

Palm Beach County Facial Coverings Frequently Asked Questions

Updated through Emergency Order 20-12

WHAT ARE FACIAL COVERINGS AND WHO HAS TO WEAR THEM

What is a facial covering? What does it do?

Facial coverings help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and help keep you and those around you safe. The use of facial coverings may reduce transmission by more than 50%. Facial coverings should cover your nose and your mouth and comply with the CDC recommendations. For CDC guidance on selection, use, and sanitization of facial coverings see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/preventgetting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>. Please note facial coverings are in addition to, and not a substitute for, the required social distancing. [EO 20-12, Section 5]

What are some examples of facial coverings?

Examples of face coverings include but are not limited to masks, clothing covering, scarf, bandana, handkerchief, or other similar cloth covering secured in place. Clear, plastic facial shields attached to a headboard that extend below the chin are also suitable facial coverings. [EO 20-12, Section 5]

Who has to wear a facial covering and when?

Generally stated, facial coverings must be worn by all persons when obtaining any good or service from any establishment, and by all persons working in those establishments during in-person interactions with the public (regardless of distance). These general rules apply to all businesses, including but not limited to restaurants, retail establishments, hotels, grocery stores, gyms, pharmacies, indoor recreational facilities, and vehicles for hire. [EO 20-12, Section 4]

The persons who must wear facial coverings include:

- a. Members of the public when obtaining any good or service or otherwise visiting any establishment (which includes businesses and amenities), including entering, exiting, and otherwise moving around within the establishment;
- b. Workers in an establishment of any type that is permitted to operate in Palm Beach County while engaged in in-person interactions with the public;
- c. Workers in restaurants or other food establishments.

WHERE DO I HAVE TO WEAR FACIAL COVERINGS

Are masks required to be worn on school campuses?

This order does not address the wearing of masks on school campuses that are governed by the School District of Palm Beach County. That decision should rest with the Superintendent of Schools and the School Board of Palm Beach County.

My office is now open. Do I have to wear a facial covering at work? Do my customers have to wear a facial covering?

Yes. Businesses must ensure that employees wear facial coverings in the workplace. Social distancing of six feet should be practiced to the maximum extent possible, even when facial coverings are worn. In addition, the business must require customers, clients, and other visitors to the business to wear facial coverings in accordance with the requirements of Palm Beach County Emergency Orders. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a.]

Do I need to wear a mask at my personal desk or in my personal office?

If an individual is able to properly socially distance in accordance with CDC guidelines while sitting at their personal desk or within the confines of their individual office, that person may remove their mask. If that individual is actively engaged with the public or if others are in their office, they must wear masks. Masks shall be worn when walking around an office to other areas including restrooms, other offices, public spaces, and entries and exits.

Are masks required to be worn at restaurants? Who has to wear facial coverings and when?

You must wear a facial covering at all times when at a restaurant, including when entering, exiting, and otherwise moving around within the establishment, except during the shortest practical period when you are actually eating or drinking. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a. and Section 4.e.5.]. For example, the facial covering should be worn when arriving at the restaurant, while waiting to be seated (whether waiting inside or outside nearby the facility), while waiting to be served, when up and about such as to use the facilities, and when the meal is completed and waiting to pay. Facial coverings do not need to be worn when you are consuming food or beverages. All restaurant staff who have direct customer contact must wear facial coverings at all times. All employees handling food must wear facial coverings. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a. and Section 4.e.5.] Back of house staff who are not in contact with the public should wear masks unless there is a safety hazard associated with their particular task.

Will restaurants and retail establishments be required to post signs about this mask order?

Yes. All businesses and establishments as provided for in Section 4 of this Order shall conspicuously post signage in multiple languages including English, Spanish and Creole as required in Section 7 of the Order.

Do I have to wear facial coverings when I ride public transit?

All persons utilizing the County's Palm Tran transit services including fixed route, Palm Tran Connection, Go Glades, and any other transit service provided by Palm Tran, shall wear facial coverings at all times when entering, riding, or exiting the bus or transit vehicle. [EO 20-12, Section 4c.]

