

Auburn University

Usage of Face Coverings to Counter COVID-19 Policy

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Auburn University requires all individuals to wear face coverings while in certain areas on the Auburn University campus or other property controlled by Auburn University.

II. POLICY PRINCIPLES

A. Face coverings must be worn by all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, in the following areas:

- Inside buildings owned or otherwise controlled by Auburn University, even when alone
- Other areas marked by official university signage or otherwise clearly communicated by the university

B. Face coverings are not required in the following areas:

- Individual offices, when alone
- Residence hall rooms, when alone or with roommates only
- Open-air athletics venues
- The Auburn University Campus Recreation and Wellness Center, when exercising
- Indoor dining facilities, when actively eating
- Outdoor areas

C. This policy does not require individuals to provide proof of vaccination status.

D. Auburn University recommends that all individuals on campus have at least three face coverings available to use throughout a week in order to begin each day with a new or cleaned face covering. Those face coverings should follow the current [CDC recommendations](#). If using cloth face coverings, they should, at a minimum, be made of multiple layers of tightly woven cotton fabric. Some common household materials may block particles more effectively than cotton. Adding a layer of filter material within a cloth face covering is recommended. Additionally, FDA approved surgical masks may also be used as a face covering.

E. Most face coverings are not respiratory protection and must not be substituted for the proper respiratory protection that may be required as part of your research duties as identified in your respiratory protection program. Respirators with exhalation valves do not impede the spread of virus from the wearer, unless they contain an internal filter, so their use should be evaluated based upon the needs of the situation. Additionally, most cloth face coverings will not have the flame resistance found within FDA approved surgical masks or FDA/NIOSH approved filtering face piece respirators. In research situations involving heat or open flame an FDA approved surgical mask or filtering face piece respirator, as appropriate for the task, should be utilized.

- F. Where appropriate, exceptions to mask requirements will be granted to individuals who are:
- i. engaged in high intensity activities;
 - ii. working in a setting where masks may increase the risk of heat-related illnesses; or
 - iii. working in a setting where safety concerns exist due to introduction of a hazard (e.g., where straps could get caught in machinery).

For more information regarding these risks, please visit: <https://cws.auburn.edu/rms/pm/facecovering>.

- G. Other exceptions to this policy for both areas and individuals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Requests to require masks in areas where they are not otherwise required by this policy should be routed to the Executive Vice President. Students seeking an accommodation due to a disability should contact the [Office of Accessibility](#). Student requests for exemptions based on a religious concern should contact [Auburn Cares](#). Employees seeking accommodations based on a disability should complete the Employee Disability Accommodation Request Form and Disability Documentation Form. Employees requesting a religious accommodation should complete the Religious Accommodation Request Form. Completed accommodation request forms should be submitted to the Office of Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity.
- H. Areas where face-covering requirements are modified should be clearly marked with signs. In some cases, face shields may be approved for use instead of face coverings.
- I. For proper use and care of face-coverings see here: <https://cws.auburn.edu/rms/pm/facemask>.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

August 3, 2021

Revised: June 1, 2021

Revised: April 9, 2021

Revised: December 14, 2020

Revised: September 28, 2020

Revised: August 19, 2020

Adopted: June 19, 2020

IV. APPLICABILITY

The requirement to wear face coverings applies to all individuals, including Auburn University faculty, staff, and students as well as visitors, vendors, contractors, and any other third parties, regardless of vaccination status.

V. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Responsible Office: Human Resources, Office of Student Affairs, and Office of the Provost

Responsible Executive: Executive Vice President

Responsible Officer: Vice President, Business & Finance, CFO

VI. DEFINITIONS

Not Applicable

VII. POLICY PROCEDURES

None

VIII. SANCTIONS

- A. Employee violations of this Policy will be considered Group 2 violations. Supervisors will address policy violations through the normal employee disciplinary process, working in conjunction with Human Resources
- B. Student violations of this Policy in the classroom will be addressed through the [Policy on Classroom Behavior](#). Violations of this Policy occurring outside of the classroom will be addressed through the university's [Code of Student Conduct](#).

IX. EXCLUSIONS

None

X. INTERPRETATION

Executive Vice President