



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency
1080 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Face Covering Guidance

What is the age range that face coverings apply to?

- Anyone the age of 2 and over must wear face coverings. Clients under the age of 2 do not need to nor should they wear a face covering.

What is a face covering?

- A covering made of cloth, fabric, or other materials, without holes, that covers only the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face. Natural fabrics like cotton are better than synthetics. Multiple layers are better than a single layer.
- Examples:
 - A scarf or bandana that is folded into multiple layers
 - A neck Gaiter that is multiple layers
 - A homemade covering made from a t-shirt, sweatshirt or towel held on with rubber bands or otherwise
 - A mask
 - It may be factory made or handmade from ordinary household materials
- Not permitted
 - A covering that hides the wearer's eyes or forehead is not a Face Covering
 - A mask that incorporates a one-way valve (typically a raised plastic cylinder about the size of a quarter on the front or side of the mask) that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling is not a Face Covering
 - A face shield alone is not a substitute for a face covering

When are Face Coverings Required?

Work

- If you are interacting with any member of the public
- If you are interacting with another person who is in their car or at a window or counter
- If you are working in any space visited by members of the public, such as a reception area, a restroom, waiting room, exam room
- If you are working in any area where food is prepared or packaged
- If you are working in or walking through any common areas such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities
- If you are in any room or enclosed area where other people are present, **and** you are unable to physically distance

- If you are in a private office and someone comes in to see you
- If driving a County Vehicle that is used to transport clients or families when they are present.
- If you are in a private cubicle, but are less than 6 feet from someone walking by or present in your cubicle

Community

- If you are inside of a public space
- If you are waiting to enter an indoor public space
- If you are getting services from a healthcare provider
- If you are riding public transportation or waiting for public transportation
- If you are outside and unable to maintain a physical distance of 6-feet from other persons who are not members of your household

When are Face Coverings Not Required?

Work

- If you are in a private office as long as members of the public do not visit that office
- If you are driving alone
- If an individual has a medical exemption to wearing a face covering.
 - We do not have to serve that individual in person, however, and can explore other means to assist them, ex. Telephone call or telehealth visit or an alternative face covering- ex. Bandana with the bottom open

Community

- If you are outside and able to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet
- If you are with members of your household

Exemptions

- Age under 2 years old
- If you are eating at a restaurant and seated at the table
- If you are engaging in outdoor recreation and can maintain physical distancing