Do I have to wear facial coverings in a County or City building?

All persons accessing governmental buildings for the purposes of conducting public business, visitation, contracting and maintenance, delivery, or any other activity requiring a presence in a governmental building shall wear facial coverings as defined by the CDC at all times while present in the building. For purposes of this section, governmental buildings shall mean any Palm Beach County or municipal-owned

and operated buildings including, but not limited to, office buildings, service centers, and libraries. [EO 20-12, Section 4.d.]

Do I have to wear a facial covering at the gym?

If you are at a gym or fitness center (including similar establishments, such as indoor recreation facilities, dance studios, yoga studios, boxing clubs, etc.), you must wear a facial covering except when actively engaged in exercising and maintaining social distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.4.]. Staff at the gym or fitness facility must wear facial coverings. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a.]

Do I have to wear a facial covering in a park?

Generally yes. Unless another exception applies, facial coverings are required to be worn in a park whenever you cannot consistently maintain at least six feet (6') of social distance from any person who is not in your household or group. [EO 20-12, Section 4.b.]

Do I have to wear a facial covering while shopping at a retail store?

Yes. Unless another exception applies (EO 20-12, Section 4.e.1-8), facial coverings must be worn by persons obtaining goods or services at the grocery store, the mall, or any other retail establishment. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a.] Please note that these requirements apply both while inside the establishment and while entering or leaving the establishment, including while leaving for short periods of time.

Do I have to wear a facial covering on the beach? At the pool? On a boat? In any outdoor location?

Facial coverings are required to be worn on the beach, at a pool, on a boat whenever you cannot consistently maintain at least six feet (6') of social distance from any person who is not in your household or group (other than when use of the beach or water necessarily precludes the wearing of a facial covering, such as while swimming, surfing, or otherwise exercising). [EO 20-12, Section 4.b.] Generally, if you are outdoors in locations where you cannot maintain consistent social distancing you must wear a mask.

Do I have to wear a facial covering on the golf course?

Facial coverings are required to be worn on the golf course where socially distancing guidelines are not possible or are not being practiced. In addition, golf course and beverage cart staff must wear facial covering during in-person interactions with the public. [EO 20-12, Section 4.b.]

I'm getting a haircut, shave, manicure, or other personal service. Do I have to wear a facial covering if I am receiving a service? Does the stylist or service provider have to wear a facial covering?

Yes, you must wear a facial covering to the full extent practicable for the service required. If you are obtaining a manicure, for example, you must wear a facial covering throughout the service. If you are obtaining a shave, you must wear a facial covering except during the shortest practical period of time when the service requires removal of the facial covering. Personal service employees must wear facial coverings when working. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.5.]

Do I have to wear a facial covering while at a hotel?

Guests must wear facial coverings in check-in areas, elevators, and all other common spaces, but not in rented rooms. [EO 20-12, Section 4a.] The facial covering requirements applicable to the specific use areas (such as restaurants and fitness centers) shall be required in accordance with the specific use areas. For example, at hotel restaurants, please refer to the guidelines for restaurants. [EO 20-12, Section 4.a.]

Do I have to wear masks in my apartment buildings and condominiums?

When an individual is in their own apartment building or condominium and in their unit, they are not required to wear masks; however, if they are in common areas of the buildings where interaction with others is possible, they must wear facial coverings.

EXCEPTIONS TO WEARING FACIAL COVERINGS PER THE ORDER

Are there exceptions to the facial covering requirements?

Yes. The persons who are not required to wear facial coverings are as follow:

- a. Children under the age 2 should not wear a facial covering and children of any age while in the custody of licensed childcare facilities (including daycare);
- b. Persons prohibited from wearing facial coverings by Federal or State safety or health regulations;
- c. Public safety, fire, or other life safety personnel that have personal protective equipment requirements governed by their respective agencies;
- d. Individuals while actively engaged in exercise and maintaining social distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines;
- e. Persons receiving goods or services from a business or establishment for the shortest practical period of time during which the receipt of such goods or services necessarily precludes the wearing of a facial covering (such as eating, drinking, or receiving a facial grooming);
- f. Persons who have a medical condition that makes the wearing of a facial covering unsafe such as asthma, COPD, other conditions that reduce breathing or lung capacity;
- g. Persons for whom wearing a facial covering conflicts with their religious beliefs or practices;
- h. Facial coverings may be removed temporarily while assisting persons who are hearing impaired or who rely on reading lips in order to communicate. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.1-8]

I have an exception to the facial covering requirements, but an establishment will not let me in. What can I do?

