



Alachua County, FL Special Meeting

Meeting Agenda - Final

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

1:30 PM

The public may attend and participate in this meeting virtually and in-person. Public comment will be taken both virtually and in-person. Masks are required regardless of vaccination status.

The Commission will take public comment in person or by calling 1-800-741-8011.

Attending virtually: The public may view the meeting on Cox Channel 12, Facebook, and the County's Video on Demand website.

Public comment: The public may submit comments and written or photographic documents to the Board through email (bocc@alachuacounty.us) before the meeting or by participating when prompted to by the Chair of the Board. Virtual participation is available through the public comment message line. Callers will be put in a queue, and prompted when it is their turn to speak. TO AVOID FEEDBACK, CALLERS TO THE PUBLIC COMMENT MESSAGE LINE MUST TURN DOWN THEIR MEETING SOUND WHEN ADDRESSING THE COMMISSION. Callers should state their names and limit comments to three minutes. When prompted for in-person public comment, in-person participants should follow the direction of the Chair to participate.

All persons are advised that, if they decide to contest any decision made at any of these meetings, they will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose they may need to ensure that verbatim record of the proceedings is made which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (Section 286.0105 Florida Statutes)

If you have a disability and need an accommodation in order to participate in this meeting, please contact the Alachua County Equal Opportunity Office at (352) 374-5275 at least 2 business days prior to the meeting. TTY users please call 711 (Florida Relay Service).

Approval of Agenda

Items for Discussion

1. [21-0826](#) Discussion of Local State of Emergency and Short Term Emergency Order

Fiscal Consideration: N/A

Recommended Action: Have a discussion.

[Emergency Action 2021-25 \(2nd Extension to Order ADA\) 9-02-21.pdf](#)

[Emergency Action 2021-27 \(ADA\) 2021-09-02.pdf](#)

[Your Guide to Masks CDC.pdf](#)

Closing Comments

Public Comment

Commission Comment

Adjourn



Agenda Item Summary

Agenda Date: 9/7/2021

Agenda Item No.: 1.

Agenda Item Name:

Discussion of Local State of Emergency and Short Term Emergency Order

Presenter:

Board of County Commissioners.

Description:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Recommended Action:

Have a discussion.

Prior Board Motions:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Fiscal Consideration:

N/A

Background:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**ALACHUA COUNTY
SECOND EXTENSION OF THE SHORT TERM EMERGENCY
ORDER 2021-25**

WHEREAS, on February 24th 2021 President Biden extended, for another year, the national state of emergency due to COVID-19 contained in Proclamation 9994 by President Trump; and

WHEREAS, both President Biden and Governor Ron DeSantis have recommended that all individuals who are able to be vaccinated get vaccinated, and both have stated that the SARS-CoV-2 (“COVID-19”) vaccine saves lives; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has designated Alachua County being in the high community transmission category, meaning 100 or more cases for every 100,000 people and/or lab test positivity rate for COVID-19 that is 10% or higher; and

WHEREAS, because of the increased incidence of infection being caused by the Delta variant of COVID-19, the CDC now recommends that face masks be worn indoors by individuals who are vaccinated as well as those who are not vaccinated since the vaccinated have been shown to be able to transmit the virus and the Delta variant has proven to be more virulent than other widespread variants; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus is almost as contagious as the chickenpox virus and can result in unvaccinated individuals getting much sicker than prior variants much more rapidly and can result in break through infections in vaccinated individuals, although generally with far milder symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has received expert testimony stating that the infection rate for the Delta variant (R_0) is 8, meaning that one individual can infect up to 8 others with the virus as opposed to the Alpha variant which had a value of 3, meaning that 1 person could infect 3 persons; and

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WHEREAS, a vaccine is available for all individuals above the age of 12, and the vaccination rate in Alachua County has reached 66% with 156,882 vaccinated and the number of those getting vaccinated decreased to 1,991 for the week of August 27th; and

WHEREAS, during the week of August 27th, the new rate of positivity for COVID-19 dropped to 11.9%, which was a decrease from the prior week due to the large number of those tested, but still remains among the highest it has been during the pandemic to date. Despite the reduction in the rate, the number of those who tested positive increased to 1,520 which was above the number from the week ending August 20th; and

