

Storage, Care, & Use: Protective Face Coverings

UVA Facilities Management

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Background

[The CDC now recommends](#) face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, essential worksites). Therefore, fabric or paper face coverings **must be worn by any FM employee needing to work within 6 feet (2 meters)** of any other individual to complete their job/task. Fabric or paper face coverings are optional at any other time. FM employees are expected to use no more than one face covering each shift and use proper donning, reuse, removal, and cleaning procedures outlined below. Face coverings are not meant to be shared among FM employees.

N95 masks are not to be used unless the employee is specifically trained on their model N95 and it is required by their job/task. If you are unsure of the training, of the N95 model trained on, or of the fit testing status of you or your employees, please reach out to FM-OHS@virginia.edu for a copy of your records.

Care:

Paper face coverings are disposable and should be replaced when they become torn, visibly soiled, or otherwise unwearable.

Fabric (homemade) face coverings can be laundered in your washing machine with your regular laundry detergent. Fabric face coverings should be laundered and then repaired (if possible) or replaced if they become damaged.

Storage:

Before Use: Unused, clean face coverings (paper & fabric) should be stored in an easily identifiable clean bag or original packaging.

During Shift Use: *The outside is to be considered contaminated.* Carefully store on a paper towel exterior side down OR in a bag. Ensure ties or ear loops do not fall into clean interior side of face covering.

After Use:

- Paper face coverings to be reused at next shift are to be stored in a bag. Ensure ties or ear loops do not fall into clean interior side of face covering.
- Fabric face coverings are to be placed into a paper or cloth bag that can clearly be identified as used or soiled PPE and laundered with other soiled PPE using your regular detergent.

Donning & Reuse:

1. **BEFORE putting on a face covering**, wash hands with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.
2. **Cover mouth & nose** with face covering.
3. **Avoid touching the front of the face covering** while using it. If you do, wash your hands with soap and water. *Consider the front of the face covering contaminated.*

Remove to reuse within your shift

Face coverings are not to be shared.

1. **Wash hands** with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.
2. Remove face covering:
 - **Face coverings with ear loops:** Remove by **holding the ear loops**. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully. Ensure ear loops do not fall into clean interior side of face covering.

- **Face coverings with ties:** Remove face covering by **untying lower ties FIRST**. Untie upper ties last. The front is contaminated, so remove slowly and carefully. Ensure ties do not fall into clean interior side of face covering.
3. After removing face covering, **visually inspect** for contamination, distortion in shape/form:
 - If soiled, torn, or saturated:
 - Paper face coverings should be discarded.
 - Fabric face coverings should be laundered and then repaired, if possible.
 - If the face covering is NOT visibly soiled, torn, or saturated, **carefully store on a paper towel exterior side down**. Ensure ties or ear loops do not fall into clean interior side of face covering
 4. **Wash hands** with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.

Re-Don Face covering during your shift

1. **Wash hands** with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.
 2. Lift face covering from paper towel using ear loops or upper ties.
 3. Place over face & secure:
 - **Face coverings with ear loops:** Secure ear loops behind the ears. Secure face covering.
 - **Face coverings with ties:** Secure upper ties first, behind head. End by securing lower ties behind head.
- Do not touch the front of the face covering.***
4. **Wash hands** with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.

To Remove at the end of shift:

1. Remove using only the ties or ear loops. ***Do not touch the front of the face covering.***
 - Fabric face coverings:
 - Place the face covering face down on a tissue or napkin with earloops or ties outside of the face covering or into a bag for storage or transport.
 - Fabric face coverings can be put in the same bag as your soiled PPE and washed with your regular detergent.
 - Paper/disposable face coverings should be disposed of at the end of your shift.
2. **Wash hands** with soap and water or clean hands with hand sanitizer.