



**Milwaukee County COVID-19 Public Health Emergency**  
**Universal Face Mask Policy and Procedures Administrative Order 20-14v1**  
Version 1 Issued and Effective as of 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2020

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As a result of COVID-19, Milwaukee County decided to close many of its operations to protect the health of the community and its employees. In preparing to bring many affected services back into operation during this prolonged public health emergency, procedures must be established to protect the health of the public who rely on these services and County employees who deliver these services. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that face masks be worn to slow the spread of COVID-19, particularly in areas of significant community-spread transmission, such as Milwaukee County.<sup>1</sup>

This Universal Face Mask Policy and Procedures Administrative Order outlines expectations for all Milwaukee County employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers, service users, visitors, the general public, and all others entering or working in Milwaukee County facilities, grounds, or other places where services are delivered.

Version 1 of the Universal Face Mask Policy and Procedures Administrative Order is effective as of 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2020. If you have questions about this, or any other Administrative Order or policy, please email: [COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:COVID-19@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

## **I. General**

COVID-19 is transmitted mainly by people interacting in close proximity with each other. A universal face mask policy serves to protect all employees, contractors, vendors, service users and the general public by providing a “source control” for all individuals that may have pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 infection should those individuals come into close contact with others. It is important to remember that **wearing a face mask does not eliminate the need to physically distance from each other**. This face mask policy is an important component of Milwaukee County’s overall COVID-19 risk mitigation and response efforts.

## **II. County Employees, Contractors, and Vendors (together “Workers”), and Volunteers**

### **A. Face Mask Requirements** (see exemptions in Section IV)

1. Any worker or volunteer must wear a face mask at all times at County facilities, grounds, or other places where services are delivered (e.g., home visits), both indoor and outdoor.
2. At all times when a worker or volunteer is interacting with the public during their shift, the worker or volunteer must wear a face mask.
3. At all times a worker or volunteer is moving through a Milwaukee County facility, they must wear a face mask.
4. If a cloth face mask is worn by the worker or volunteer, they are expected to clean the mask after their shift, prior to wearing it again.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

5. If a department's operations or services require a separate face mask policy specific to recommended industry standards (e.g., healthcare, emergency response), the worker should follow industry face masks requirements. This policy is primarily designed for people who typically do not wear masks in their job functions, or times when a mask is not typically worn by a worker.
6. Workers and volunteers that require medical grade face masks or respiratory protection are required to wear cloth or disposable paper masks to comply with the universal face mask policy until reporting to their work area where medical-grade face masks or respiratory protection are distributed.
7. If a worker or volunteer forgets their cloth mask when reporting to work, they should use a paper face mask from the distribution at the point of entry.

## **B. Types of Face Masks**

The type of face mask worn by workers and volunteers is determined by medical vs. non-medical settings and services provided. Any medical-grade surgical face masks or N95 respirators are reserved for healthcare workers, first responders, and others who work in high-risk environments.

Most workers and volunteers will wear non-medical face masks, such as:

1. Cloth face masks, such as handmade/sewn cloth masks, scarves, buffs, or bandanas; or
2. Disposable face masks, such as non-medical grade paper or procedure masks.

Employees shall not wear masks with inappropriate images or writing.

## **C. Supply and Distribution of Face Masks for Workers and Volunteers**

Milwaukee County will provide its employees who cannot telework full time with up to five (5) washable cloth masks. Departments needing cloth masks for in-person workers should order cloth masks for their employees by entering a requisition in Marketplace Central. Employees may supply their own face masks but will not receive reimbursement for these purchases. Associated department expenses will be reimbursed through CARES funding.

Contractors and vendors will not be provided face masks by the County, unless otherwise decided by the managing department. Volunteers should wear their own face mask or may be given a disposable face mask upon entry to County facilities or grounds.

# **III. Service Users, Visitors, and General Public (together, "members of the public")**

## **A. Face Mask Requirements**

The County has developed two signs for departments, contractors, or vendors to hang in facilities and public work areas they manage based on whether a face mask is "required" or "highly recommended" per the guidance below. Signs are available on Marketplace Central or may be requested from the Re-Opening Steering Committee (ROSC).

