

## Cloth or Homemade Masks for Non-Clinic-Based Staff At SCCA

### Guidance

All SCCA staff and faculty who are working in buildings with no clinical activity are required to wear, at a minimum, a cloth face covering or a personal mask, as mandated by Governor Inslee, while on premises and within 6 feet of another person.

### Rationale

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization believes the majority of transmission occurs from people who develop symptoms that lead to production of respiratory droplets, such as coughing. Data also indicates that individuals with COVID-19 who lack symptoms (asymptomatic), those who will eventually develop symptoms (pre-symptomatic), or those who have only mild early symptoms which are not recognized (e.g. fatigue, headaches, low grade fever) can transmit the virus to others. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity (speaking, coughing, sneezing) even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms.

In response to these findings, the Governor Inslee now requires *wearing cloth face coverings\* in public settings* where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. This policy has two main benefits:

- By covering your mouth and nose, you are less likely to transmit the virus when you either have asymptomatic or unrecognized early COVID-19 symptoms.
- Wearing a mask helps ensure you don't touch your face during the day.

**Please note:** Cloth/Homemade masks provide limited additional protection to those who wear them and are not a replacement for social distancing and hand hygiene. **Staff with active symptoms should not come to work even if they are wearing a mask.**

\*Staff are encouraged to bring their own face covering from home. Staff working in SCCA office buildings can also contact [storeroom@seattlecca.org](mailto:storeroom@seattlecca.org) to request cloth masks (two cloth masks per employee are available while supplies last).

## Types of masks

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homemade sewn cloth masks; see guidelines for making your own <a href="#">here</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical grade masks</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bandana/scarf/t-shirt — no-sew masks; see video description <a href="#">here</a> and examples in above guidelines.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N-95 respirators</li></ul>

Cloth or homemade masks are used by staff in non-clinic locations and medical grade masks and N-95 respirators are used only by staff working in clinic locations.

### Cloth or handmade masks 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

## FAQs about cloth masks

### Do I have to wear a mask on campus?

YES. We require wearing a cloth or homemade mask on campus, when you have limited ability to maintain 6 feet of space from colleagues while at work. Staff that are closed in office spaces or have the ability to maintain appropriate physical distancing may decide not to wear a mask, but they should continue to ensure they are performing hand hygiene regularly and avoiding close interactions with colleagues.

### How do I store my face covering/cloth mask when I enter the clinic and transition to a procedure mask?

Face covering or cloth mask should be stored in a clean, breathable container such as a paper bag. Please bring a clean, breathable container from home to store your personal mask. If forgotten, ask for a paper bag, but please be mindful of limited supplies.

**I work in my own office with my door closed and I am by myself all day. Do I have to continue to wear my mask while in my office?**

NO. Cloth or homemade masks are to be used when interacting with others in social spaces. If you are the only one in your office, then you can safely remove your mask once you have arrived to work as long as you continue to practice hand hygiene regularly and avoid close interactions with colleagues.

**I take the bus to work. Should I wear my mask on the bus?**

YES. Public transport is considered a public space, so wearing your mask to and from work can help limit transmission and prevent you from touching your face. However, when on a bus or train, make sure that you try to maintain physical distancing of 6 feet during travel, and use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the bus.

**Why is hand hygiene and physical distancing needed if I am wearing a mask?**

Wearing cloth or homemade masks does not replace frequent hand hygiene, avoiding touching the face and physical distancing. These are the most important steps to prevent spread of COVID-19. People who wear cloth or homemade masks should not assume that such masks can protect them from getting infected. These masks do not fit as tightly as medical grade masks, and do not have barriers to protect against very small particles that can lead to infection.

**I have some mild symptoms; can I wear my mask and come to work?**

NO. Wearing cloth or homemade masks does not mean you can come to work while ill. Anyone with active symptoms should not come to work. Those with active symptoms should fill out the online survey at <https://www.seattlecca.org/testingsurvey> to be tested for COVID-19 by Employee Health.

**I need to go to the clinic to help on a project. Can I wear my cloth or homemade mask?**

NO. SCCA and Fred Hutch employees are not permitted to wear homemade or cloth masks while in the SCCA clinic. However, medical grade disposable masks will be available when you enter the clinic.

**Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How frequently?**

YES. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

**How does one safely wash or clean a cloth face covering?**

A washing machine using hot water and regular laundry detergent should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

**How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?**

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

## **I have my own N-95 respirators at home, why can't I wear them?**

Medical grade masks are needed in hospitals where medical professionals are caring for patients with COVID-19. The CDC and other organizations do not recommend those outside of health care use N-95 or other medical grade masks. If you would like to learn more about how to donate N-95 respirators or medical grade masks to our clinical staff please contact [donate@seattlecca.org](mailto:donate@seattlecca.org).

### **Links for making your own masks**

- <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/2020/04/04/coronavirus-face-mask-tips-how-make-fabric-instructions/2945209001/>
- <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/make-a-face-mask-or-covering-at-home-how-to-find-cloth-patterns-premade-masks/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPx1yqvJgf4&feature=youtu.be>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>