

COVID-19 Face Covering Policy

(Summary of Policy 809)

Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer does not know they are infected with COVID-19

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for employees, students and other persons (including visitors, guests, contractors, etc.) present on school property to wear face coverings in accordance to Emergency Order 20-81 and 20-82.

Summary of Notice

This notice summarizes SoWashCo policies requiring face coverings on school property in compliance with Governor Walz's Executive Orders 20-81 and 20-82 and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The provisions of this policy substantially reflect the requirements of the 2020-21 Planning Guide for students, Executive Order 20-81 and Executive Order 20-82. The complete policy and related procedures are available in your school or work location, on the District's web site at www.sowashco.org, from the Assistant Superintendent of your school or from the Human Resources Department.

We will promptly investigate reports and take appropriate action against staff, students or visitors who do not comply with the policy, which may include discipline, termination or reporting to local authorities.

Exceptions

Face covering may be removed when:

- Participating in social distanced outdoor classes or activities
- Participating in indoor physical activities
- Swimming or showering
- While receiving a service
- Pre-kindergarten students age 5 and under
- When eating or drinking
- Socially distanced indoor practices or performances
- Identification purposes
- Staff working alone in offices, classrooms, vehicles or job locations
- Staff working in communal spaces that have barriers above face level
- When communicating with a person who is deaf or heard of hearing or has a disability, medical condition or mental health condition while socially distanced

Definition of a Face Covering

A. A face covering must be worn to cover the nose and mouth completely. It should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear. The following are included in the definition of face covering:

- Paper or disposable mask
- Cloth face mask
- Scarf
- Neck Gaiter
- Bandana
- Religious face covering
- Medical-grade masks and respirators

B. A face shield is a clear plastic barrier that covers the face and allows visibility of facial expressions and lip movements for speech perception. A face shield should extend below the chin anteriorly, to the ears laterally and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and shield's headpiece.

C. Masks that incorporate a valve designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh masks or masks with openings, holes or visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow exhaled droplets to be released into the air.

Thank you for helping prevent the spread of COVID-19

