UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Washington's COVID-19 Face Covering Policy is in accordance with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) workplace health and safety requirements, the Washington State Department of Health Face Covering Order, and the Washington state Proclamation for Higher Education. This policy is in effect until otherwise modified or rescinded.

In order to ensure the health and safety of the University campus community and the public, face coverings are required to be worn on site at the University of Washington, regardless of vaccination status, indoors when other people are present and in all public and common areas, such as lobbies, hallways, stairways, restrooms, elevators, and in shared vehicles.

Outdoors, face coverings are optional regardless of vaccination status. However, a face covering is recommended when in outdoor crowded settings and in settings where there is a decreased ability to consistently maintain a physical distance between others.

The University continues to implement a multilayered COVID-19 Prevention Plan. Being vaccinated against COVID-19 is the most critical element of this plan. Face coverings continue to be an important element, along with staying home if you are sick or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, practicing good hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, and communication and education.

For the purposes of this policy, a face covering must: Fit snugly against the sides of the face; completely cover the nose and mouth; be secured with ties, ear loops, elastic bands, or other equally effective method; include at least two layers of material; allow for breathing without restriction; be capable of being laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape (if made with fabric); be free of holes, tears or valves that have the potential to release respiratory droplets.

2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all University personnel, students, contractors, vendors, tenants, customers and visitors, on site at a University location, including campus residence halls, unless specifically exempted below.

For the purposes of this policy, “University personnel” includes:

- Faculty, librarians and other academic personnel, students who work on site at a University work location, staff including contract-covered, classified non-union,
temporary hourly, and professional staff, Hall Health physicians, and Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA) contract employees.

- Individuals who have a contingent worker or appointment relationship with the UW, stipend recipients, and others who work on site at a University location but are not employees of the University.

3. EXEMPTIONS

The following exemptions to this policy apply.

a. UW Medicine medical facility employees and visitors to UW Medicine medical facilities are required to wear a face covering and/or personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with UW Medicine policy.

b. University personnel verified to be fully vaccinated in accordance with the University's COVID-19 Vaccination Policy may remove their face coverings when presenting to or instructing a group or class if the face covering interferes with communication. A physical distance of least six feet between the presenter/instructor and others is required to be maintained.

c. Personal office/workspaces, private residential units:
   - Working or spending time alone in a personal office or workspace with the door closed
   - Operating a vehicle with no passengers
   - Inside an assigned on-campus residential unit

d. When actively eating or drinking in appropriate places

e. Other exempted activities specified in the WA State Department of Health Face Coverings order

f. Job-specific personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements: Face coverings do not replace required job-specific PPE, such as medical/procedure masks, face shields or respirators. See the Workplace COVID-19 Risk Level and Selection of Personal Protective Equipment guidance for job-specific PPE requirements.

g. Children younger than five years old: Children who are younger than two years old should never wear a face covering due to the risk of suffocation. Children who are two, three, or four years old, with the assistance and close supervision of an adult, are strongly recommended to wear a face covering at all times in public settings and when around non-household members.

h. Modifications to the application of this policy as approved by the Environmental Health & Safety Department (EH&S) and the Executive Office for specialized...
operations or programs (e.g., University athletics training spaces which follow PAC-12 guidelines, music and performing arts) where alternative health and safety measures and protocols (e.g., additional testing, required distancing) are implemented to reduce the risk of transmission.

4. UNIVERSITY UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Units are required to provide all personnel working on site at a University work location with required face coverings and/or job-required PPE and replace them when necessary. Unless personnel have job- or location-specific required PPE, units must distribute two cloth face coverings to personnel who are required to wear them. Personnel are responsible for laundering their University-issued reusable cloth face coverings and remembering to bring them to work. Personnel may use a personal alternative face covering as appropriate, as long as it complies with requirements in this policy.

Personnel must be trained on the proper use, care, storage and disposal of face coverings and PPE. University units should refer to the EH&S Guidance on Facemask Use for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 for training personnel on the selection, care and use of face coverings and facemasks. Units can also refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance with regard to type and fit, wearing and washing face coverings.

Units must communicate and enforce these requirements to all personnel working on site at a University work location and ensure all personnel are trained on the University’s COVID-19 Prevention Plan. Signs indicating the face covering requirement for all who enter should be clearly posted at all entrances and on websites when possible.

The University of Washington is committed to maintaining a respectful, productive, inclusive, and equitable workplace, and discrimination and other conduct that is inconsistent with our values will not be tolerated.

5. POLICY ENFORCEMENT

a. In the Workplace:

Personnel are required to comply with this policy as a condition of employment, as well as for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, and the UW community. Units are required to ensure all of their personnel have a thorough understanding of the requirements outlined in this policy. If, after education and training, personnel refuse to comply, contact your college/school/campus’s dean/chancellor office or your unit’s human resources/academic human resources (HR/AHR) representative to initiate the appropriate corrective action or standard of conduct process. If your dean/chancellor’s office or unit’s human resources representatives require assistance, they should contact their central HR consultant or Academic Human Resources business partner. If personnel state they are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition, refer the individual to the formal
accommodation request process. University personnel with concerns that other personnel are not complying should speak with their supervisor or report it to the Environmental Health & Safety Department.

b. Students:

Students are required to follow the University's COVID-19 Face Covering Policy at all times when on-site at the University, including any posted requirements in specific buildings or spaces. If a student refuses to comply with the policy, the student can be sent home (on or off-campus residence). Student Conduct offices are available for consultations on potential violations of student conduct if needed. University personnel with concerns that a student or group of students are not complying with this policy should speak with their supervisor, a representative of the academic unit, or report it to the Environmental Health & Safety Department.

c. Members of the public, customers and visitors on campus:

Members of the public, customers and visitors to the University are required to wear face coverings when entering a University facility and receiving service in accordance with this policy. If a member of the public, customer or visitor is not wearing a face covering, the following steps are to be taken:

- Begin with a polite verbal request for compliance to educate and persuade the individual to wear a face covering. University personnel should ask the individual to wear a mask or face covering, or have a supply of disposable facemasks to offer individuals who do not have one.

- If, following a polite verbal request, the individual continues to decline to wear a face covering or facemask, personnel should notify the site manager to assist the customer with determining if accommodations, such as curbside pickup, can be made.

- If the individual refuses to wear a face covering and does not indicate a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering, they should be politely informed that they are not permitted to enter and be asked to leave. Personnel should not attempt to physically block an individual or physically remove them from the space and should avoid confrontation but should not provide service. Law enforcement (e.g., University of Washington Police Department or local law enforcement agency) may be called for help as a last resort.

6. RESOURCES

Individuals required to wear a face covering who have the following medical conditions or health risks may request an accommodation. A person has a medical condition, mental health condition, developmental or cognitive condition, or disability that prevents wearing a
face covering. This includes, but is not limited to, persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing, who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

For University personnel requesting a medical or health risk accommodation, determination of the accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis with the unit human resources representatives in coordination with the Disability Services Office (DSO) and the EH&S. Personnel may be required to provide documentation to substantiate their need for an accommodation.

Students seeking an accommodation should contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) for determination of a medical or health risk. Accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis through consultation with DRS.

7. RESOURCES

- WA State Workplace and Public Health Orders for Face Coverings
- WA State Labor & Industries Requirements for COVID-19 Prevention in the Workplace
- University of Washington COVID-19 Prevention Plan
- EH&S Workplace COVID-19 Risk Level and Selection of Personal Protective Equipment
- EH&S Face Covering Requirements webpage