Overview

This document provides guidance about use of non-medical masks and face coverings within the UFV community and on campuses.

Summary

Masks are most effective when fitted, worn, and handled correctly. They act as a barrier and, in combination with other measures, can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Masks are required at UFV

- When moving around indoor campus space
- During UFV meetings (i.e., meetings tied to the academic or administrative operations of the University)
- When meeting students for office hours, if not done remotely
- At organized events

Permanent mask exemptions are available to those who are unable to wear them. To request an exemption:

- Students: Apply through the Centre for Accessibility Services [https://www.ufv.ca/accessibility/](https://www.ufv.ca/accessibility/)
- Faculty/Staff: Follow HR’s established process for medical accommodation requests [https://www.ufv.ca/hr/health-well-being/sick-leave/](https://www.ufv.ca/hr/health-well-being/sick-leave/)

Individuals may temporarily remove their mask for the following reasons:

- While seated behind a barrier separating them from other people or when seated alone in a room.
- When presenting or teaching in an educational setting if there is two meters or a barrier separating themselves and the other persons in the room.
- While seated and actively eating or drinking; it is encouraged that this is done in areas designated for eating such as the cafeteria and in break rooms.
- While participating in UFV organized physical activity or at a fitness facility.
- To communicate with a person for whom visual cues, facial expressions, lip-reading, or lip movements are essential.
- To engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask (e.g., playing a wind instrument).
- To identify an individual.

Masks are available at Campus Security and various locations around campus.

Using Face Coverings and Masks on Campus

The Province of BC has mandated that non-medical masks/face coverings are required in all public indoor settings and workplaces. Non-medical masks/face coverings must be worn in all indoor UFV spaces with exemptions described below. The non-medical masks/face coverings must also be worn appropriately, in a manner that covers the nose and mouth.

Face coverings and masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must consistently and strictly adhere
to good hygiene and public health measures, including frequent handwashing and physical (social) distancing. The following exemptions apply:

- If an individual is unable to wear a face covering because of:
  - a psychological, behavioural or health condition, or
  - a physical, cognitive, or mental impairment.
- If the individual is unable to put on or remove a face covering without the assistance of another person.
- The non-medical mask/face covering is removed temporarily for the purposes of identifying the individual.
- The individual is consuming food or drink while seated. *For Faculty and Staff, removing non-medical masks/face coverings for this purpose is to be done in designated areas including breakrooms.*
- While the individual is participating in physical activity organized by the post-secondary institution or at a fitness or sport facility.
- While communicating with a person for whom the visual cues, facial expressions, lip-reading, or lip movements are essential.
- If the mask is removed temporarily to engage in an educational activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, for example while actively playing a wind instrument.
- If the individual is behind a barrier separating the student from other persons, for example a divider or cubicle.
- If the individual is in a room by themselves.
- If the individual is in a post-secondary space and no other students, post-secondary staff persons or members of the public are present.
- The student or faculty member is delivering a presentation or lecture if:
  - there is a distance of two metres separating the individual delivering the presentation or lecture and students and other persons attending the presentation or lecture, or
  - there is a physical barrier between the individual delivering the lecture and the students and the persons attending the presentation or lecture.

**Types of Masks**

**Respirators**

Respirators referred to as N95 or KN95 usually have a cup shape, flat fold, or duckbill shape. Respirators can filter small particles when they fit closely over the mouth and nose with no gaps around the face. Respirators with valves allow the breath of the wearer to escape, which could spread infectious particles to others. In healthcare and other workplace settings, respirators are specially fitted to each person, but in public settings, this is not needed.

*Note: N95 and KN95 are only recommended for individuals who are immunocompromised in non healthcare related workplaces or those who are confirmed to have Covid-19.*

*To ensure that respirators have been approved in Canada look for a TC-84A-####n number stamped on the mask, or products marked as meeting the CSA Z94.4.1, GB 2626-2019, KMOEL–2017-64 or EN 149-2001 standards.*

**Medical Masks**

Medical masks can be made from different materials but commonly have a pleated or folded look and are rectangular when flat. To improve the fit of medical masks they can be folded, knotted, worn with a mask fitter, or worn with a cloth mask overtop.
To ensure that medical masks have been approved in Canada look for a medical mask that has ASTM F2100 or EN 14683 on the packaging label.

**Non-medical Disposable Masks**

Non-medical disposable masks often look like certified medical masks, but unlike certified medical masks, they have not been tested by national agencies for filtration effectiveness.

**Cloth Masks**

Cloth masks should be made from three layers of tightly woven, breathable fabric. Some cloth masks are designed with a pocket for a filter and may provide more protection when the filter is used.

**Face and Mouth Shields**

Face shields do not replace masks but can provide additional protection when worn with a mask. Mouth shields are not recommended. When communicating using lip-reading, when visual facial cues are essential, or when people may be unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition a face shield may be an alternative to no mask. Clear masks that cover the nose and mouth are another option when visual communication is necessary.

Information from:


**How to Wear a Mask**

- All masks should fit comfortably over the mouth and nose with no gaps around the face. Wearing a mask should be combined with other important protective measures such as getting all the recommended doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, staying home when sick, avoiding crowds, and hand washing.
- The mask should be held snugly in place with ties or ear loops.
- Masks that are uncomfortable and need frequent adjustment are less effective.
- Respirators or masks with valves should not be used because they allow the breath of the wearer to escape, which could spread infectious particles to others.
- Masks should only be used by one person and should never be shared.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before putting on your mask and after taking it off.
Limitations and Risks on Non-Medical Masks/Face Coverings

- Non-medical masks/face coverings may provide minimal protection to the wearer but are most important as a community protection mechanism (reduces the risk of an individual spreading to others). Therefore, masks do not replace other risk mitigation strategies.
- May offer limited protection to the user as the Non-Medical Masks/Face Coverings may not be effective in blocking virus particles transmitted by coughing and sneezing because of a looser fit and the materials used.
- Do not provide complete protection for others if the wearer is ill, depending on the material, only large droplets are contained.
- Wearing a Non-Medical Masks/Face Coverings can be misconstrued as a replacement for effective controls including physical distancing and hand hygiene.
- Can result in increased face touching as users adjust masks.

Further Information

Please visit https://www.ufv.ca/return-to-campus for more information and updates regarding COVID-19 or contact ehs@ufv.ca.