



Media Release

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Mandatory Face Coverings and the Governor's Executive Orders

San Benito County, California June 24, 2020:

On June 18, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released statewide [face covering guidance, which has the force of legal order](#). It mandates that face coverings be worn statewide in the circumstances and with the exceptions outlined in the guidance. It does not substitute for existing guidance about social distancing and handwashing.

Although entitled "Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings", it has the force of an order pursuant to Executive Order N-60-20

On May 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order [N-60-20](#), available at <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/5.4.20-EO-N-60-20.pdf>, which mandates that the public obey State public health directives. The order states in part:

"It is Hereby ordered that:

- 1) *All residents are directed to continue to obey State public health directives, as made available at <https://covid19.ca.gov/stay-home-except-for-essential-needs/> and elsewhere as the State Public Health Officer may provide."*

Previously, on March 12, 2020 Governor Newsom had issued Executive Order [N-25-20](#) which states in part:

"It is Hereby ordered that:

- 1) *All residents are to heed any orders and guidance of state and local public health officials, including but not limited to the imposition of social distancing measures, to control the spread of COVID-19"*

Both Executive Orders remain in effect and have not been terminated or rescinded.

Face Covering Guidance

People in California **must** wear face coverings when they are in the high-risk situations listed below:

- Inside of, or in line to enter, any indoor public space;¹
- Obtaining services from the healthcare sector in settings including, but not limited to, a hospital, pharmacy, medical clinic, laboratory, physician or dental office, veterinary clinic, or blood bank;²
- Waiting for or riding on public transportation or paratransit or while in a taxi, private car service, or ride-sharing vehicle;



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- Engaged in work, whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when:
 - Interacting in-person with any member of the public;
 - Working in any space visited by members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time;
 - Working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others;
 - Working in or walking through common areas, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities;
 - In any room or enclosed area where other people (except for members of the person's own household or residence) are present when unable to physically distance.
- Driving or operating any public transportation or paratransit vehicle, taxi, or private car service or ride-sharing vehicle when passengers are present. When **no** passengers are present, face coverings are strongly recommended.
- While outdoors in public spaces when maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet from persons who are not members of the same household or residence is not feasible.

The following individuals are exempt from wearing a face covering:

- Persons age two years or under. These very young children must not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation.
- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.
- Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
- Persons for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.
- Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service.
- Persons who are seated at a restaurant or other establishment that offers food or beverage service, while they are eating or drinking, provided that they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet away from persons who are not members of the same household or residence.
- Persons who are engaged in outdoor work or recreation such as swimming, walking, hiking, bicycling, or running, when alone or with household members, and when they are able to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others.



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- Persons who are incarcerated. Prisons and jails, as part of their mitigation plans, will have specific guidance on the wearing of face coverings or masks for both inmates and staff.

- ¹ Unless exempted by state guidelines for specific public settings (e.g., school or childcare center)
- ² Unless directed otherwise by an employee or healthcare provider

Who needs a mask?

- Anyone going outside their home
- Workers in customer-facing industries
- Workers in offices, factories, or any group setting
- Doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals
- And other workers, as dictated by [industry guidance](#)

Who should not wear a mask?

- Children under 2 years old
- Anyone with respiratory issues where it would impede their breathing
- Anyone unable to remove the mask without help

When should you wear a mask?

You should wear a mask whenever you will be around someone you don't live with, including:

- In any indoor public space
- When waiting in line
- When getting health care
- On public transportation or when ride-sharing
- At work
- Outdoors

Can I take my mask off in public?

There are times when it is okay to take your mask off, such as:

- When eating or drinking
- If a hearing-impaired person needs to read your lips
- If wearing a mask imposes a risk to you at work
- When you are getting a service to the nose or face
- When exercising in public and you need more air

You should replace the mask as soon as you can after these activities to reduce risk of infection.

Note: Persons exempted from wearing a face covering due to a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others should wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, as long as their condition permits it.