Palm Beach County has established certain exceptions to the County requirements for facial coverings. Please note that a business may deny access for any legitimate nondiscriminatory reason. If you believe an establishment is treating you inappropriately, you may want to discuss your concern with management of the establishment if you feel comfortable doing so. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.1-8] The establishment has a right to provide an alternative means of service such as curbside delivery, takeout, or outside dining where social distancing is possible.

I have a health condition that does not allow me to wear a facial covering, but businesses are refusing to grant me access. What can I do?

You may consider showing the County's Emergency Order 20-12 to the business and explaining that you fall within the exception. However, please note that a business may deny access for any legitimate nondiscriminatory reason. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.1-8] The establishment has a right to provide an alternative means of service such as curbside delivery, takeout, or outside dining where social distancing is possible.

If my faith precludes me from wearing a facial covering, do I have to wear one?

No. If wearing of a facial covering is subject to a religious objection, you are not subject to the Palm Beach County facial covering requirement. Please note, however, that an establishment may deny access for any legitimate nondiscriminatory reason. [EO 20-12, Section 4.e.7.]

I have a health condition that does not allow me to wear a facial covering. Do I need to show medical proof before seeking access to a business or other establishment?

No, at this time, the County's Emergency Orders do not require that you provide medical proof of a health condition that renders you exempt from the requirement to wear a facial covering. Please note, however, that a municipality or individual establishment may impose other or additional requirements.

ENFORCEMENT OF THE ORDER

What are the consequences of violating an Emergency Order? How do I report a violation of the Emergency Orders?

Violation of this Emergency Order may be subject to civil enforcement action. Civil enforcement of a violation may include fines up to \$250 for first violations and up to \$500 for each additional violation. If you know or suspect that a particular establishment is in violation of an applicable order, you should report the suspected violation to (561)-24COVID. These penalties may be imposed upon an individual as well as an establishment. [EO 20-12, Section 8]

How will this Order be enforced?

The County has set up COVID-19 Education Compliance Teams that consist of representatives from state and local agencies including the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Palm Beach County Code Enforcement and Fire Rescue, The Florida Department of Health – Palm Beach County and police departments from Boca Raton, Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Jupiter, Palm Beach Gardens, West Palm Beach and Palm Beach. Team members will proactively conduct spot inspections of local businesses and public venues, noting where masks are not being worn and/or social distancing is not being consistently practiced, and will enforce this order with the prescribed penalties.

For more information or to contact the COVID Education Compliance Team, please call **561-24COVID** (561-242-6843) or email covidcompliance@pbcgov.org.

Can a business be held liable if people do not wear facial coverings in their establishments?

All businesses and establishments as provided for in Section 4 of this Order shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Order and shall establish a process for verification of compliance upon customer entry into the establishment. A failure to establish and ensure such compliance may result in fines, penalties, and/or any other enforcement measures against the business as set forth in this order and as otherwise authorized by law. [EO 20-12, Section 6]

OTHER ISSUES

How should I discard my facial covering?

Reusable facial coverings should be properly sanitized after each use per CDC guidelines. Disposable facial coverings and other disposable personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves must be discarded properly in a waste receptacle.

May municipalities impose additional, stricter limitations on facial coverings?

Yes. Municipalities may have stricter limitations than the County. Any more stringent requirements imposed by a municipality are in addition to the requirements stated in Palm Beach County Emergency Orders and as further explained in these Frequently Asked Questions. Please check with your municipality for additional restrictions.

How can I contact the County if I have any questions or comments about COVID-19 or the County's Emergency Orders?

Call the COVID-19 Hotline at (561)-24COVID or email covidcompliance@pbcgov.org.

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