

Missouri University of Science and Technology

1201 N. State St. | Rolla, MO 65409
573-341-4111 | mst.edu

Missouri S&T Face Covering Policy Guideline

Missouri S&T issued the [Health and Safety Standards Policy Memorandum No. I-12](#) on July 1, 2020, setting a policy on required face coverings. This policy considers the current state of science in developing a facial covering response to COVID-19.

Face coverings are an additional step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 when combined with everyday preventive actions and social distancing in public settings. Face coverings are especially important to keep people who don't know they have the virus from transmitting it to others.

The S&T campus will continue to adjust strategies and will consider local ordinances and public health official recommendations in modifying policy guidelines.

The policy guideline will cover the following areas as they relate to the S&T community:

- Acceptable types of facial coverings
- Additional definitions
- Common exceptions
- Availability of face coverings on campus
- University provided supplies
- Accommodation processes
- Enforcement specifics
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Examples of acceptable facial coverings

Face coverings must cover the individual's mouth and nose. Examples of acceptable face coverings include:

- Cloth ear-loop face coverings
- Clear plastic ear-loop face coverings
- Non-medical disposable face masks

Please note: Face coverings with exhalation valves or vents should NOT be worn to help prevent the person wearing the face covering from spreading COVID-19 to others. Exhalation valves or vents can allow for respiratory droplets to pass through and possibly reach others.



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Additional definitions

Common Areas: locations where groups of people tend to gather creating a risk of increased contacts. This generally includes:

- dining areas
- lounges
- hallways
- conference spaces
- restrooms
- outdoor gathering areas
- study areas.

Availability of face coverings on campus

In general, individuals are responsible for providing their face coverings.

Disposable face coverings will be available at the following locations:

- Havener Center Information Desk
- Library Service Desk
- ID Card Office – Centennial Hall (New Student Programs)
- Student Success Center – Toomey Hall
- University Police Department
- Gale Bullman – Student Recreation Center Desk

Face coverings and shields are available for purchase at the [S&T Store](#).

University provided supplies

In general, individuals are responsible for providing their face coverings.

Some individual job descriptions require protective equipment. For example, health care workers and first responders. The University will provide employees with a face shield when required in situations, which include classroom instructors, coaches, and employees in laboratory settings.

The intent of an instructor wearing a clear facial shield is to allow the audience to have a visual component to speech in the case of auditory impairment. If this can be accomplished with other facial coverings, a substitute is acceptable for the instructor. Outside of the classroom environment, a face shield alone is not an acceptable face covering. Each audience and classroom environment may have their own unique characteristics that require individualized solutions.



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Students are responsible for purchasing a plastic face shield, in addition to a face mask, for laboratory settings where six feet of physical distance cannot be consistently maintained for an extended period of time. Students are encouraged to check with the faculty member in charge of the lab environment, review Canvas announcements and syllabi, and consistently check for updates to required course materials in the S&T Store [course materials online system](#).

Common exceptions

Exceptions include when you are alone in a private workspace, private residence hall rooms, or while you are outdoors and able to maintain six feet or more of distance from others and if you have an ADA accommodation.

Accommodations

If you are unable to wear a face covering due to a health condition, or if you need any additional accommodations based on how working or learning environments may change to adapt to public health needs, reach out to the appropriate campus support services.

The accommodation process should include an evaluation of facial covering options that comply with health and safety requirements while meeting the individual's needs.

Individuals who are unable to wear a face covering of any type should be referred to the [Testing and Student Disability Services](#) (students) or [Office of Accessibility and ADA](#) (employees and visitors) to identify reasonable accommodations, which may include remote learning or work.

Enforcement

Individuals are encouraged to practice peer enforcement of the face covering policy. Effort should be made in the moment to identify solutions enabling the individual to participate while observing six-foot social distancing, but individuals who are not wearing face coverings or have approved accommodations authorizing them to do otherwise may be excluded from University programs and activities.

