



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

KARYN E. POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000

GUIDANCE FOR WEARING FACE MASKS IN PUBLIC SETTINGS
ISSUED
April 26, 2021

On April 26, 2021, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, issued a revised order effective 12:01 am, Friday, April 30, 2021, requiring individuals to wear masks or face-coverings in indoor public places and outdoors when they are unable to maintain 6 feet from other people.

Face coverings will still be required at all times in indoor public places. Face coverings will also continue to be required at all times at events, whether held indoors or outdoors and whether held in a public space or private home, except for when eating or drinking.

At smaller gatherings in private homes, face coverings are recommended but not required.

This guidance is issued pursuant to that revised Order to further clarify who is required to wear masks and any exceptions.

Any person in Massachusetts over the age of 5 years old is required to wear a mask or face covering over their mouth and nose when in a public location. This includes indoors and outdoors when unable to maintain social distance from others. Masks are required at all times when in locations open to the public such as any of the following:

- Inside or waiting in line outside of grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retail stores;
- Providing or using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing, or similar service;
- On any form of public transit, including train or bus; and
- In an enclosed or semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area.

The use of a mask does not replace important social distancing measures. All individuals must continue to maintain more than 6 feet of distance from other people; wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; and stay home when sick.

Children under the age of 2 years should not wear face coverings or masks. Masks or face coverings are encouraged but not required for children between the ages of 2 and 5. Parents and guardians should ensure that the mask fits snugly and does not obstruct a child's ability to breathe.

The fit of face coverings should be as follows:

- Cover the nose and mouth;
- Fit securely and comfortably against the side of the face;
- Be secured with ties or ear loops;
- Allow for breathing without restriction; and
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change of shape.

Exceptions for wearing face masks include situations that may inhibit an individual from wearing a face-mask safely. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Those who cannot breathe safely;
- Those who, due to a behavioral health diagnosis, are unable to do so;
- Those communicating with people who rely upon lip-reading;
- Those who require supplemental oxygen to breathe; and
- Those who are exercising outdoors and are able to keep physical distance from others.

Masks and face coverings should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use. When possible, masks should be washed in a washing machine. If a washing machine is unavailable, masks should be washed with soap and water and allowed to dry fully before using again.

For information on how to make your own masks please visit:

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