



COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

Cloth Face Coverings

Updated April 27, 2020

There are many questions about the use of facial coverings during the COVID-19 pandemic. These frequently asked questions (FAQs) provide guidance and clarity and are based on CDC guidance, city and county ordinances and medical advice. As we continue to monitor this outbreak, new and modified contractor and employee guidance will be provided to help our people minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Q1. Why did PG&E change the policy from recommending to requiring face coverings?

A1. This new guidance aligns with requirements that many jurisdictions have now put in place, including the six Bay Area counties (San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin and Sonoma), as well as San Bernardino County and the City of Fresno. We expect many other jurisdictions will follow suit and amend their face-covering best practice from a recommendation to a requirement.

Q2. Do I still need to maintain social distancing if I am wearing a face covering?

A2. Yes, face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing. The CDC still recommends you stay at least six feet away from other people, perform frequent hand washing and other everyday preventive actions. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but it helps prevent the spread of virus from the wearer to others. This is especially important if someone is infected but does not have symptoms.

Q3. I sit at a desk at work and am at least six feet away from co-workers. Do I need to wear my face covering all day?

A3. The ordinances state that individuals must wear a face covering at the workplace in any room or enclosed area when other people are nearby. You may remove your face covering while at your desk if you are at least six feet away from others. Please remember to place it back on if you get up from your desk or if a co-worker comes to visit you or to drop something off.

Q4. I must drive in a vehicle with a co-worker. Do we both need to wear a face covering?

A4. Yes. A cloth face covering helps prevent the spread of a virus from the wearer to others. In addition, you should try to keep as much distance between yourselves (such as having the passenger ride in the back seat), and you should set the air controls to outside air rather than re-circulated air. Also, disinfect "high touch" areas including the dashboard and door handles.

Q5. I work alone in a bucket truck. Do I need to wear a face covering?

A5. If you are at least six feet away from other people you may remove your face covering. Please keep it with you in order to put it on when you may need to interact with or encounter others. If two people are working together in an elevated bucket, they must both wear the appropriate face coverings for the work.

Q6. I work in a warehouse or a yard. Do I need to wear a face covering?

A6. Yes. The county and city ordinances require workers to wear a face covering in common areas and where others are regularly present. You may remove your face covering if you are alone in your vehicle or when you can maintain at least six feet of distance from others.



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Q7. I work by myself out in the field. Do I need to wear a face covering?

A7. If you are at least six feet away from other people you may remove your face covering. Please keep it with you in order to put it on when you may need to interact with or encounter others.

Q8. I work in a call center and spend most of my day on the phone. It is difficult to talk through the face covering. Do I have to wear one?

A8. The ordinances state that individuals must wear a face covering at the workplace in any room or enclosed area when other people are nearby. You may remove the face covering to talk on the phone if you are at least six feet away from others. Please remember to place it back on if you get up from your desk or if a co-worker comes to visit you or to drop something off.

Q9. I have respiratory issues and am concerned about wearing a face covering. What should I do?

A9. Face coverings are mandatory Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”). If you have a medical condition that makes wearing a face covering challenging, please discuss your concerns with your medical provider and talk with your supervisor.

Q10. How do I handle a face covering and how do I care for it?

A10. Do not handle the front of the covering. Handle it by its elastic or from the back. Do not touch the covering or your face while you are wearing it. Wash your face covering regularly and store it in a plastic or paper bag when not in use.

Q11. When I wear my face covering, my eyeglasses fog up. Is there a way to prevent that?

A11. Wash your eyeglasses with soapy water and allow them to air dry or gently wipe them with a dry soft cloth immediately before putting on a mask. The residual soap will reduce fogging. You can also put an absorbent tissue, a Band-Aid, or a nose-clip on the top of the mask to reduce the amount of warm moist air escaping onto your glasses. Commercially available anti-fogging wipes are also effective.

Q12. I heard that some face coverings are made in China. Are they safe to wear?

A12. Yes. Coronavirus can survive on surfaces for only a limited amount of time. However, it is still good practice to wash any cloth face covering before wearing it.

Q13. Can I wear an N95 mask instead of a cloth face covering?

A13. N95 respirators are provided to those contractors and employees who are at higher risk of potential exposure to infectious individuals. For example, environments such as hospitals, morgues, senior centers, and homes with individuals that have symptoms of COVID-19 illness. If your work assignment requires you to work in these environments, please work with your supervisor to obtain a N95 respirator.