

REOPENING RI

Advisory regarding face coverings and cloth masks

There are many things that you can do to help protect yourself and others from becoming infected with COVID-19. People who show no symptoms of illness may still be able to spread COVID-19. A face covering may help prevent you from spreading COVID-19 to other people.

- A face covering can include anything that covers your nose and mouth, including dust masks, scarves, and bandanas.
- Do not use healthcare worker masks, such as the N95 masks - those should be preserved for healthcare workers.
- It is important that you wear these face coverings or masks in situations where it is difficult to maintain a social distance of six feet from others. For example, in a pharmacy or grocery store.

When you wear a cloth mask, it should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
- Be secured with ties or ear loops,
- Include multiple layers of fabric,
- Allow for breathing without restriction, and
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.



When putting on and taking off a mask, do not touch the front of it, you should only handle the ties or ear straps, and make sure you wash the cloth mask regularly. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching the mask.

Cloth masks should not be placed on young children younger than age two, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Instructions on how to make your own cloth mask are available on the CDC web site <https://youtu.be/tPx1yqvJgf4>.

In addition to wearing a cloth mask you should continue to practice proven methods to protect yourself.

- Practice social distancing at all times by remaining six feet away from others when you have to leave your home for essential trips.
- Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use alcohol-based hand gel with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.