



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION POLICY/PROCEDURE

Policy No. 111

Page 1 of 3

**SUBJECT:**

COVID-19 "FACE COVERING"

**Effective Date:**

July 27, 2020

**Commissioner Approval:**

*Shane Harty Scarsella*  
Approval: Andrew Tunhard, Ass't Commissioner, TOS&S

*Andrew Tunhard*  
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## **I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), an effective way to reduce the spread of the COVID virus is for our workforce, visitors and partners to wear face coverings when they are in the presence of others. This policy establishes the rules of who, where, when and what of face coverings for the New Jersey Department of Transportation.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of wearing a cloth face covering is to reduce the chances of spreading the COVID virus from the person wearing the face covering to others through sneezing, coughing and even normal breathing. The cloth face covering is NOT meant to protect the wearer from others. But, when everyone in the workforce is properly wearing a face covering, our work environment will be safer.

This policy applies to all Department employees, visitors, consultants and other state employees who have to conduct business in an NJDOT facility.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**

**Face Covering** – A hands free cloth barrier that fits snugly on one's face which covers the mouth and nose. Examples of face coverings include neck gaiters, surgical face masks, bandanas, homemade face masks, scarfs.

**Presence of others** – When two or more employees are close enough to speak and/or hear one another at normal volume.

**Six feet of distance** – Self-explanatory. All employees should strive to maintain at least six feet of distance from other people as much as practical, even when wearing a face covering.

<sup>1</sup> CDC recommendation\*: CDC continues to study the spread and effects of the novel coronavirus across the United States. A significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms ("asymptomatic") and that even those who eventually develop symptoms ("pre-symptomatic") can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. In light of this new evidence, CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies) **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

**III. RESPONSIBILITY****A. Employee**

1. Employees must wear a face covering whenever they are in the presence of others. People may temporarily relax the wearing of their face covering if they are working alone and beyond the presence of others, or if there is a physical barrier (e.g. - cubicle wall or a hard, full wall) that helps separate people from sharing close air space.
2. In addition to wearing a face covering, maintain at least six feet of distance from others as much as practical.
3. If an employee is unable to wear a face covering for medical reasons, they must contact the Division of Human Resources to discuss accommodation options and to document their understanding of the agreed upon alternative safety precautions.

**B. Immediate Supervisor**

1. Monitor compliance of this policy by their direct reports. Coach and encourage their personnel to adhere to the terms of this policy.
2. If an employee refuses or fails to follow this policy, document the behavior and work with their Manager to pursue appropriate progressive discipline.

**C. Manager**

1. Monitor compliance of this policy by their direct reports. Coach and encourage their personnel to adhere to the terms of this policy.
2. If an employee refuses or fails to follow the terms of the policy, document the behavior and work with the Division of Human Resources to pursue appropriate progressive discipline.

**D. Division of Human Resources, Bureau of Employee Relations**

1. Assist Supervisors and Managers in coaching, encouraging and (if necessary) counseling employees who are not compliant with this policy.
2. For employees who refuse or fail to comply with this policy, pursue progressive discipline as appropriate.
3. Validate any medical documentation produced by an employee that states they can not wear a face covering.

**IV. POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

- A. All employees, visitors, consultants and other state employees must wear a face covering when they are in the presence of other people. Here are some examples of when employees must wear a face covering.

## Policy

		No. 111
SUBJECT COVID-19 "FACE COVERING"	July 27, 2020	Page 3 of 3

1. **Cubicle/Personal Office** - When an employee is working alone and there are physical barriers separating them from other people in adjoining cubicles, they may temporarily relax the wearing of a face covering. However, as soon as someone "stops by" their cubicle to converse, they must immediately put the face covering back on and keep it on until the person leaves. Both people should also strive to maintain at least six feet of distance while in conversation.
  2. **Meetings** - When face to face meetings have to take place, all the people in the meeting area must wear face coverings for the duration of the meeting.
  3. **Hallways** - When employees are walking from point A to point B, they must wear a face covering the entire time.
  4. **Restrooms** - When employees are using the rest room, they must wear a face covering the entire time they are in the restroom. This includes when employees are in bathroom stalls or using urinals. Also, they should strive to maintain at least six feet of distance from others when there are multiple people in a rest room.
  5. **Indoor break areas/lunch rooms/cafeteria** - If or when people are congregating indoors (e.g. maintenance yard break room, covered garage area, etc.) everyone must wear a face covering. If people have to eat together in a common area, they can relax their face covering, should be at least six feet apart, and attempt to stagger meal periods to allow for physical distancing.
  6. **Outdoor Break Areas/Smoking Areas** - Employees must wear a face covering to/from their work space to a break area. Once in the outdoor break area, they may relax the face covering to smoke, but must keep at least six feet of distance from others.
  7. **Sharing a Vehicle** - If two or more NJDOT employees must share a vehicle, all employees must wear a face covering.
  8. **Field Work/Job Site** - The same standard applies to employees working in the field. When employees are in the presence of others, even outdoors, they must wear a face covering.
- B. Any employee who is required to wear a face covering and refuses or fails to comply, may be subject to disciplinary action.

### V. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- A. Executive Order #122, Governor Murphy
- B. \*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>