

# Columbia College

## Mandatory Mask/Face Covering Requirements August 2020

NOTE:	Clarification of Terms
<i>Must; Shall; Will:</i>	These words or phrases indicate actions or activities that are <b>essential or mandatory</b> .
<i>Should:</i>	This word implies that it is highly desirable to perform certain actions or activities, but not essential or mandatory.
<i>May or Could; Can:</i>	These words imply freedom or liberty to follow an alternative to the action or activity being presented in a document.

### **Mandatory Mask/Face Covering Requirements.**

Effective 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020, mandatory mask or face covering is required at Columbia College for all staff, students and visitors, both inside the buildings and between buildings if social distancing (2 meters) is not possible, and when using elevators or when using the stairs.

The mask or face covering may be removed when seated in a classroom, lunch area, lab, social area, study area, and office space, and/or when meeting with others in a setting where social distancing (2 meters) can be maintained,

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. The infection spreads from close contact with someone with COVID-19 through their respiratory droplets or touching our face with contaminated hands. Respiratory droplets can include coughing, sneezing, talking or even normal breathing. When a person is singing, laughing or talking loudly, the droplets can travel further than two metres/six feet.

People may unknowingly pass the infection to others because they do not have symptoms (asymptomatic) or have not yet developed symptoms (pre-symptomatic). The highest risk for infection is with prolonged close contact.

Wearing non-medical (cloth) masks or face coverings can be an added public health measure for containing the spread of COVID-19 when it is used in combination with frequent handwashing, physical distancing and staying home when sick.

### **My Mask or Face Covering Protects You and Your Mask or Face Covering Protects Me**

As we are progressing through Stage 2 of reopening, more people are returning to work, reconnecting, moving around the city and using public transit. This is making physical distancing more challenging or near impossible. The risk of spreading COVID-19 is greater indoors as there is less airflow, ventilation, and more crowding.

Wearing masks or face coverings indoors helps us keep our respiratory droplets to ourselves to prevent spreading germs to others. There is evidence that cloth masks can reduce the spread of respiratory droplets into the air and landing on surfaces. Jurisdictions that have legislated mandatory mask wearing have seen a decrease in new COVID-19 cases.

The use of masks/face coverings is non-invasive, inexpensive, and can help save lives. Masks may also serve as a visual reminder to everyone that we need to be vigilant and continue to maintain physical distance.

## **Non-medical Masks or Face Coverings**

Non-medical masks or face coverings can help keep your respiratory droplets to yourself and protect others when we are unable to maintain physical distancing. The general public should wear non-medical (cloth) masks or face coverings when going to public places, and when entering enclosed public settings. Non-medical masks or face coverings can be made with household items or purchased materials. It is important to use and clean a mask properly. Using a mask incorrectly can accidentally spread infection to the wearer.

## **Qualities of a Good Cloth Mask or Face Covering**

A good cloth mask or face covering should:

- Be at least two layers of tightly woven cotton or linen.
- Cover over nose, mouth and chin, and be easy to breathe through.
- Fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops without gaping or impairing vision.
- Be comfortable to avoid the need for adjustments when wearing.
- Maintain their shape after washing and drying.
- Not contain non-breathable materials such as plastic.

## **Proper Use of a Mask or Face Covering**

- Do not share your mask with others.
- Wash your hands before putting on and after taking off a mask.
- Place the mask over your nose, mouth and chin.
- Avoid touching your face and mask while using it.
- Change your mask as soon as it is moist or dirty.
- Do not leave your mask tucked under the chin, hanging from your ear, or on your forehead.
- Remove the mask by the ear loops without touching the front of the mask.
- Put used mask in a plastic bag or directly in the laundry bin to be washed.
- Launder cloth masks with other items using the hot cycle and dryer.

## **Face Shields**

Some people may choose to use a face shield when sustained close contact with other people is expected. If face shields are used without a mask, they should wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend to below the chin. Reusable face shields should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

## **Mask/Face Covering Guidelines behind Plexiglass Screens**

Employees who work within or behind a physical barrier (e.g. Plexiglass), are not required to wear a mask. However if they leave the space behind the barrier or someone comes into the space with them behind the barrier, then they and the other person must wear a mask or face covering.

### **Exemptions**

- Children under two years of age
- Children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a mask or face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver.
- Persons with a formally documented medical condition, who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering (e.g. due to breathing difficulties), cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties, and persons who cannot wear or remove a mask or face covering without assistance.

### **Enforcement of Mask/Face Covering Guidelines**

The enforcement of the masking policy at Columbia College is in “good faith” and education on wearing of masks and face coverings during working and studying at the college is encouraged to promote their use in enclosed public spaces.

If individuals are unable to wear a mask or face covering, they are advised to contact the head of the department to discuss.

When individuals enter Columbia College without a mask or face covering, they will be given a verbal reminder of the requirement to wear a mask or face covering.