

FAQs for Using a Mask

Faculty, staff and students are required to wear a medical-style mask while indoors in all U of G spaces until further notice. For more comprehensive information on the use of medical masks, please refer to [COVID-19: Guidance for Using Medical Masks](#) [1].

[When should I use a medical mask?](#)

With the higher transmissibility of the Omicron variant, the University has updated its requirements for masks worn on-site. Effective January 19, 2022, faculty, staff and students are required to wear a medical-style mask at U of G locations – cloth masks are not considered acceptable at this time. Medical-style masks must fit tightly to the face without gaping and completely cover the nose, mouth and chin. Public Health guidance indicates that medical masks provide more reliable protection from COVID-19 than non-medical masks. Medical masks that meet ASTM standards will be made available for people who must be on site through the 2022 Winter semester and who are in need of a mask. There are additional PPE requirements for employees required to work in student residence or family housing units or within 2 metres of others. Please refer to Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) guidelines on “COVID-19: How to Work Safely in Student Residences of Family Housing Units” for details on these requirements.

[What do I do if I feel sick?](#)

If you feel sick, do not come to campus - follow the steps on our What to do when you're sick or have been exposed page, including contacting the U of G COVID-19 Call Centre to report your illness. Employees should follow their department's process for reporting absences and complete the Self-Declaration Form on the University's website. Students should inform their course instructor about any missed work. Further information is available on the Student Wellness website.

[When do I need to wear a mask?](#)

Masks must be worn when indoors including in cubicles, classrooms, hallways, washrooms, stairways, meeting rooms and other common spaces. masks are also required when outdoors and unable to maintain 2 metres of distance from others

[When can I remove a mask?](#)

Under certain limited circumstances, it may be acceptable to remove a mask while:

- Working alone in a private office with the door closed (others are not present)
- Eating or drinking in a lunchroom, kitchenette or break room while maintaining 2 metres of distance
- Exercising during a booked appointment in designated areas of the Athletics Centre
- Outdoors and able to maintain 2 metres from others
- Child under the age of 5 are not required to wear a mask on campus.

[Why do I need to wear a mask?](#)

When worn properly, masks can prevent the spread of COVID-19 and provide protection to the wearer. Wearing a mask complements (but does not replace) the following measures that prevent the spread of COVID-19 between

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people:

- Vaccination Mandate
- Complete the [University of Guelph COVID-19 Daily Screening Form](#) [2] every day before coming to U of G campuses.
- If you feel sick, do not come to campus – follow the steps on our [What to do when you're sick or have been exposed](#) [3].
- Avoid crowded poorly ventilated spaces.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.
- Frequently clean and disinfect shared space, especially high-touch surfaces.
- Wash your hands often and use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

[Who should not wear a mask?](#)

People whose ability to breathe is inhibited in any way by the face covering, or people that have any other medical condition, disability, or impairment that prevent them from wearing a medical mask safely.

[What should I do if I can't wear a mask due to a medical condition?](#)

If you have a medical condition, disability, or impairment that affects your ability to wear a mask and need accommodation, please contact:

Employees: Occupational Health and Wellness (OHW) at ohw@uoguelph.ca [4], and notify your supervisor. Please note that employees are not required to disclose their specific medical condition to their supervisor.

Students: Student Health Services at 519-824-4120, x 52131 and notify your Advisor/Instructor.

[What type of masks should be worn?](#)

With the higher transmissibility of the Omicron variant, the University has updated its requirements for [masks worn on-site](#) [5]. Effective January 19, 2022, faculty, staff and students are required to wear a [medical-style](#) [6] mask at U of G locations – cloth masks are not considered acceptable at this time. Medical-style masks must fit tightly to the face without gaping and completely cover the nose, mouth and chin. Public Health guidance indicates that medical masks provide more reliable protection from COVID-19 than non-medical masks.

If you are working with hazardous materials (e.g. biohazards, chemicals, or nuclear substances, etc.), disposable masks are to be used unless a respirator (e.g., N95 filtering facepiece, half facepiece or full facepiece) is required as part of assigned personal protective equipment and has been approved for performing the work safely. A respirator requirement takes priority over wearing a medical-style mask.

