

CLOTH FACE COVERINGS GUIDELINES

According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), the COVID-19 virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. As part of the essential effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, Michigan State University is directing everyone to take personal responsibility to protect the health and safety of all MSU faculty, staff, students and visitors. Face coverings are a crucial public health measure and help protect others by reducing exposure to droplets if someone is unknowingly infected with COVID-19. Face coverings must be worn by everyone (including all faculty, staff, students, vendors, and visitors) indoors and outdoors while you are on property owned or governed by MSU and while participating in MSU-related or MSU-sponsored activities. If you have a medical condition that may prevent you from safely wearing a face covering, you should contact MSU's Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to begin the accommodation process.

It is critical to emphasize that maintaining 6-foot social distancing, as well as frequent handwashing and regular disinfection of workspaces remains important to slowing the spread of the virus. CDC is additionally advising the use of simple **cloth face coverings** to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. While these provide the wearer some protection from external sources, they are primarily designed **to protect others**, in case the wearer is infected, since individuals may be contagious while being symptom free.

References:

CDC [Centers for Disease - Use of Face Coverings to help slow the spread](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>)

MSU [University Physician's Office](https://uphys.msu.edu/) (<https://uphys.msu.edu/>)

MSU [Environmental Health and Safety](https://ehs.msu.edu/) (<https://ehs.msu.edu/>)

MSU [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) (<https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/>)

MSU [Reopening Task Force \(PDF\)](https://msu.edu/coronavirus/_assets/pdfs/KeepingMSUsafe.pdf) (https://msu.edu/coronavirus/_assets/pdfs/KeepingMSUsafe.pdf)

FACE COVERING MATERIAL AND CONSTRUCTION

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by CDC guidance. These coverings should be constructed of washable, multilayer, breathable materials such as cotton. Instructions are available on CDC website. Homemade face coverings are perfectly acceptable.

- Do not share face coverings. Having multiple coverings may also be helpful when one needs to be laundered.
- Do not wear a cloth face covering if it impedes proper use of other essential PPE

- Do not wear a cloth face covering if it can be entangled in machinery or when using flammable materials
- Do not use cloth face coverings with an exhalation valve as this allow droplets expelled while exhaling to freely flow out of the mask and therefore is no longer protecting others.

HOW TO WEAR A CLOTH FACE COVERING

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape



Employees should avoid the urge to touch their face without first washing their hands. Face coverings can increase the desire to touch the face more than normal.

CLEANING FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings should be washed routinely, meaning every other day or daily preferably, depending on the frequency of use. They should be washed in a washing machine with soap and the hottest appropriate water temperature setting. They should be machine dried completely and at the highest heat setting. These will not be laundered at MSU laundry.

STORING AND TRANSPORTING FACE COVERINGS

Keep in a plastic bag or similar container that prevents it from becoming contaminated while not being worn. Leave container unsealed to allow for drying if reuse prior to cleaning is necessitated by an extraordinary circumstance. Have a designated spot to store the covering especially when you are not able to wash it immediately.

DONNING AND DOFFING FACE COVERINGS

1. Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after donning cloth face coverings. If unable to wash hands, employees should use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
2. Avoid touching the inside surface of face covering when donning. If the inside of a person's face covering becomes contaminated, it provides a pathway for the virus to reach the face.
3. Ensure the covering is positioned securely when donning to minimize the need for adjustment during wearing. Fit the covering as tightly as possible while being able to breathe comfortably.
4. When an employee must remove their face covering to eat, drink, etc., or adjust during use, they should take the following steps:

- a. Wash hands, as described in step 1
 - b. Place in plastic bag for storing
5. Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.