Members of the public entering Milwaukee County facilities or grounds, both indoor and outdoor, or receiving County services in a different setting (e.g., home visit) should wear a face mask (see exemptions in Section IV) as indicated:

### **1. Indoor Milwaukee County Facilities or Indoor Service Areas**

Face masks are **required** upon entry into any indoor Milwaukee County facility or indoor service areas (e.g., a service user's home). Members of the public should wear their face masks at all time while in County facilities or while receiving County services indoors (see exemptions in Section IV).

The airport and buses are the only indoor service areas that will follow procedures for outdoor facilities and grounds due to the specific operational needs of those services (see Section III.A.3).

### **2. Outdoor Milwaukee County Facilities and Grounds with Controlled Entry Points**

Face masks are **required** upon entry into any outdoor facilities and grounds with controlled entry points (e.g., Zoo). Members of the public should wear their face masks at all time while in County facilities or while receiving County services indoors (see exemptions in Section IV).

### **3. Outdoor Milwaukee County Facilities, Grounds without Controlled Entry Points, Buses and the Airport**

Face masks are **highly recommended** at service access points that are outdoors without a controlled entry point. The County will not supply face masks to members of the public in instances where masks are highly recommended with the exception of buses, where masks will be made available.

## **B. Types of Face Masks**

Any member of the public should wear a face mask, such as washable/reusable cloth or disposable paper face masks, as described:

1. Cloth face masks, such as handmade/sewn cloth masks, scarves, buffs, or bandanas; or
2. Disposable face masks, such as non-medical grade paper or procedure masks.

A medical-grade face mask is not required or recommended, unless the department providing the service specifically requires and supplies a medical-grade mask to the member of the public.

## **C. Supply and Distribution of Face Masks to Members of the Public**

**The County will be providing disposable face masks to members of the public when a face mask is required (see Sections III.A.1 and III.A.2) and on buses; the County will**

**otherwise not be providing face masks to members of the public when wearing a mask is highly recommended.**

A member of the public may use their own face mask. If they do not have their own mask, they will be provided either a cloth mask or disposable paper mask at the controlled public entry point to the County facility, grounds, or other point of service.

**Departments or elected offices that manage entry points to County facilities or grounds shall be responsible for the procurement of disposable face masks and the process for distribution.** Departments operating within facilities should keep a small supply of disposable face masks on hand for instances in which a member of the public shows up without a mask. Non-medical grade disposable face masks can be requisitioned through Marketplace Central. The ROSC will support efforts to implement distribution processes, procedures, and trainings at the request of departments.

#### **D. Local Service-Level Policies for Additional Risk Mitigation**

Departments and elected offices may have additional local policies related to face masks or other risk mitigation measures (e.g., health questionnaire, temperature screening) that go beyond the policies of this administrative order if additional risk mitigation is needed due to the nature of the service or the population being served. Departments and elected offices should notify the ROSC of any additional risk mitigation measures being applied locally and the reason for the additional risk mitigation.

### **IV. Exemptions from Wearing a Face Mask**

#### **A. People Who are Exempted from Wearing a Mask**

1. Children ages two (2) years old and younger.<sup>2</sup> Children ages 2 through 12 should only wear a face mask if a parent or guardian monitors to make sure it is worn safely. All children under 12 years old must remain within six (6) feet of parent/guardian, or household unit, and those who are small enough should be in a stroller or cart.
2. Anyone with a disability that makes it difficult to put on, wear, or remove a face mask.
3. Anyone consistently interacting with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and primarily relies on lip reading.
4. Anyone who has been advised by a medical professional not to wear a face mask because of personal health issues.<sup>3</sup>
5. Anyone who has difficulty breathing<sup>4</sup> or is incapacitated.

#### **B. Times When a Person May Temporarily Remove Their Face Mask**

1. Some services require that workers or members of the public not have a face mask on during certain times (e.g., witness in a court hearing, genetics test). Departments and elected offices may have local exemption policies for face mask removal for points in

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>

<sup>3</sup> Employees, contractors, and vendors must provide a note from their doctor to use this exemption.

