

Mask Regulations

Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC, recommends the use of simple cloth face masks/coverings to prevent respiratory droplets from traveling to other people and to slow the spread of COVID-19. The Governor of Kansas issued her Executive Order, EO 20-52, effective July 3, 2020, requiring masks to be worn. Effective July 7, 2020, Shawnee County approved a resolution and order with provisions requiring masks in certain circumstances in response to Governor Kelly's executive order. The below regulations are based on the information from these three sources.

The spread of COVID-19 can be reduced when masks are used along with other preventative measures like social distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

Definitions:

“Mask” means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face. A mask or other face covering can be made of [fabric/cloth](#) or can be disposable. It can be factory made or made from household items.

The following are not acceptable masks as of 8/17/20: a face shield; and masks that have a ventilation valve or vent.

“Public space” means any indoor or outdoor space open to members of the public. This means areas where the public is welcome to engage with employees without greater permission and does not include private office or workspaces (as the public must be invited into these spaces).

“Social distancing,” also called “physical distancing,” means keeping at least 6 feet between yourself and others who are not from your household, except for infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity.

Regulations:

1. Students, faculty, staff, and visitors must wear masks while on the Washburn and Washburn Institute of Technology campuses in all hallways, public spaces, classrooms, and other common areas of campus buildings. Masks must also be worn when in offices, work spaces, or outdoor settings when 6-foot social distancing cannot be maintained.
 - a. Employees who work in public spaces may keep their mask off and nearby when the public or coworkers are not present, provided there is at least 6 feet distance or adequate time to put the mask on to interact with other persons (except for infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity).

2. Individuals who have a physical or mental health condition and may need reasonable accommodations related to the use of masks may contact Teresa Lee at Human Resources at <mailto:teresa.lee@washburn.edu> (for employees) or the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, at diversity.inclusion@washburn.edu (for students) for assistance.
3. Exceptions from mask requirements:
 - a. Communicating with persons who have a hearing impairment.
 - b. Engaging in strenuous physical activity, whether in a gym or outdoors, including athletes who are engaged in organized sports activities, so long as social distancing can be maintained.
 - c. While eating or drinking in an appropriately designated location, provided social distancing can be maintained.
 - d. Working in a setting where masks may increase the risk of heat-related illness or cause safety concerns related to their work as determined by workplace safety guidelines.
 - e. Working in a setting that a regulatory entity or professional association has determined should not be done while wearing a mask.
 - f. Visitors age ten years and under.
 - g. Participating in any lawful activity during which wearing a mask is prohibited by law.
 - h. In common areas of residence halls (e.g. hallways and study lounges) as long as individuals can maintain social distance. Roommates and Suitemates are considered a “family” unit, so masks are not required in rooms or suites.
4. Departments or programs may have more stringent guidelines as approved.
5. Students, faculty, staff and visitors are required to provide their own masks and are responsible for cleaning their own mask.
 - a. Acceptable masks must meet the definition above, follow [CDC guidelines](#), and fabric/cloth masks should have at least two layers.
 - b. Departments with frequent visitors are encouraged to have disposable masks available to provide visitors if needed.
6. Signage will be posted to inform individuals of face mask and social distancing requirements. The signage shall be consistent in format across campuses. Signs designating that masks are required shall have contact information for those persons needing to request an accommodation to exempt them from the mask requirement.
7. Syllabus statements also will include notification of the requirement to wear a mask in classrooms and other instructional areas.
8. Please review [CDC information](#) on how to wear and clean a cloth face covering (mask).

Enforcement

All students, faculty, staff and visitors are expected to adhere to these regulations. In classrooms, faculty have the right to deny a student entry into the room if the student is not wearing a mask. Violations of this regulation by faculty, staff or visitors, including contractors and vendors, should be reported to Human Resources; violations by students should be reported to the Office of Student Life.

Failure to comply with mask requirements may result in discipline according to applicable university policies, ranging from a warning letter to removal from campus. Any sanctions imposed on students, faculty, and staff will consider the facts surrounding the violation and an individual's non-compliance with this regulation. If there have been previous violations, the type of sanctions or corrective actions taken against the violator shall also be considered.

Updates to document:

8/5/20:

- Clarified language in 3.g.

8/17/20:

- Added ventilation valve or vent to list of unacceptable masks
- Added new 5.a. for mask acceptability and requirements.
- Added additional hyperlinks to CDC information.

3/30/21:

- Added an exception 3.h. for residence halls.