



Face Covering Requirement for COVID-19 Response

REVISED September 28, 2020

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in alignment with the Oregon Governor's executive orders, and consistent with guidance from the Oregon Health Authority ("OHA") and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), Oregon Tech issued its face covering policy on June 17, 2020. It applies to all Oregon Tech locations and serves the university's goal to help reduce the risk and spread of COVID-19.

Oregon Tech requires the use of cloth face coverings, or an appropriate alternative, among all faculty, staff, students and visitors who are physically present at an Oregon Tech location and in enclosed public or common areas. Cloth face coverings, or alternative, are worn in combination with other measures, such as physical distancing and proper hand washing.

Face coverings are required where physical distancing of at least 6 feet may be difficult or when working in enclosed spaces shared by others, other than family or household members (*e.g., family, roommates*).

Acceptable forms of face coverings include: cloth face coverings, single-use disposable medical-grade masks, multi-layered scarfs, gators, or other wraps. Full face shields that wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend below the chin. Hooded face shields. Cloth masks containing a clear plastic shield (for lip reading purposes) are also acceptable.

Unacceptable forms of face coverings include: Masks with an exhalation valve are not acceptable. These types of masks filter air being inhaled, but do not filter air that is exhaled and can project germs, exposing others to COVID-19. Half-face shields that anchor on the chin and are open at the top or anchor at the top but do not go below the chin.

Campus settings that will require the use of face coverings include:

- Spaces where physical distancing cannot be met (i.e., hallways, doorways, elevators, stairwells)
- In-person classroom settings
- Integrated Student Health Center
- Shared lab spaces, computer labs, library
- MarketPlace Cafe, coffee shops, and bookstore
- Common areas within university buildings (lounges, study nooks, etc.)
- Higher density shared outdoor spaces
- Student Rec Center / gym
- Other spaces as designated

Exemptions from Face Covering Requirement. Face coverings are mandated of all individuals on Oregon Tech property and involved in Oregon Tech activities as described in these requirements. Non-compliance with the requirement, irrespective of reason, is not acceptable. Narrow exceptions to this requirement are outlined below:

- **Exceptions for Infants and Toddlers.** Infants and toddlers under age two (2) should never wear cloth face coverings due to the risk of suffocation. Children ages two to four (2-4), with the assistance and close supervision of an adult, are strongly recommended to wear face coverings in settings where it is likely that a distance of at least six feet cannot be maintained from non-household members and those at high risk for more serious illness. All children aged five(5) years and older should wear a face covering unless medically directed to do otherwise.
- **Exceptions as a Medical or Health Risk Modification or Accommodation.** Individuals with the following medical conditions or health risks may request an accommodation to this policy:
 - A medical professional has advised that wearing a face covering may pose a health risk to the person wearing the covering or impair their breathing.
 - A person has a medical condition, mental health condition, developmental or cognitive condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes, but is not limited to, persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing, who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.
 - Wearing a face covering would create a safety risk to the person as determined by local, state, or federal regulators, or workplace safety guidelines.
 - The person is deaf or hard of hearing and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication.

Students: Oregon Tech students who believe they may require an exemption from this policy must contact the Disability Services (DS). The DS will assess the student's medical or health risk situation. Such assessments will be conducted on a case-by-case basis.

Employees & Visitors: Oregon Tech employees and visitors may request a medical or health risk accommodation through the Office of Human Resources. Individuals seeking an accommodation may be required to provide medical documentation to assess their request. Such assessments will be conducted on a case-by-case basis

Enforcement:

- A person not wearing a face covering will be asked to put on a face covering or leave campus.
- Individuals who are unable or refuse to wear a face covering or alternative in designated university spaces will be referred to the appropriate office for action (OHR for employees; Student Affairs for students).
- Refusal to comply with these face covering requirements could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees and suspension or expulsion for students.

Additional Information:

- Oregon Tech's policy will be fluid and adaptive as regulatory conditions change or guidance from health authorities evolves. This may include local or state-level guidance related to business practices (e.g., food service, campus spaces, etc.)
- Oregon Tech may transition from required to recommend based on guidance from the CDC, OHA and local health authorities.
- Oregon Tech will provide members of the university community with a cloth face cover (or alternative) as a supplement to their personal supply.

- Oregon Tech will continue to follow OSHA and industry guidance related to workplace safety (e.g., safe clean protocols for custodial workers, or face coverings indicated for food services workers).
- Oregon Tech will provide alternatives to face coverings, such as face shields, if such alternatives are needed and comply with the most current health and safety guidance.
- Oregon Tech will take a zero tolerance approach to any acts of bias or discrimination related to the use of face coverings, including acts of public shaming or criticism for individuals not able to wear a face covering or individuals who are complying with the face covering requirements.
- Oregon Tech has the latitude to expand the requirement based on local circumstances (e.g., a campus-based outbreak), in consultation with the policy administrator.

Campus contact regarding this policy: Vice President for Student Affairs; Student.Affairs@oit.edu or 541-885-1013.