Concerns involving student or student organization compliance may be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students for review and education in accordance with the [University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations Section 200.020 Rules of Procedures in Student or Student Organization Conduct Matters](#).

Concerns involving employee compliance may be reported to the appropriate authority, supervisor or administrator, or to Human Resource Services. Staff members may be subject to the procedures of progressive discipline outlined in [HR-601](#). Faculty members are subject to procedures in accordance with the [University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations Chapter 330 – Employee Conduct](#).



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Frequently Asked Questions

Do I still need to comply with the 6-foot physical distance if I am wearing a facial covering?

Yes. The six-foot physical distance combined with a facial covering is currently our best strategy for preventing the spread of the virus.

What else do I need to know to properly wear a face covering?

Wearing your face covering appropriately is an important part of preventing the spread of COVID-19, too. Wash your hands before securing the covering over your nose and mouth, and keep it on the entire time you're in a space where you can't consistently maintain six feet of distance. Your face covering should be snug but comfortable and allow you to breathe easily.

While wearing a face covering, avoid touching the fabric with your hands. You should also be careful to avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth when you remove the covering. Instead, handle it by the ear loops or ties. After touching or removing your covering, wash your hands again or use hand sanitizer.

Do I have to wear a face covering when I am alone in my office?

No. It is recommended that personal office space not be used as a general meeting space for others.

When I am in a lab environment, what facial coverings are required?

Face coverings are required in a lab environment. However, in lab environments where there is close contact and six feet of physical distance cannot be maintained for an extended period, both a cloth face covering and a face shield are required, in addition to the PPE appropriate for the particular lab.

As a student, can I wear a face shield instead of a facial covering in the classroom?

No. A face shield does not fit tightly around the mouth and the nose, therefore, a snug-fitting facial covering is required.

As an instructor, can I wear an alternative facial covering in the classroom instead of a shield?

The intent of an instructor wearing a clear facial shield is to allow for the audience to have a visual component to speech in the case of auditory impairment. If this can be accomplished with other facial coverings, a substitute is acceptable for the instructor. Outside of the classroom environment, a face shield alone is not an acceptable face covering. Each audience and classroom environment may have their own unique characteristics leading to individualized solutions.



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Do I have to pay for my own face covering?

In general, individuals are responsible for providing their own face coverings. Each student and employee is asked to have 3-5 face coverings available for use, allowing for frequent changes and laundering. Face coverings are available for purchase at the S&T Store.

Do I need to have a face covering with me at all times?

Yes, you should always carry a face covering with you just in case you find yourself in a situation where it is difficult to distance. However, remember that face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing. The best way to stay healthy is to maintain distance and avoid exposure — this includes no handshaking or hugging.

Can I wear a surgical mask instead of a facial covering?

Yes, surgical masks are acceptable, but they are only intended for single use.

Can I wear an N95?

As a reminder, surgical masks and N-95 respirators should be reserved for health care professionals, since these critical supplies can help ensure they remain safe when in close contact with COVID-19 patients.

An N95 is considered a specialized device and should be reserved for medical providers. Additionally, proper use of the respirator requires a fit test.

Are face coverings required in university vehicles?

Yes, face coverings are required when in University vehicles where more than one individual is present. Face coverings are not required when only one individual is in the vehicle. Shared equipment and vehicles should be wiped down after each shift or before a different employee uses the equipment or vehicle, including steering wheels, door handles, turn signals, gearshifts and seat belts.

Are face coverings required in the dining areas?

Yes, face coverings are required while in dining areas. Diners may remove their face covering when seated to eat. Physical distancing floor markers must be followed when standing in line. Even when dining areas are busy, patrons must follow the designated procedures.

How do I clean my facial covering?

To ensure contaminants don't remain on your covering, it should be washed after each use. You can use regular detergent to wash coverings with other laundry. If possible, use a warm water setting. Or, refer to manufacturer care instructions on how to best clean your face covering.



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How do I clean my face shield?

