



Mask and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Protocol for 2021-2022 School Year

(formerly named Employee Mask Protocol)
(Updated August 2021)

When worn properly, wearing a mask helps reduce the spread of COVID-19 by reducing droplet transmission between people. As a reminder, face masks do not replace the need to maintain social distancing, frequent hand washing, and our rigorous cleaning and disinfecting routines.

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), all School District of Philadelphia employees, students, contractors, vendors, and visitors must wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose at all times while in a District space (buildings, security desks, conference rooms, elevators, etc.).

APPROVED FACE MASKS

A mask is defined as a covering of the nose *and* mouth that is secured with straps that loop over the ears or tie around the back of the head. Acceptable masks may be factory-made; sewn by hand or machine; or created by using materials cut or constructed from household or clothing items like scarves, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. These clothing items in their original forms are not themselves acceptable face coverings for use in District facilities and are not acceptable substitutes for the types of face coverings approved for use on District premises.

Individuals who are communicating, or seeking to communicate with, someone who is hearing impaired, or who has another disability, where the ability for the student to see the mouth is essential to communication, may wear a face shield instead of a mask. The student should maintain a mask during this interaction when feasible.

Please follow the guidance below for applying, removing, and cleaning the types of masks approved for wear by District students. Hand hygiene should be performed before and after applying and removing a mask.





Masks containing valves are not an acceptable covering in District buildings. Gaiters are also not an approved face mask in District buildings.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Employees may wear personal, clean, well-maintained masks appropriate for a work environment that meet one of the approved face masks types identified in the chart below.
- Employees must wear a face mask at all times in hallways, classrooms, public spaces, and other common areas across District indoor spaces.



- Employees should carry at least two masks with them daily to ensure that they have a replacement if one becomes unusable due to damage or soiling while in a District space.
- Remain mindful not to unnecessarily touch your mask or your face during the day except for meals.
- Employees are not required to wear face masks while participating in outdoor activities if a minimum of three feet of social distancing is maintained.
- Disposable surgical masks will be available for employees whose mask becomes damaged or lost or forgotten.
- Employees may remove face masks indoors when eating or drinking if seated three feet away from others.
- When masks are removed, they must be placed below the chin, in a pocket, or on the lap. Masks should not be placed on tabletops or other communal surfaces.

Type and Intended Use of Masks				
Approved Masks	Disposable Surgical Mask 	Cloth Mask 	Face Shields (not to be used in lieu of an approved mask) 	KN95, N95, or othered filtered mask (non-vented) 
Mask Application (i.e. putting on your mask)	Hook loops snugly around ears. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.	Secure ties to head or hook loops snugly around ears. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.	Bending forward, hold face shield with both hands, expand the elastic with thumbs and place the elastic behind head, so that the foam rests on forehead. Ensure the shield covers the front and sides of the face and no areas are left uncovered.	Hook loops snugly around ears or behind head. Ensure that mask covers nose and mouth at all times and is secured under the chin.



Mask Removal	Unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask. Fold so the inner part of the mask faces inward. Dispose immediately into trash can.	Untie or unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask. Fold so the inner part of the mask faces inward.	Remove and pull up and away from face without touching the front of the mask. Check for cracks in the mask and discard if cracked or damaged.	Unhook from ears and pull away from face without touching the inside of the mask.
Mask Cleaning	Dispose immediately into trash can.	Wash after daily use in washing machine with other laundry OR by hand soaking in a solution of 1/3rd cup of household bleach per gallon of room temperature water. Rinse clear. Place in the dryer or hang dry.	Carefully wipe the inside, followed by the outside of the face shield with a disinfectant wipe.	Dispose of into trashcan when soiled.

Please note the following locations and activities that allow mask removal:

- Employees who work on their own in an enclosed space (e.g., their own office or a cubicle with panels that extend above the head of the employee) are permitted to remove their mask if they are seated at least six feet from others. However, they must wear their mask if anyone comes into their office or approaches their cubicle, and at all other times whenever they are in any other space.
- Employees may remove their masks while eating or drinking but must maintain six feet of social distancing while eating. They may not congregate together in break rooms to eat and should perform the necessary hand hygiene, and replace the mask when they are done. If an employee does remove their mask to eat or drink, it must be dropped below the chin or placed in a pocket or lap until finished eating. Masks are not to be placed on tabletops or other surfaces.

Accommodations Due to Medical Conditions or Other Reasons

Prior to entering a District facility, employees who are unable to wear a mask on account of a health-related concern should contact the Office of Employee and Labor Relations at accommodations@philasd.org to discuss alternatives and seek an accommodation.



Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Along with masks, additional PPE will be made available based on job duties and responsibilities. For example, gowns will be provided to nurses as well as made available for teachers and special education assistants of our AS, LSS, and MDS classrooms. Gloves will be provided to nurse's offices and be made available to teachers and special education assistants of our AS, LSS, and MDS classrooms if they would like to use them. These additional PPE are supplemental materials and do not replace the overall requirement of wearing a mask.