the University for supporting documentation or other proof regarding exemptions or accommodations under the *Policy* or this Guideline. In specific circumstances where individual health and safety is at risk, an individual who is unable to wear a non-medical mask or face covering due to one of the reasons above, or some other similar reason, may be asked by a manager or academic administrator to provide supporting documentation to the University through the appropriate office on a confidential basis. For example, employees, including faculty members, may be asked to provide documentation to Health & Well-being Services & Programs in some circumstances, or students in some situations may be asked to register with Accessibility Services. In all cases, such inquiries should be for the purpose of maintaining health and safety for the community, or for assisting with tailoring accommodation to their specific needs in a manner that maintains health and safety.

### **Education and Enforcement**

The University will focus on educating members of the community about the *Policy* and this Guideline, including the benefits of non-medical masks or face coverings with regard to community transmission of COVID-19, as well as the importance of accommodation and personal privacy regarding medical or other conditions.

Enforcement measures will focus primarily on an educational approach and will depend on the individual's relationship with the University, the nature of an incident, the place in which it occurred, and the impact on others in that place. Additional training will be provided to Campus Police on all three campuses on expectations with regard to enforcement and engaging with community members not wearing a mask while at the University of Toronto.