WHEREAS, due to the regional nature of our health care facilities, our hospitals continue to have a significant increase in the number of individuals requiring ambulance transport, hospitalization and placement in the ICU's although there has been a decrease from the hospitalization numbers reported by the State last week; and

WHEREAS, the admissions to the hospitals in Alachua County for COVID-19 are significantly higher for the unvaccinated than for the vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, with the continuing increase in hospitalizations and community spread, there is likely to be an impact on county operations and the ability to provide public services in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, the data from hospitals demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of individuals hospitalized with COVID-19 are not vaccinated, and there is an increase in the number of pediatric hospitalizations, patients on ventilators and ICU cases due to COVID-19. The overall vaccination level is 66% of individuals eligible, but the Delta variant has shown that the vaccination rate for reaching community immunity could be much higher. Because of the increase in positivity

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and infection, the Alachua County Health Department has increased its hours of operation at the main location for vaccination and testing. The Health Department's recommendation is to get vaccinated follow CDC guidelines, wear a mask, socially distance, avoid crowds and wash your hands often. The Board recognizes that the most important thing that the public can do to stop community spread is to get vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, local hospitals are limiting elective and outpatient surgeries in direct response to the increased demands on the hospitals to care for COVID-19 infected patients. Elective surgery includes surgeries which may be quite important but are not considered at the moment to be life threatening. Examples include cardiac, joint replacement and cancer surgeries; and

WHEREAS, the Board received expert testimony that, until those who are unvaccinated and are capable of getting vaccinated obtain the full vaccination, indoor masking is absolutely essential as an additional mitigation strategy to reduce the community spread of this disease, which will in turn reduce the burden upon the health system.

WHEREAS, the current Delta variant is impacting younger individuals now more than the earlier variations. Most of people hospitalized for the condition locally are below 50; and

WHEREAS, fully vaccinated people with the Delta variant may infect others; and

WHEREAS, the Board heard from an expert who, over the past year and a half, has been monitoring the spread of COVID-19 and its mutations from an epidemiological standpoint. His opinion was that the current surge is not a seasonal surge. This is a new phenomenon. This virus mutates. The wider its spread, the quicker its mutation. The current Delta Variant is more aggressive, more infectious and perhaps more pathogenic than the Alpha variant, and there has been a surge in hospitalizations and the hospitalization of young people. In his opinion, community immunity for

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COVID-19 may not be possible and may not be able to be achieved. While there is some immunity from being infected, it is temporary, and there have been outbreaks from those who have been infected before. Individuals who have been vaccinated have also been noted as being infected, although often with lesser symptoms than the unvaccinated. Vaccination and the other mitigation measures together will limit the spread of the condition. Over time the presence of different mutations of COVID-19 present in Alachua County has changed. In June, the Delta variant began to be noted at 65 individual cases and, in July, that number went up to 42% of all cases. It is expected that this percentage will increase. In addition, with the Delta variant, there is an increasing trend in individuals who have been vaccinated contracting the condition. While he stated it was possible for the virus to become resistant or mutate to the point where a new vaccine is necessary, it is not at that point now and increasing the number of people vaccinated may delay or prevent that from happening. He also stated that a number of outbreaks occur where people gather, such as in workplaces; and

WHEREAS, even with recovery from COVID-19, the recovery may involve permanent impairments including, but not limited to pulmonary damage including pulmonary fibrosis which can lead to reduced lung capacity and potentially lung transplants; and

WHEREAS, based upon the testimony provided to the Board by those scientists and medical professionals who have come before it, and recently testified in public meetings, along with the recommendations of the CDC, OSHA and various studies the Board has considered, the Board believes the use of face masks as recommended by the CDC reduces significantly the spread of the COVID-19 by the individual wearing a face mask and additionally lowers the inhalation of the virus by those individuals wearing masks when in an area around other individuals wearing masks; and

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WHEREAS, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued “Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace” which as of August 13th, 2021, adopted recommendations similar to the CDC and recommended the wearing of face masks in the work place by individuals; and

WHEREAS, while it is important that all individuals who are capable of getting vaccinated do so, the vaccinations take time to take full effect and wearing a face mask is immediately effective and an effective mitigation strategy; and

