

USE AND CARE OF FACE COVERINGS

Following CDC recommendations, Connecticut Governor Lamont has ordered face coverings to be worn by anyone in public. This physical barrier can help contain the spread of respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. This is considered *source control*. A face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but by covering their mouth and nose with a face covering, they are less likely to transmit the virus to others if they are asymptomatic or have unrecognized, early COVID-19 symptoms. The CDC explains that your face covering may help to protect others, while their face covering may help protect you. In contrast, *personal protective equipment (PPE)*, such as gloves or a respirator, protects the wearer. A face covering also prevents the wearer from touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Research shows that the use of face coverings reduces community transmission of COVID-19.

Wear a Mask or Face Covering in Public Settings

Members of the Yale community are expected to comply with the Governor’s order and wear a mask or a face covering when outside or inside any space that can reasonably be expected to be shared (e.g., common work areas, hallways, and restrooms). Follow these practices:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on and removing the mask or face covering.
- Your mouth and nose should be fully covered.
- Tie or secure the face covering to prevent slipping.
- If you have difficulty breathing when wearing a face covering, it should be removed.

A face covering is not a replacement for social distancing and hand hygiene.

Examples of Proper Face Coverings and Their Use		
		
Examples of UNACCEPTABLE Face Coverings with Exhalation Valves		Face Covering MUST Cover the Nose
		

Obtaining a Mask or Face Covering

A 3-ply mask or face covering appropriate for each individuals' work activities are provided by a variety of means. A face covering brought from home or acquired from other sources is acceptable, but it must not have an exhalation valve. It should be easily washable or disposable.

If you plan to purchase a large quantity of face coverings, EHS is available to help you evaluate samples and advise on fabric and design. Helpful published research on face coverings is available.

Caring for Your Mask or Face Covering

3-ply masks should be disposed of after every shift, or if damaged or contaminated. When removing your mask, only touch the loops that go around your ear. Masks can be disposed of in the normal trash.

Cloth face coverings should be washed after each use. CDC instructions for washing face coverings are here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

It is important to always remove face coverings correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used face covering.

Special Situations

If you are concerned about your respiratory protection for certain tasks and assignments, contact EHS for a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) hazard assessment. EHS will provide the appropriate respiratory protection for your work.

A face covering is not required when working alone in segregated spaces (e.g., cubicles with walls, private offices, etc.) or when walking alone outdoors away from others. The requirement for a face covering does not apply to anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition. Contact EHS to determine if alternative protections can be provided.

Cloth face coverings are not allowed in Yale laboratories. People working in Yale laboratories have been provided surgical masks and other types of respiratory protection. A mask provided for laboratory use may be used as face covering outside of the laboratory, but don't wear the same mask both inside and outside of the lab. As you do with other laboratory PPE—such as a lab coat and gloves—the mask you wear in the laboratory should be removed when leaving the laboratory.

Clear Face Masks



People who interact with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing or those who rely on lip reading and facial expressions should obtain a clear face mask. While not providing equivalent filtration, a clear face mask should be the first choice if a 3-ply mask or a cloth face covering is unsatisfactory for your needs. Clear face masks are washable and reusable, but may fog as the person talks and are more difficult to clean than other reusable cloth face coverings. **Note:** The most effective products to prevent fogging of glasses and face shields consist of siloxane in alcohol (e.g., Rain-X), which create a hydrophobic film that bonds to the glass or plastic's interior surface. Fogging can also be prevented by sealing the mask at the nose ridge. Paper tape has been successfully used for this by many users. When using a clear face mask, six-foot distancing from others is sufficient.

Face Shields



NOTE: THE USE OF FACE SHIELDS REQUIRES 12 FOOT DISTANCING FROM OTHERS.

Yale is allowing instructors and those who involved in proximity work the use of face shields without a mask when the above options have been found unsatisfactory. Because there is no filtration of the wearer's droplets and aerosols, the CDC does not allow a face shield to substitute for a mask. To protect others, you are only allowed to use a face shield without a mask when the following precautions are taken:

- Must keep 12 feet or more from others.
- The room must be well ventilated. Contact Facilities to verify room ventilation.
- The length of instruction/proximity work should not exceed two hours.
- Commonly touched surfaces (e.g., desktops, lecturn, microphone, etc.) must be decontaminated after class has ended.

For instructors, we recommend not using the room for an hour after the class has ended.

Some individuals disfavor face shields because of fogging and distorted speech. **Note:** The most effective products to prevent fogging of glasses and face shields consist of siloxane in alcohol (e.g., Rain-X), which create a hydrophobic film that bonds to the glass or plastic's interior surface. Fogging can also be prevented by sealing the mask at the nose ridge. Paper tape has been successfully used for this by many users. As mentioned, a face shield does not filter droplets or aerosols—they simply redirect them to the room via the shields' gaps. The 12 foot distance allows for dispersion and dilution of aerosols, which is facilitated by good ventilation. Moreover, unlike clear face masks and shrouded face shields, unshrouded face shields are inexpensive and readily available and are a good choice for a well-ventilated classroom where instructors can easily stay 12 feet from students.

Face shields should be ordered via SciQuest.

Questions?

For more information about masks, face coverings and respiratory protection, please contact Yale Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@yale.edu or 203-785-3550.

Concerns

For personal health concerns and questions about Yale's COVID-19 response and policies, you may call 203-432-6604 (toll-free at 866-924-9253). Available 8 am–5 pm, 7 days a week.

If you are comfortable doing so, you may report a concern about compliance with COVID-19 health and safety policies or regulations directly to your staff supervisor, your human resources representative, or a supervising faculty member. You may also make an anonymous or identified report through Yale's hotline at 877-360-9253, or online at your.yale.edu/hotline. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You may also report a concern or seek additional COVID-19 information by contacting the 2-1-1 Connecticut Hotline.

