

CITY ORDINANCE 2020-059 (FACE MASK ORDINANCE) FAQs:

Q: Why do I need to wear a mask?

A: The virus that causes COVID-19 is most commonly spread through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person sneezes, coughs or talks. These aerosols can remain suspended in the air for up to three hours and be transmitted at least 13 feet, based on reports by the CDC.

Masks are effective in blocking or at least limiting your exposure to these contagious viral droplets and particles. Because we do not always know who is infected (many coronavirus cases are asymptomatic), you should also wear a face covering to protect others.

Q: What kind of mask should I wear?

A: The CDC recommends people wear washable cloth coverings to ensure there are enough surgical and N95 masks for medical workers.

Here's a breakdown of how common masks work.

Cloth face coverings, bandannas, and DIY masks: Homemade face coverings don't stop you from inhaling potentially infected particles, but they provide a barrier that may prevent the spread of droplets by asymptomatic individuals. When worn correctly, these masks also keep the wearer's face clean and reduce the likelihood that people will touch their faces.

Surgical masks: Also known as medical and procedure masks, these are used in hospitals to reduce the number of potential contaminants that mask wearers release into the immediate environment. These loose-fitting masks can protect against large splashes of droplets. They are less effective for protection against the coronavirus because they allow particles to enter through the sides.

Q: What is the proper way to wear masks?

A: The World Health Organization has provided the following guidelines for effectively wearing a face mask:

- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it. If you do, clean your hands immediately. Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp.

- To remove the mask, take it off from behind (do not touch the front of mask); discard immediately in a closed bin; and wash or sanitize your hands.
- Do not reuse or share disposable N95 or surgical masks.

Q: When does the City of Columbia's Face Mask ordinance go into effect?

A: Friday, June 26, 2020 at 6:00 a.m.

Q: Do kids have to wear face coverings?

A: Yes, children 11 and over are required to wear face coverings in the circumstances listed in the ordinance.

Q: I have a medical exemption. Do I need a doctor's note?

A: No, those who cannot wear face coverings due to a medical, mental health, developmental condition, inability to remove the face mask without assistance or anyone who cannot wear face coverings under CDC guidance, do not have to have a doctor's note and are not required to produce one.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering while outdoors?

A: No, face coverings are not required while exercising, walking or spending time outside as long as physical distancing of six feet is maintained between you and anyone that is not a part of your household. If you're walking or exercising outside with members of your own household, you do not need to wear a face covering even if you are within six feet from one another.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering while swimming?

A: No, face coverings are not required while swimming, but physical distancing should be maintained. Face coverings are required in locker rooms.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering while shopping?

A: Yes, face coverings are required while entering, exiting, waiting in line to enter, and while inside places of business including, but not limited to, grocery stores, retail stores, pharmacies, health care facilities, restaurants and bars (including outdoor seating for such facilities), gyms and similar facilities.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering while at a bar or restaurant?

A: Yes, face coverings are required while entering, exiting, waiting for a table and ordering. Face coverings can be removed while eating or drinking but must be worn otherwise. If a patron is not seated at their table or at the bar, a face covering is required.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering at work?

A: If you interact with the public while at work, a face covering is required. If you do not interact with the public while at work, physical distancing of at least six feet is recommended with your co-workers but you do not need to wear a face covering.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering in my car?

A: No, face coverings are not required while inside a personal or commercial vehicle that is not a public transportation vehicle, taxi, or ride sharing service. It is recommended to wear a face covering if you cannot maintain six feet of physical distancing between you and someone who is not a member of your household.

Q: Where can I get a face covering?

A: Face coverings are widely available at retailers in the City of Columbia. You can also use a bandana, scarf or piece of fabric as a face covering. Here is information from the Centers for Disease Control on how to make and wear face coverings:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html>.

Q: Can I carry a concealed weapon and wear a face covering?

A: Yes, face coverings can be worn while carrying a concealed weapon. If a crime is committed while concealing your identity with a face covering of any kind, it may be an aggravating factor at the time of sentencing if convicted for that crime.

Q: Why are churches exempt from the requirement of face coverings?

A: While the use of face coverings and physical distancing at church is highly recommended, it is not included in the ordinance due to federal protections.

Q: What are the consequences for not wearing a face covering?

A: The enforcement of this ordinance is not designed to be punitive. Enforcement will begin with education and may increase to fines or more, depending on the circumstance and severity of the violation(s).

Q: When does the requirement expire?

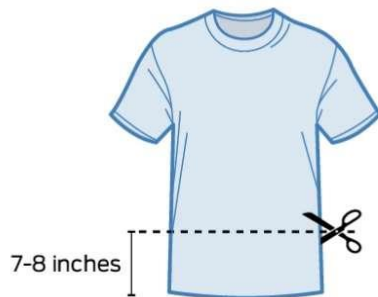
A: The ordinance is in effect until August 26, 2020.

How to make a cloth face mask without sewing

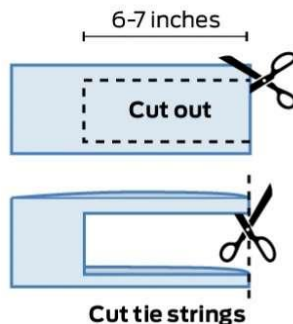
To slow the spread of the coronavirus, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises using simple cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores and pharmacies. You can make a face mask yourself at home — no sewing required. Below are two quick methods using common household items. For more information from the CDC, including a tutorial on how to sew a cloth mask, go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and click on “Cloth face covers.”

T-SHIRT

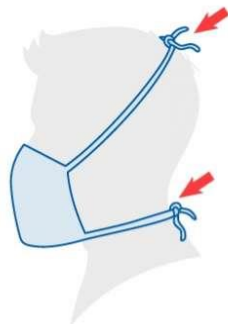
- 1 Cut off a T-shirt 7 to 8 inches from the bottom.



- 2 Cut out a rectangle to make tie strings.



- 3 Tie the strings around neck first, then over top of head.

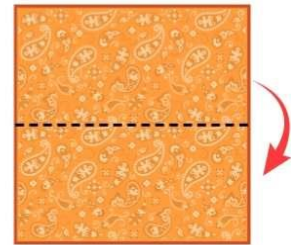


BANDANNA

- 1 Cut off the bottom of a coffee filter.



- 2 Fold a bandanna in half.



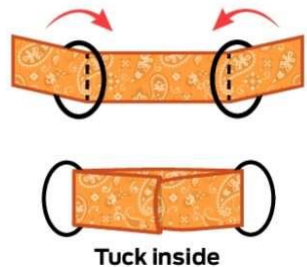
- 3 Place the coffee filter in the center of the folded bandanna. Fold top down; fold bottom up.



- 4 Place rubber bands or hair ties about 6 inches apart.



- 5 Fold sides to the middle, and tuck one end inside the other.



- 6 Loop the bands or hair ties around ears to secure.



Note: The CDC advises that cloth face coverings should not be placed on children under age 2 or on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately afterward. Cloth face coverings should be routinely laundered in a washing machine depending on the frequency of use.