

Saint Joseph's College

Policy Guidebook

Human Resources

Section Name: Environmental Health & Safety

Section Number: 10.05

Effective Date: 6/22/2020

Revision Dates: 7/21/2020, 9/11/2020, 9/14/2020, 11/10/2020
5/10/2021, 5/27/2021, 8/9/2021, 1/14/2022, 2/17/2022, 3/18/2022

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Face Masks (Personal Protective Equipment - PPE)

Purpose:

Saint Joseph's College is committed to providing a healthy working and learning environment for the entire campus community. Along with being vaccinated from infectious diseases, another effective way to reduce the spread of viruses such as COVID-19 is by wearing a face mask, especially when inside and in close proximity to others. When an entire community establishes a culture of wearing face masks indoors and in other settings where social distance can't be ensured, the risk of transmission from one person to another is significantly lowered.

Wearing an appropriate face mask does more than protect the wearer; it also protects other people around and those close to you. Using appropriate methods to socially distance when possible, and wearing a face mask, protects our colleagues, families and friends, especially those in our lives who are particularly at risk, as well as those who aren't. Not only is wearing an appropriate face mask and maintaining proper social distance a shared responsibility, but it is also an extension of our College Core Values of Community, Compassion and Respect.

***NOTE: This policy will remain in compliance with any State of Maine mandate, Executive Order, and following the guidance of the CDC. The Pandemic Response Team (PRT) will monitor the County status and rescind this mask requirement if and when the current risk subsides. Any changes or modifications to this policy will be communicated directly to all members of the College community.

Mandatory Participation and Applicability:

All Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, Contractors, Vendors, and Visitors on Campus whether vaccinated or not from COVID-19.

Procedure:

All Students, Faculty, Staff, and anyone else on campus, are required to wear a face mask **during indoor athletic events (spectators)**.

The College will make masking in classrooms optional, and up to the discretion of individual faculty.

It is important to note that SJC is supportive and respectful of all students, faculty, or staff who

choose to continue to wear a mask at any time for any reason. The CDC recommends continued masking and physical distancing for people with weakened immune systems. **SJC will remain a mask-positive campus.** If you feel more comfortable in a mask, please wear one. If you feel sick, put on a mask and go immediately to the Health and Wellness Center. If someone else asks you to put on a mask in their residence, office or classroom, please respect their personal circumstances by complying.

All faculty and staff working on campus with an approved medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement must wear face masks indefinitely as a safety precaution. Also, face masks are required to be worn indefinitely by any students on campus who have an approved medical exemption.

Even during low levels of community transmission in Cumberland County, there may be specific needs for some functions within a department to require the wearing of face masks for those employees who are fully vaccinated. This would be part of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements while engaged in work, such as the Food Service Division, Health & Wellness Center, etc. Examples of PPE include: gloves, hairnets, face masks, goggles, ear protection headphones, etc.

Acceptable Face Masks on Campus

Heeding the latest guidance from public health authorities, **medical grade surgical masks** are required, and will be available at the Health and Wellness Center, all residence halls, and all campus offices. Medical masks should be changed regularly, as they do not prevent infection when they get wet or damaged.

For a face mask to be effective, place the mask over the nose and mouth and secure it under the chin. If a mask falls below the nose, it may be too large. Adjust the ear straps by tying small knots in the straps. The knots should not have a lot of extra "strap" to ensure the mask doesn't become too tight around the ears.

Face coverings such as cloth masks, neck gaiters, bandanas, and scarfs are not acceptable types of face masks, and, consequently, should not be worn on campus. The CDC does not currently recommend the use of face shields as a substitute for masks.

Recognizing that this decision impacts all members of our community, medical grade surgical masks and other PPE will be available to all students, faculty, and staff at no cost. The CDC recommends proper methods to put on and remove face masks. It is the responsibility of the employee to properly place, wear, remove, and dispose of masks in appropriate receptacles.

Face Mask Alternatives and Medical Accommodations:

Wearing a face mask may not be feasible in every situation on campus. For some people, because wearing a face mask may exacerbate a physical or mental health condition, it may lead to a medical emergency, or result in a significant safety concern.

Whenever possible, the College will consider the appropriate alternatives to increase the possibility of wearing a face mask or to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one. In cases where individuals have a **need** to wear a face shield instead of a

mask, these CDC considerations should be followed: use face shields that wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend below the chin; or use hooded face shields.

Additionally, there may be a medical need for a student, faculty or staff who are not fully vaccinated to request an accommodation regarding face masks. For example, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those who communicate with a person who is hearing impaired, may not be able to wear face masks if lipreading is necessary to communicate.

The College is committed to making reasonable accommodations to students and employees with known disabilities, unless the accommodation would pose an undue hardship. Medical accommodations for students may be requested through the ADA office within the Academic Center for Excellence. For faculty and staff, medical accommodation requests can be requested through the Human Resources Office.

Enforcement:

All Students, Faculty, Staff, Alumni, Contractors, Vendors, and Visitors on Campus whether vaccinated or not from COVID-19 are expected to observe this Saint Joseph's College "COVID-19 Face Masks (Personal Protective Equipment – PPE)" policy. Enforcement of this policy is viewed as the shared responsibility of all those in the campus community. The primary goal is to achieve voluntary compliance by educating students, faculty, staff, alumni, contractors, vendors and visitors on campus about the policy.

- The success of this policy depends on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of everyone. All members of the campus community, including vendors and visitors, are asked to observe this policy.
- The President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Supervisors and Department Heads shall ensure that this policy is communicated to everyone within their areas of responsibility.
- Everyone is expected to follow the policy.
- Individuals may email questions or concerns to coronaquestions@sjcme.edu.
- Violations of this policy will follow appropriate conduct and/or discipline procedures. Campus Life will be responsible for student violations. Deans, Supervisors, and Human Resources will be responsible for Faculty & Staff violations.
- It is the responsibility of all members of the Saint Joseph's College community to comply with this policy. Failure to follow this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and being exited from campus.