

Auburn University

Usage of Face Coverings to Counter COVID-19 Policy

I. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. Individuals are required to wear face coverings at all times while indoors on the Auburn University campus or other property controlled by Auburn University. Face coverings are strongly encouraged while outdoors.

- B. 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.

- C. The primary purpose of wearing a face covering is to reduce the amount of virus spreading from the wearer (who may not know they are spreading the virus) into the environment and to others. The secondary purpose of the face covering is to reduce the likelihood that large droplets containing virus that are generated by others may enter the nose and mouth of the wearer.

- D. The use of a face covering does not replace the continued need to maintain physical distances from others, at least 6 feet, but instead augments physical distancing and helps us further reduce the likelihood of virus transmission

II. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- A. The health and safety of the Auburn family (students, faculty, and staff), especially of vulnerable individuals, is of paramount importance. In light of [CDC guidance](#), and to protect the campus against COVID-19:
 - i. Face coverings must be worn inside all buildings on campus or that are otherwise controlled by Auburn University
 - 1. This requirement does not apply when an individual is alone in a private office or when an individual is in a private residential space alone or only with other residents of that private residential space. This requirement does apply in all other areas of every building, even when an individual is alone.
 - 2. Any other building exceptions to the face-covering requirement will be clearly marked with signage.
 - ii. Face coverings are strongly encouraged in all outdoor areas on campus or otherwise controlled by Auburn University.
 - 1. Face coverings may be required at university-sponsored outdoor events or in specific university-owned or controlled outdoor areas at the

university's discretion. Such requirements will be clearly communicated.

2. Individuals should maintain physical distancing as appropriate when not wearing a face covering.

This policy will be amended as needed in response to conditions on campus and local, state and federal health guidelines.

- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. Where appropriate, exceptions 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>

- E. Other exceptions/waivers for both areas and individuals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students who are asking for an accommodation to a policy (including wearing a face covering) due to a disability should contact the [Office of Accessibility](#). Student requests for exemptions based on a religious concern should contact [Auburn](#)

Cares. Employees requesting for 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.

F. Areas where face-covering requirements are modified must be clearly marked with signs indicating that an exception to wearing face coverings has been granted. In some cases, face shields may be approved for use instead of face coverings.

G. For proper use and care of face-coverings see here.

i. <https://cws.auburn.edu/rms/pm/facemask>

III. **EFFECTIVE DATE**

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.

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