Face shields should be cleaned when removed and on a regular basis. If your shield is soiled, follow the manufacturer's recommended instructions. When manufacturer instructions for cleaning and disinfection are not available, face shields may be cleaned using a mild detergent with water and dried with a cloth. You may also wish to use a surface disinfectant wipe or spray. If the shield is streaked or has a cloudy film, clean it with a soft, water dampened cloth or use an alcohol pad. Be sure to fully dry by air drying or using clean absorbent towels.

How should a face shield fit?

Use a face shield that fits closely directly in front of the face and covers the entire front of the face, extends to the chin or below, and wraps around the sides of the wearer's face. Face shields should be substantial enough to remain in place without excessive readjustment. If the face shield appears damaged or torn – discard and obtain a replacement. Many people who wear glasses recommend choosing a mask with a wire insert that allows it to be molded to the nose just below the spot where one's glasses are resting. This type of mask should allow you to keep your glasses in place with the beneficial side effect of reducing fogging. Reusable face shields should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Can I make my own face covering?

Yes, you may make your own face coverings or purchase them. The CDC emphasizes that face coverings—even those made of common household fabrics—filter particles and can help prevent infection. Learn more about making your own face coverings [on the CDC website](#).

What should I do in an elevator?

You should wear your mask in an elevator and ride alone.

Should I wear a mask in a public restroom?

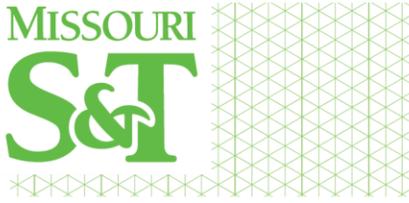
Yes. Public restrooms are considered common gathering locations.

How do I properly dispose of a surgical mask?

Once you are finished wearing a disposable facial covering, you can throw it away in a standard trash receptacle.

I am a student. What happens if I refuse to wear a facial covering?

A student who refuses to wear a face covering as required will be asked to leave the class, lab, location, or activity and may be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for review through the student conduct process.



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Additional information is available on the [Face Covering Policy](#), the [Standard of Conduct](#) and the [Rules of Procedures in Student Conduct Matters](#). Questions regarding face covering policy requirements may be directed to the Office of the Dean of Students, dos@mst.edu or 573-341-4209.

I am a faculty member. What happens if I refuse to wear a facial covering?

A faculty member who refuses to wear a face covering as required and who does not have an ADA accommodation will be subject to the policy and procedures outlined in accordance with the [University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations Section 330.110 Standards of Faculty Conduct](#).

I am a staff member. What happens if I refuse to wear a facial covering?

A staff member who refuses to wear a face covering as required and who does not have an ADA accommodation will be subject to the procedures of progressive discipline outlined in [HR-601](#).

What are the guidelines for living and interacting with others?

Students are encouraged to establish a “social bubble” or “family unit” with a small number of individuals with whom they will freely interact. The intent is to minimize external contacts and to reduce the risk of coming in contact with the virus. The concept involves the unit agreeing to limit contact to group members while wearing face coverings and practicing social distancing with everyone else.

Students living in shared housing environments are encouraged to establish their “family unit” and agree upon clear guidelines for how the unit will interact when together and when outside of the unit, with the goal being to minimize contact with others. This strategy helps break transmission chains of infection and protects individuals within and outside the unit.

All “social bubbles” and “family units” should continue to be vigilant, follow the 6/10/15 rule, and the following safety-guidelines:

- Maintain 6 feet of social distance at all times (and continue to wear your face coverings even when distanced)
- Limit gatherings to 10 or fewer individuals – on or off campus
- Limit close contact with others to less than 15 minutes as much as possible, as “close contacts” for COVID-19 tracing is defined as those who are within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes.
- Wear a facial covering in all classrooms, labs and wherever you cannot maintain a physical distance of six feet or more.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds.
- Constantly monitor your health. If you have a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or other symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and notify covid@mst.edu.