WHEREAS, the use of face masks will reduce the amount of viral spread prior to, at, or after the peak of infections caused by the Delta variant and will reduce the number of infections in the community reducing the stress which is currently on our local healthcare facilities and governmental services; and

WHEREAS, there have been incidents reported to the County of some employers refusing to allow their employees to wear face masks; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to ensure that the message of the need to wear a face mask is communicated to all individuals entering into businesses and other public occupancies and the posting of a sign setting forth the requirements of this Order will accomplish this need; and

WHEREAS, the impact of the return of students to the University of Florida and Santa Fe College may not be known for at least two weeks; and

WHEREAS, the University of Florida will be hosting football games this upcoming weekend which will involve a large number of individuals from outside the community coming into Alachua County and having contact with residents. The impact of that influx of individuals into the community and any potential resulting increase in the community spread of COVID-19 is unknown; and

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WHEREAS, information regarding infection and vaccination rates from the Florida Department of Health is now released weekly rather than daily as it was earlier this year; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature in Chapter 2021-8, Laws of Florida, amended Section 252.38(4) to limit the actions of political subdivision in enacting emergency orders which limit the rights or liberties of individuals or businesses within the political subdivision; and

WHEREAS, the legislation requires that any such emergency order must be narrowly tailored to serve a compelling public health or safety purpose. Further any such emergency order must be limited in duration, applicability and scope in order to reduce any infringement on individual rights or liberties to the greatest extent possible. Any such order automatically expires 7 days after issuance but may be extended by a majority vote of the Board in 7 day increments for no more than 42 days (6 weeks). This Order having been renewed twice may be renewed 3 more times after this renewal; and

WHEREAS, Alachua County is a Charter County and has the constitutional authority to enact laws which are not in conflict with general or special laws; and

WHEREAS, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners as the Official Authority has declared a local state of emergency based upon the current situation arising from the impact of the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners that:

1. The above recitals are true.
2. The Board of County Commissioners finds the following:
 - A. That the most effective way to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus is through the concerted action of all residents in Alachua County.

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B. That the evidence is overwhelming that it is imperative that those individuals who are not vaccinated and are able to get vaccinated obtain the vaccine for the purposes of reducing the strain on local hospitals which Alachua County is currently experiencing and to slow the spread of the virus so that fewer individuals are impacted by the virus and those who are unable to receive the inoculations are provided with some level of protection by a higher level of vaccination in the local population.

C. That the evidence also supports the use of face masks indoors in locations where the public does business or gathers, excluding private residences by all individuals regardless of their vaccination status along with social distancing, avoiding crowds and the frequent washing of one's hands. These are the recommendations of the CDC and of OSHA.

D. That there is a compelling governmental interest in reducing community spread of COVID-19 in Alachua County so to limit the impact of the absence of workers in their employments and to reduce the admissions to the hospitals and stress on the medical transport system to the extent that those admissions are from Alachua County.

E. That there is a compelling public health and safety need for Alachua County to require face masks to be worn in public indoor spaces including businesses and locations other than private residences. It is recognized that there will be locations where because of adequate distancing – e.g., sitting alone in one's office – may exist where not wearing a face mask would not contribute to community spread and therefore this is an exception to the general rule of wearing a face mask. In addition, it is recognized that face masks cannot be worn while eating or drinking, therefore this is an exception to the general rule of wearing a face mask.

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F. That there is a compelling need that the public be reminded or made aware of the need to wear a face mask upon entry into enclosed spaces and this can be accomplished by requiring signage regarding the requirements of this Order at every public occupancy covered by this Order.

G. That for the reasons set forth in this Emergency Order (including its preamble), the Board of County Commissioners finds that this Emergency Order is narrowly tailored to serve a compelling public health and/or safety purpose. This Emergency Order applies the least intrusive method available to achieve the compelling goal.

3. THE BOARD ORDERS THAT:

A. A face mask shall be worn in all indoor places when there are more than two people present, with exceptions as provided by this Emergency Order. This requirement excludes private residences or spaces occupied by a single-family unit.

B. Such face masks shall be of a nature approved by the CDC and shall cover the mouth and nose and loop securely around the head or ears.

