

## **FACE COVERINGS**

**Revised: May 6, 2022**

Face coverings are strongly recommended indoors, but not required, regardless of vaccination status. Individuals should feel free to continue to wear face coverings if they desire. Face coverings are optional outdoors.

Student Health Center, Counseling Center, and UCI Health properties will continue to adhere to face covering guidance for healthcare settings.

Per state guidelines and public health guidance, face coverings may be required consistent with public health guidance for a limited duration for those who are COVID-19 positive and returning from isolation, and for those recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Current directives and advisories are available at: [Executive Directives and Policies | Coronavirus Information Hub | UCI](#)

All individuals should follow campus posted signs and consult with their supervisor regarding worksite-specific requirements. Individuals shall comply with relevant policies applicable to the wearer, including, but not limited to, student code of conduct and employee policies. In addition, staff should follow posted signs, department specific procedures and if they have any questions, consult their supervisor regarding worksite specific face covering requirements.

UCI will provide employees with face coverings that meet the Cal OSHA definition (definition effective May 6, 2022) and upon request, UCI will provide voluntary-use respirators to unvaccinated or vaccinated employees: [Face Coverings and Voluntary Use Respirators \(N95s\) // Environmental Health & Safety // UCI](#)

### **Protective Measures:**

Wearing face coverings can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 by people who may not know that they are infected with the virus and is considered an additional public health measure to reduce community transmission of COVID-19. They should be used in conjunction with other protective measures, such as frequent handwashing and physical distancing, to slow the spread of infection. Face coverings may help reduce exposure to droplets in the air that contain the virus. Wearing face coverings can help protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

Per Cal OSHA, face coverings are defined as a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, a respirator worn voluntarily, or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers that completely covers the nose and mouth and is secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. A face covering is a solid piece of material without slits, visible holes, or punctures, and must fit snugly over the nose, mouth and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face. A face covering does not include a scarf, ski mask, balaclava, bandana, turtleneck, collar, gaiter, or a single layer of fabric.

Face coverings must comply with relevant policies applicable to the wearer, including, but not limited to student code of conduct and employee policies.

Face coverings, if worn properly, help greatly reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Wearing face coverings, increasing ventilation indoors, and wearing respiratory protection decreases the spread of COVID-19, but are most effective when used in combination.

In conjunction with these control measures, remember to follow these best practices for infection control:

- Stay at home if you feel sick
- Wash your hands frequently ([proper hand hygiene](#))
- Avoid touching your face
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, keyboards, desktops, copiers, refrigerator handles, phones, headsets, etc.)

### **How to Wear, Remove, and Clean a Face Covering:**

#### **To wear:**

- Perform hand hygiene before handling the face covering □
- Make sure it fits snugly over the nose, mouth, and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face.
- Secure the face covering with ties, ear loops, or tie it behind the head
- Make sure hands are clean if any adjustments are needed

#### **To remove all types of face coverings:**

- Perform hand hygiene before removing the face covering
- Carefully remove the face covering by loosening the ties or ear loops
- Do not touch eyes, nose, and mouth when removing face covering
- If reusing the face covering, place it in a clean bag or container to be stored until it can be reused
- Immediately wash hands after removing face covering

#### **Cleaning instructions and frequency:**

- If reusing a face covering, when soiled or dirty, wash using a washing machine.
- If a washing machine is not available, wash the face covering in the sink with very warm water and detergent.
- The frequency of washing is dependent on frequency of use; it is recommended that the face covering be washed at least daily per CDC guidelines.
- Wash items as appropriate to the cloth material or in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry completely before storage and reuse.
- Store clean cloth face covering in a clean bag or container until it can be reused.
- Clean containers used to store used or dirty face coverings prior to reuse.

For more information about face coverings, refer to the [CDC](#) and to the [California Department of Public](#)

[Health Guidance.](#)

**Additional Resources:**

[Environmental Health and Safety \(EHS\)](#)

[California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#)

[Orange County Health Care Agency \(OCHCA\)](#)