<sup>4</sup> Employees, contractors, and vendors must provide a note from their doctor to use this exemption.

time; additional risk mitigation measures should be put in place per the minimum requirements in Administrative Order Phased Re-Opening Guidance for Milwaukee County Services and Facilities (20-13).<sup>5</sup>

2. When consuming food or beverages when other risk mitigation measures are in place per the minimum requirements in Administrative Order Phased Re-Opening Guidance for Milwaukee County Services and Facilities (20-13).<sup>6</sup>
3. If a worker or volunteer is alone inside their enclosed office or work vehicle. This does not apply to cubicles unless the partition extends to the ceiling, or the worker or volunteer is the only person in the entire cubicle workspace.
4. If a worker or volunteer is working alone outdoors, not in close proximity to other people (e.g., mowing grass).

## **V. Enforcement Policy & Procedure**

### **A. Employees**

Milwaukee County employees are expected to follow the face mask requirements. Any exemption from this Order will require a request for accommodation and certification from a health care provider. An employee with a qualifying exemption is encouraged to carry an exemption visual indicator when moving through County facilities; the ROSC will develop the visual marker and make available to departments and employees.

Employees who fail to follow any of the work rules outlined in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **B. Members of the Public**

Enforcement of the policies in this Order will be based on the County facility per the below:

1. **Milwaukee County Courthouse Complex & Vel Phillips Juvenile Justice Center:**
  - i. Any member of the public who refuses to wear a face mask without a qualifying exemption shall be refused entrance. If the person refusing to wear a mask is at the Courthouse because of a mandated court hearing, subpoena, and/or a court case-related activity, facility security shall give that person a call list and tell them to call the appropriate number for instructions **before leaving the facility**. The court official will determine the next steps for the individual refusing to wear a mask.
  - ii. If a member of the public states that they have a qualifying exemption they will be allowed into the facility. Individuals with a qualifying exemption should be given a visual marker for their time in the facility upon entry.
  - iii. Some departments or elected offices may have different and/or additional risk mitigation strategies (see Section III.D) or exemptions (see Section IV.B.1) in place for safe, effective delivery of their services and members of the public

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<sup>5</sup> See “Administrative Orders” Section: <https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/COVID-19>

<sup>6</sup> See “Administrative Orders” Section: <https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/COVID-19>

may therefore be subject to different and/or additional face mask requirements inside of the facility.

- iv. Members of the public who fail to comply with face mask policies will be asked by law enforcement to leave the facility.
- v. **Only trained law enforcement should carry out enforcement with members of the public.**

**2. For all other County facilities, grounds, and service delivery locations:**

- i. There will **not** be criminal or civil enforcement of this policy for members of the public who fail to comply with County face mask policies at all other locations outside of the Courthouse Complex and Vel Philips Juvenile Justice Center.
- ii. Some departments or elected offices may have different and/or additional risk mitigation strategies (see Section III.D) or exemptions (see Section IV.B.1) in place for safe, effective delivery of their services and members of the public may therefore be subject to additional face mask requirements before being able to access services; members of the public who fail to comply with this Order or local policies may be refused service.

## **VI. Training and Communication**

Milwaukee County will make public announcement of the Universal Face Mask Policy to prepare the general public prior to entrance into County facilities or grounds. Departments and elected offices are responsible for notifying their vendors, contractors, and volunteers of the rules, expectations, and procedures in this Order. Signs indicating “Face Masks Are Required in This Facility” or “Face Masks are Highly Recommended” should be hung by the managing department of the County facility or service access points, at minimum.

Milwaukee County employees will receive online training regarding the proper care and use of face masks while working. They will also receive training on interacting with members of the public to help support public education and uphold the health of employees and the public when using County services.

Departments or elected offices with local exemption policies (see Section IV.B.1) are responsible for documenting, managing, and communicating any policies to their employees. This includes policies related to exempting people from wearing a mask in order to deliver a service and whether services will or will not be denied if a member of the public is refusing to wear a face mask.

## **VII. Timeline for Implementation**

Departments should be in compliance with policies for workers and volunteers by June 22, 2020.

Departments and Elected Offices responsible for distribution of face masks to members of the public should immediately begin planning for implementation. The face mask policy should be fully operational no later than June 29, 2020. If a department or elected office needs more time, they should work with the ROSC to determine timing for rollout.