



Charles County Department of Human Resources

Mask & Hygiene Guidelines

Update May 20, 2021 - Per Governor Hogan's orders face coverings or masks are no longer required in county buildings. Unvaccinated employees and visitors over the age of two are urged to continue wearing masks for their own safety, and all employees should feel comfortable continuing to wear them if they choose to do so.

Riding in County Vehicles –The CDC, the Maryland Department of Health, and the Charles County Department of Health all highly recommend that people who are unvaccinated and are over the age of 2 wear masks when they are indoors or in situations when physical distancing is not possible. If either of the people in the vehicle are unvaccinated, it is prudent for all to wear masks.

Masks continue to be required in schools, on public transportation, and in healthcare settings, in accordance with the Governor's order. In addition, masks continue to be required in nursing homes, per the order of the Secretary of Health and in correctional settings, per the policy of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

Employees, volunteers, and contractors who work in emergency operations, at childcare facilities, county youth camps, the Nanjemoy Community Center (where Health Partners is located), and on VanGO buses must continue to wear face coverings according to state guidance. Employees who work and travel in county vehicles together are encouraged, but not required, to follow CDC guidance and wear masks if they are unvaccinated and physical distancing is not possible.

The health and safety of our employees is our highest priority. All employees will be required to wear a mask or cloth face-covering that covers their mouth and nose whenever it is anticipated that the six (6) feet social distancing between each person will be a challenge. This does not alleviate the requirement to socially distance, but will help prevent the spread of COVID. The expectation is that workplace desk locations will be modified to be at minimum of 6 feet apart so that employees sitting at their workspace will be able to work without a facemask in place. However, if the employee must move about the building to the restroom or for meetings, or will be in a common area of any form such as the copier area or breakroom, a facemask will be required.

County government will issue employees cloth facemasks. Employees may wear their own facemask fashioned as they choose. The facemask must be appropriate for work and must comply with the dress code provisions set forth in the dress code policy specifically it is inappropriate to wear a mask with writing (other than the County logo) or inappropriate language/images.

CDC Guidance on cloth masks can be reviewed here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html>

How to safely wear a facemask CDC guidance can be seen here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>

CDC Guidance on how to make your own cloth face covering: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf>

Cloth masks do not require special cleaning and may be laundered in a washing machine.

*Please note the following exceptions to wearing a facemask:

- Employees whose health or safety is put at risk by wearing a mask or cloth face-covering should engage in the normal interactive dialogue under the Americans with Disabilities Act with the County Safety Officer. The Safety Officer will verify that the employee cannot wear a mask and state what possible accommodation would allow the employee to work.
- Employees who work on their own in an enclosed space (ex. Their own office) are permitted to remove their mask if they are seated at least six feet from the doorway. However, they must wear their mask or face covering at all other times.
- Employees who wish to eat or drink may remove their mask to do so, provided they are situated six feet away from others, perform necessary hand hygiene and replace the mask when they are done.

Please note: this policy is an addition to all previous communications regarding preventing the spread of COVID-19. All County advice on teleworking and social distancing remain in place. Please continue to practice social distancing even when wearing a mask.

[Maryland Strong FAQ](#) on face coverings includes helpful information about reasonable accommodations for people who have difficulty wearing facial coverings.

Recommended Hygiene Guidelines

OSHA General Guidance for All Workers and Employers

For all workers, regardless of specific exposure risks, it is always a good practice to:

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if sick.
- Recognize personal risk factors. According to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), certain people, including older adults and those with underlying conditions such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19.