C. That based upon the standards set forth by OSHA ("Occupational Safety and Health Administration"), an employer shall not prevent its employees from wearing face masks in accordance with the recommendations of OSHA and this Order. However, the business owner or their representative may prescribe the nature of the mask to be worn as long as it meets the requirements of OSHA and is not required to allow the use of any personal protection equipment which carries an obscene message or one that is not appropriate.

D. Face masks shall not be required for children under six, (although it is encouraged that children ages 2-5 wear masks), persons who have trouble breathing due to a chronic pre-existing condition or individuals with a documented or demonstrable medical problem. It is the intent of

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this provision that those individuals who cannot tolerate a face mask for a medical, sensory or any other condition, which makes it difficult for them to utilize a face mask and function in public, are not required to wear one. It is recognized that this requirement is broader than what might be considered a covered condition under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Individuals who believes that they meet this exception are not required to show documentation of their condition but should be able to describe their limitation in general terms. Wearing face masks shall not be required while eating or drinking.

E. Public places covered by this Order where the public gathers inside, including businesses, non-profit entities and similar organizations, shall post and display a sign setting forth the requirements of this Order regarding face masks at all locations where the public enters a building in manner and location that is clearly visible. A copy of a sign meeting these requirements is available from the County.

F. This Emergency Order applies to incorporated and unincorporated areas within Alachua County, but has no application outside of Alachua County. Municipalities have the authority to enforce this Emergency Order within their jurisdiction. Municipalities are authorized to impose regulations, which are more stringent than those set forth herein.

G. This Emergency Order does not apply to the internal operations or policies of local governments within the County, the Alachua County Public Schools, local Charter Schools established by law, the State University System, State College System, the State of Florida, or federal agencies who are encouraged to adopt their own rules and procedures regarding the matters set forth herein.

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- H. A violation of this Emergency Order does not authorize the search or arrest of any individual. A violation of this Order is a noncriminal infraction. Prior to issuing any citation, the individual will be asked to comply with this Order or be able to explain how any exemption or exception under this Order applies to them. Failure to comply with the requirements of this Order presents a serious threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, pursuant to Chapt. 162, Fla. Stat., and a citation may be issued immediately for such violation. The County shall enforce the first violation of section 3 of this Emergency Order through a fine of \$125.00 to the violator. The second violation of section 3 of this Emergency Order shall be subject to a fine of \$250.00 to the violator. All subsequent violations of section 3 of this Order shall constitute a Class V violation under Art. II, Chapt. 24 of the Alachua County Code of Ordinances, requiring a mandatory court appearance and subject to a fine not to exceed \$500.00. The municipalities may enforce this Order as provided by Florida law and municipal code.
4. This Emergency Order shall last for 7 days and will expire no later than September 9th, 2021. Pursuant to Section 252.38(4)(c), the Board of County Commissioners may extend this Order by majority vote in 7 day increments not to exceed a total of 42 days if the circumstances warrant. Those conditions shall include a significant reduction in community spread of the Delta variant and the return to the ability of hospitals to return to providing elective surgeries and care.
5. This Emergency Order shall be effective upon filing with the Clerk of Courts. If it is not filed with the Clerk within 3 days of issuance it shall be considered void.
6. This Emergency Order shall take effect on the 2nd Day of September, 2021 beginning at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

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Dated this 2nd day of September, 2021 at 10:45 a.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Ken Cornell, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


County Attorney's Office

EMERGENCY ACTION 2021-27
EXTENSION OF STATE OF GENERAL EMERGENCY
IN ALACHUA COUNTY DUE TO DELTA VARIANT OF COVID-19

WHEREAS, on February 24th 2021 President Biden extended, for another year, the national state of emergency due to Covid-19 contained in Proclamation 9994 by President Trump; and

WHEREAS, both President Biden and Governor Ron DeSantis have recommended that all individuals who are able to be vaccinated get vaccinated, and both have stated that the COVID vaccine saves lives; and

WHEREAS, the CDC has indicated that Alachua County is in the high community transmission category, meaning 100 or more cases for every 100,000 people and/or lab test positivity rate for COVID that is 10% or higher; and

