

Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations: Updated July 2021

There is no longer a statewide requirement to wear face coverings in most settings. However, other federal, state, or local laws may require face coverings in some settings, and businesses may set their own requirements. Additionally, face covering requirements for K-12 schools remain in effect through the end of the 2020-2021 school year, and face covering requirements for child care settings remain in effect through June 30, 2021 **or** until 70% of Minnesotans aged 16+ receive at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, whichever is earlier.

Unvaccinated people

People who are not vaccinated, including children, are not required to wear face coverings indoors or outdoors by state executive order, but are at risk for getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **strongly recommend** that anyone who is not fully vaccinated continue to wear face coverings indoors in businesses, public settings, and when around people from other households, as well as outdoors when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Vaccinated people

People who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear face coverings indoors or outdoors. However, MDH and CDC recommend face coverings for fully vaccinated people in a few situations – refer to information below for more details.

Laws in certain settings may require face coverings

Certain settings may have specific federal, state, and/or local legal requirements that require face coverings.

- For example, the CDC requires face coverings on buses, trains, trolleys, subways, ride-shares, maritime transportation, air travel, and other public transportation. In addition, health care settings – including long-term care – may be required by federal, state, and/or local regulatory authorities to require face coverings in certain situations.

- Note that this is not an exclusive list of federal, state, or local face covering requirements. Be sure you understand your region and industry's legal requirements. Businesses that are uncertain about applicable legal requirements should seek legal advice.

Accommodations should be considered

In certain circumstances, the use of masks may not be reasonable and accommodations should be considered. When face coverings are required by law, be sure to consider exemptions and guidance addressing the specific requirement. Businesses that choose to require face coverings should also be aware that:

- People who have certain disabilities, behavioral needs, or other health, mental health, or developmental conditions may have difficulty tolerating a face covering or wearing one safely.
- CDC also notes that children under age 2 should not wear a face covering, and certain situations (e.g., swimming or other activities that will soak or submerge a face covering in water) may make face coverings unsafe.

Accommodations might include safe alternatives, such as social distancing or contactless service options (e.g., curbside pickup).

Businesses may require face coverings

Businesses and entities can also set their own face covering rules, and workers and customers may be legally required to follow those requirements.

Recommendations regardless of vaccination status

Face coverings are strongly recommended in the following situations:

- **In settings where there is a high risk of COVID-19 spread or complications from COVID-19 infection such as health care settings, homeless shelters, and correctional facilities.**
- **For people who have symptoms of COVID-19.** People who have symptoms should remain at home. If they must go out (e.g., to go to a medical appointment), they should wear a face covering.

Immunocompromised people

People with weakened immune systems, even if fully vaccinated, should consult their health care provider for specific recommendations. The protection they get from COVID-19 vaccines may not be as strong as for people with stronger immune systems.