

## WEARING NON-MEDICAL MASKS

<b>Required PPE</b>	N/A
<b>Training</b>	Hygiene Practices, Non-Medical Face Masks
<b>Hazards</b>	Spread of COVID-19 Virus

It has been recognized by Public Health authorities around the world that the proper use of [non-medical masks \(NMM\)](#) can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Wearing such masks is considered part of our own personal preventive measures we should be taking to do our part in keeping everyone safe and healthy. A mask acts as a barrier. It reduces the chance of spreading respiratory droplets to others and prevents droplets from landing on surfaces when you cough, sneeze, talk or laugh.

NMMs are not considered personal protective equipment (PPE) because their purpose is not to protect the wearer, but rather the people near the wearer. The wearing of NMMs is an additional personal practice that can help to prevent the infectious respiratory droplets of an unknowingly-infected person from coming into contact with other people.

StFX now requires the use of an NMM as follows:

**\*\*UPDATED June 24, 2020: StFX now requires the use of a *Non-Medical Mask* as follows:**

*Until further notice, masks are required when inside and moving about all campus buildings until an employee is at their personal workstation.*

*While outdoors on campus the use of masks is strongly encouraged but not required, unless the two metre physical distancing cannot be assured.\*\**

There are employees on campus whose workstation may be outside or in an area otherwise open to other employees. In these situations, a hazard assessment will be conducted, and an alternate control may be approved.

It is important that non-medical masks or cloth face coverings fit well and are worn safely.

### **Appropriate use of non-medical mask or face covering**

When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of their own infectious respiratory droplets.

Non-medical face masks or face coverings **should**:

- allow for easy breathing
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- maintain their shape after washing and drying
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)

*NOTE: All tools and equipment shall be used in accordance with provincial OH&S legislation, manufacturer's specifications, applicable standards and codes of practice.*

- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping

### Non-medical masks or face coverings **should**:

- not be shared with others
- not impair vision or interfere with tasks
- not be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- not be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials
- not be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- not be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- not be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing

**Masks with exhalation valves are not allowed, because they don't protect others from COVID-19 and don't limit the spread of the virus.**

### Do's

- DO wear a non-medical mask or face covering to **protect others**.
- DO ensure the mask is made of **at least two layers of tightly woven fabric**.
- DO inspect the mask for tears or holes.
- DO ensure the mask or face covering is clean and dry.
- DO wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after touching the mask or face covering.
- DO use the ear loops or ties to put on and remove the mask.
- DO ensure your nose and mouth are fully covered.
- DO replace and launder your mask whenever it becomes damp or dirty.
- DO wash your mask with hot, soapy water and let it dry completely before wearing it again.
- DO store re-usable masks in a clean paper bag until you wear it again. Fold the mask in half so the outside surfaces touch each other.
- DO discard masks that cannot be washed in a plastic lined garbage bin after use.
- DO mark the outside of the mask in some way, if needed, so you can easily identify which side is the outside of the mask and handle it accordingly.

### Don'ts

- DON'T reuse masks that are moist, dirty or damaged.
- DON'T wear a loose mask.
- DON'T touch the mask while wearing it.
- DON'T remove the mask to talk to someone.
- DON'T hang mask from your neck or ears.
- DON'T share your mask.
- DON'T leave your used mask within the reach of others.

Remember, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must also wash your hands often, practice physical distancing and stay home if you are sick.

### How to put on a non-medical mask or face covering

*NOTE: All tools and equipment shall be used in accordance with provincial OH&S legislation, manufacturer's specifications, applicable standards and codes of practice.*

1. Ensure the face covering is clean and dry.
2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask.
  - If none is available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
3. Ensure your hair is away from your face.
4. Place the face covering over your nose and mouth and secure to your head or ears with its ties or elastics.
  - Adjust if needed to ensure nose and mouth are fully covered.
5. The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and there should not be any gaps.
6. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after adjusting your mask.

While wearing a non-medical mask, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

### How to remove a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
  - If none is available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
2. Remove the face covering by un-tying it or removing the loops from your ears.
  - Avoid touching the front of the mask when removing it.
3. Store the face covering in a paper bag, envelope, or something that does not retain moisture if you will be wearing it again.
4. After removing the face covering, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.

### Cleaning and disposing of non-medical masks and face coverings

Cloth masks or face coverings should be changed and cleaned if they become damp or soiled. You can wash your cloth mask by:

- putting it directly into the washing machine, using a hot cycle, and then dry thoroughly
- washing it thoroughly by hand if a washing machine is not available, using soap and warm/hot water
  - allow it to dry completely before wearing it again

Non-medical masks that cannot be washed should be disposed of properly in a lined garbage bin, and replaced as soon as they get damp, soiled or crumpled.

It is important to remember the following when using non-medical masks and face coverings:

- masks with an exhalation valve do not protect others
- never share your non-medical mask or face covering with someone else
- do not handle a non-medical mask or face covering belonging to someone else
- do not allow other people to handle or touch your non-medical mask or face covering

### Related links

- [How to safely use a non-medical mask or face covering \(printable poster\)](#)
- [YouTube Video from Health Canada about using Non Medical Masks](#)

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