WHEREAS, because of the increased incidence of infection being caused by the Delta variant of COVID-19 the CDC now recommends that face masks be worn indoors by individuals who are vaccinated as well as those who are not vaccinated since the Delta variant has proven to be more virulent than other widespread variants; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus is as contagious as the chickenpox virus and can result in unvaccinated individuals getting much sicker than prior variants and can result in break through infections in vaccinated individuals, although with far milder symptoms; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners allowed its prior state of emergency to expire in May based upon the increased level of availability of effective and safe vaccines in Alachua County and the continuing increase in vaccination by the residents of Alachua County; and,

WHEREAS, a vaccine is available for all individuals above the age of 12 and while the vaccination rate in Alachua County is currently just over 66% the vaccination rate has slowed from where it was in May; and

ALACHUA COUNTY
EMERGENCY ACTION 2021-27

WHEREAS, since July 9, 2021 there has been an increase in local cases week by week so that by the last time figures are available from the Florida Department of Health, August 27th, Alachua County had 1,520 new positive cases with a positivity rate of 11.9%; and

WHEREAS, because of the regional nature of our health facilities, our hospitals have had a significant increase in the number of individuals requiring hospitalization and placement in the ICU's; and

WHEREAS, with the continuing increase in hospitalizations and community spread there is likely to be an impact on county operations and the ability to provide public services in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, with the increase in hospitalizations due to the increase in virulence of the Delta variant when compared with previous variants and the increase in breakthrough infections of the vaccinated, the County strongly recommends that the members of the public who have not been vaccinated get vaccinated, and all members of the public, including those who are vaccinated, should follow the guidelines of the CDC regarding washing hands frequently, social distancing and wearing masks indoors; and

WHEREAS, at their meetings on August 10th, August 17th and, August 24th 2021 the Board of County Commissioners received briefings from the Department of Health and experts from the University of Florida regarding the increase in positive cases and the impact on the Delta Variant on the local healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, the declaration of a local state of emergency under Section 252.38, Fla. Stat. does not meet the definition of an emergency order as defined in Sec. 252.38(4)(a), Fla. Stat. (2021) as this Action does not limit the rights or liberties of individuals or businesses in the County; and

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EMERGENCY ACTION 2021-27

WHEREAS, the Alachua County Code allows certain streamlined operations during the pendency of a local declared state of emergency which allows the County Administration and the Board of County Commissioners flexibility in the utilization of Federal, State and local Funds; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 27 of the Alachua County Code the Chair, acting as the Official Authority has declared a state of emergency in Emergency Actions 2021-26. These Actions have been ratified by the Board of County Commissioners at their following meeting; and

WHEREAS, on August 31st the Board of County Commissioners met in a regular meeting and after considering a briefing from the Department of Health acted to extend the declaration of emergency for an additional 7 days starting September 2nd 2021; and

WHEREAS, Sec. 27.07(4) provides that a declaration of emergency shall be declared by the Board of County Commissioners if they are available.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to Alachua County Code Section §27.07, the Board of County Commissioners sitting as the Official Authority hereby resolves, finds, and declares:

1. The above recitals are true.
2. There shall be in effect a local state of emergency as of September 2nd 2021 beginning at 1:00 pm. and shall continue uninterrupted for 7 days.
3. Should circumstances warrant this Action may be extended for another seven days no later than September 9th, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.
4. In accordance with §252.46(2), Fla. Stat., this Order shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Clerk of Courts for Alachua County.

ALACHUA COUNTY
EMERGENCY ACTION 2021-27

Dated this 2nd day of September, 2021 at 10:40 a.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Ken Cornell, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


County Attorney's Office



COVID-19

Your Guide to Masks

Updated Aug. 13, 2021 [Print](#)

- If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
- In general, you do not need to wear a mask in outdoor settings.
 - In areas with [high numbers of COVID-19 cases](#), consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with [close contact](#) with others who are not fully vaccinated.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you are fully vaccinated, to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of [substantial or high transmission](#).
- If you are fully vaccinated, see [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated](#).

Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is [required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation](#) traveling into, within, or out of the United States and [while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations](#). Travelers are not required to wear a mask in [outdoor areas of a conveyance \(like on open deck areas of a ferry or the uncovered top deck of a bus\)](#).