[Can I wear a bandana or scarf in place of a mask?](#)

Bandanas and scarves are NOT acceptable forms of masks. A medical-style mask that covers the mouth, nose and chin, ensuring a barrier that limits the transmission of infectious respiratory particles must be worn.

[Can I wear a mouth shield in place of a mask?](#)

No, mouth shields are not an appropriate alternative to a mask as the mouth shield does not fit snugly around the mouth, nose and chin. Mouth shields allow infectious respiratory particles to spread outside the shield, and do not

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help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

[Can I wear a mask with exhalation valves in place of a mask?](#)

No, according to [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) [7], masks with exhalation valves or vents allow infectious respiratory particles to spread outside the mask. These masks do not protect others from COVID-19 or limit the spread of the virus.

[What about using face shields instead of masks?](#)

Public Health agencies have not recommended face shields as a substitute for masks. However, face shields may be used as eye protection. In situations when masks may impede lip reading, language instruction and present other accessibility issues, [transparent medical masks](#) [8] are to be worn in place of wearing face shields without a mask to teach. Transparent masks are available through the [Physical Resources Stockroom](#) [9].

Contact Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@uoguelph.ca [10], to discuss the use of face shields as necessary. For any medical concerns, contact Occupational Health and Wellness at ohw@uoguelph.ca [4] if you are an employee. If you are a student, please contact Student Health Services at 519-824-4120 ext. 52131.

[What do I do if someone in my area is not wearing a mask consistently when they are required to?](#)

Please note that under certain limited circumstances, it may be acceptable to remove a mask while:

- Working alone in a private office with the door closed (others are not present)
- eating or drinking in a lunchroom, kitchenette or break room while maintaining 2 metres of distance
- Exercising in designated areas of the Athletics Centre
- Outdoors and able to maintain 2 metres from others

If the person does not wear a mask consistently when he/she is required to, please notify your supervisor or contact Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@uoguelph.ca [10]

[Do I still need to stay at least two metres \(six feet\) away from people if wearing a mask?](#)

Physical distancing is no longer required except if actively eating or drinking in a lunchroom.

[Can I remove my mask if physical distancing can be maintained and predicted?](#)

In outdoor environments, masks can be removed if physical distancing of 2 metres can be maintained from others. However, masks must be worn when indoors, including in cubicles, classrooms, hallways, washrooms, stairways, meeting rooms and other common spaces, even when you can maintain physical distancing from others. Masks can be removed under certain circumstances such as when working alone in a private office with the door closed, eating or drinking while maintaining 2 metres of distance in a lunchroom, kitchenette or breakroom, or while exercising in designated areas of the Athletics Centre.

Please refer to the guidance [COVID-19: Guidance for Using Medical Masks](#) [1] for more information.

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[What is the proper way to safely put on and remove a mask?](#)

The University's [COVID-19: Guidance for Using Medical Masks](#) [1] outlines the appropriate steps for putting on and removing a mask.

[Will medical mask requirements be enforced?](#)

Yes. All members of the University community are currently required to wear a [medical-style](#) [6] mask at U of G locations. Members of the University community who demonstrate continued non-compliance with this directive may be asked to leave campus. Supervisors will be enforcing these requirements with their employees, in consultation with HR and FASR. Employees who fail to properly utilize masks when required to do so may be subject to disciplinary action. Faculty advisors and lab managers will similarly be monitoring compliance amongst the student body.

Source

URL:<https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-2>

Links

[1] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-24> [2] https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6lh1bNRMHDEU1OR [3] <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/i-have-tested-positive-for-covid-19-what-should-i-do/> [4] <mailto:ohw@uoguelph.ca> [5] <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/practices/#mask> [6] <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/types-masks-respirators/types-masks-respirators.pdf> [7] <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html> [8] <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/medical-devices/guidance-transparent-medical-mask-technical-specifications/other-requirements.html> [9] <https://www.pr.uoguelph.ca/signage-and-hygiene-supplies-covid-19> [10] <mailto:ehs@uoguelph.ca>