COVID-19 County Check

Find community transmission levels by county.

Select a Location

How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. [Here are some do's and don'ts.](#)

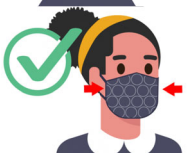
DO choose masks that



Have two or more layers of [washable, breathable fabric](#)



Completely cover [your nose and mouth](#)



Fit snugly against the [sides of your face](#) and don't have gaps

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that [makes it hard to breathe](#), for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents which [allow virus particles to escape](#)

Are prioritized for [healthcare workers, first responders, and others](#)



Have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top of the mask



including N95 respirators

Special Considerations

Gaiters & face shields



Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers



Not recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.

Children



Find a mask that is made for children to help ensure proper fit



Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin and that there are no gaps around the sides



Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old

People with beards

Certain types of facial hair, like beards, can make mask fitting difficult. Masks that fit well protect you better. To have a better fit, people with beards can shave their beards or trim their beards close to the face.

Other ways to improve fit



Use a mask fitter or brace.



Wear one disposable mask underneath a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric. The second mask should push the edges of the inner mask against the face and beard.

For people with beards that are not trimmed close to the face, masks may fit loosely around the beard. However, people with beards should still wear a mask. Masks designed for people with beards are being evaluated, and information will be provided when it becomes available.

Wearing a mask does not raise the carbon dioxide (CO₂) level in the air you breathe

Cloth masks and surgical masks do not provide an airtight fit across the face. The CO₂ escapes into the air through the mask when you breathe out or talk. CO₂ molecules are small enough to easily pass through mask material. In contrast, the respiratory droplets that carry the virus that causes COVID-19 are much larger than CO₂, so they cannot pass as easily through a properly designed and properly worn mask.

How to Wear

Wear a mask correctly and consistently for the best protection.

- Be sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on a mask.
- Do NOT touch the mask when wearing it. If you have to often touch/adjust your mask, it doesn't fit you properly, and you may need to find a different mask or make adjustments.

Do wear a mask that

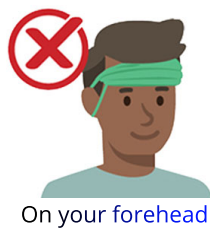


- Covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face.

How NOT to wear a mask



Around your neck



On your forehead



Under your nose



Only on your nose



On your chin



Dangling from one ear



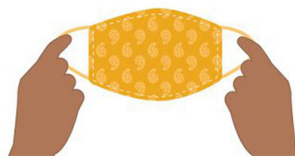
On your arm

How to take off a mask



1

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



2

Handle only by the ear loops or ties



3

Fold the outside corners together



4

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

How to Clean

Reusable masks should be washed whenever it gets dirty or at least daily. If you have a disposable face mask, throw it away after wearing it once. Always and wash your hands after handling or touching a used mask.



Using a washing machine



- Include your mask with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the appropriate settings according to the fabric label.

By hand



- Wash your mask with tap water and laundry detergent or soap.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove detergent or soap.

Dry your mask

Dryer

- Dry your mask completely in a warm or hot dryer



By hand



- Hang your mask in direct sunlight to dry completely. If you cannot hang it in direct sunlight, hang or lay it flat and let it dry completely.

For information on the sources for our mask guidance, see [Recent Studies](#).

How to Store

Store wet or dirty masks in a plastic bag



If your mask is wet or dirty from sweat, saliva, make-up, or other liquids or substances, keep it in a sealed plastic bag until you can wash it. Wash wet or dirty masks as soon as possible to prevent them from becoming moldy. Wet masks can be hard to breathe through and are less effective than dry masks.

Store masks that are not wet or dirty in a paper bag



You can store your mask temporarily to reuse later. Remove your mask correctly and wash your hands after touching a used mask. Keep it in a dry, breathable bag (like a paper or mesh fabric bag) to keep it clean between uses. When reusing your mask, keep the same side facing out.

If you are taking off your mask to eat or drink outside of your home, you can place it somewhere safe to keep it clean, such as your pocket, purse, or paper bag. Make sure to wash or sanitize your hands after removing your mask. After eating, put the mask back on with the same side facing out. Be sure to wash or sanitize your hands again after putting your mask back on.

