Healthy @ Centre Mask and Face Shield Policy

Introduction

In keeping with the recommendations of the CDC and other governmental agencies, Centre College requires the use of masks and face shields as a means to prevent viral transmission. The spread of COVID-19 occurs from person to person through respiratory droplets that are generated whenever a person infected with the virus talks, coughs, sneezes, speaks forcefully, or sings. Airborne spread is now recognized to be a significant route for transmission of the virus and the disease (Morawska and Milton, It is Time to Address Airborne Transmission of COVID-19, Clinical Infectious Diseases, July 6, 2020). An infected person may show no symptoms and still transmit the virus while engaging in routine conversation.

The purpose of wearing a mask is to contain coughs, sneezes, and respiratory droplets produced upon exhalation, preventing you from spreading them to other people and nearby surfaces. Wearing a mask helps reduce airborne spread, helps prevent infected persons from spreading the virus, and aids in protecting the mask wearer, those around them, and people who may enter the space later.

Scope

This policy applies to all people working, studying, or attending class on campus, plus any visitors to campus.

Policy

Faculty, staff, students, and permitted visitors are **required to wear a cloth face mask that covers their nose and mouth** (see Exceptions to Wearing Cloth Masks, below) as a means to prevent viral transmission. Centre College’s face covering policies are meant to supplement the Policy on Social Distancing, which recommends maintaining a six-foot distance from others whenever possible. Masks, face coverings, and shields are not substitutes for physical distancing. They are intended as an added layer of protection when used in conjunction with social distancing, frequent handwashing, and hand sanitizing.

Because masks are recommended for public use when outside the home, by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Centre also asks its employees and students to don masks when visiting stores or congested outdoor areas off-campus.

Both employees and students are expected to supply and maintain their own masks. Centre will supply a limited number of disposable surgical masks for students and employees who do not have access and resources to purchase masks. Masks will also be available in specific locations on campus for those who forget to bring them, including:

- Facilities Management Desk (for visitors)
- Campus Center Information Desk
- Old Centre (table near entrance)
Exceptions to Wearing Cloth Masks: Clear/plastic face masks will be made available for use by faculty or staff who need to be able to communicate with individuals who use lip-reading as a means of communication.

If the use of a cloth face mask poses a health or safety risk to an individual, that person will be exempt by doctor’s excuse from wearing a mask. In this instance, the use of a face shield is required (see below).

If a Plexiglas shield (typically 4’ x 7’) is installed in a classroom, instructors may chose to lecture wearing a face shield (without a mask) and remain behind the Plexiglas shield while lecturing. The instructor must otherwise wear a cloth face mask.

When face coverings are not required: The wearing of a mask and/or face shield is not required when a person is alone in a private, enclosed space (for example, office, residence hall room) or when they are engaged in outdoor work (for example, mowing) and able to maintain at least six feet of distance from other persons.

Consistent with state guidance, a mask is not required for persons engaged in exercise in a gym or indoor facility so long as there is six or more feet of separation between individuals and where the gym or indoor facility engages in required cleaning; nor is mask-wearing required for persons actively participating in intercollegiate athletic practice or competition.

A mask is also not required when a person is eating or drinking, but the person should still observe social distancing.

Procedures

Masks

Correct Way to Wear Your Mask

1. Wash or sanitize your hands before donning your mask.
2. Your mask must cover your mouth and nose and extend underneath your chin.
3. Secure your mask either behind your ears (ear loops) or tie it behind your head.
4. Your mask must fit snugly against your face but not interfere with your breathing.
5. If your mask has a noseband, gently press the noseband until it conforms to the structure of your nose.

Removing Your Mask

1. Untie the strings or remove the ear loops from behind your head.
2. Handle the mask only by the strings or ear loops.
3. Fold the mask upon itself with the outside corners meet.
4. If the mask is washable, place it in a bag until it can be washed.
5. Do not touch your eyes, nose, mouth or face when removing your mask.
6. Wash or sanitize your hands immediately after you remove your mask.

Cleaning and Decontamination of Masks

1. Masks should be cleaned or decontaminated before reuse.
2. Cloth masks can be laundered in hot water with detergent, and hung to air dry.
3. Surgical masks should be placed or hung undisturbed at room temperature for several days prior to reuse.

Face Shields

Face shields should provide full face covering.

1. Wash or sanitize your hands before donning your face shield.
2. Place your face shield’s band around your head and check the fit. Face shields should be adjusted to fit the wearer and should not slide up or down when the wearer moves their head.
3. Remove your face shield by grasping the shield and headband and slide it off your head.
4. Do not touch your eyes, nose, mouth or face when removing your face shield.
5. Disinfect your face shield with the recommended sanitizer.
6. Wash or sanitize your hands immediately after you remove your face shield.
7. Store your face shield in away from potential sources of contamination.

Clear Masks

Clear masks would be used in a similar manner to other face masks. However, clear masks should be reserved for use when they are needed for ease of communication with persons who read lips as a form of communication. Clear masks must be washed or disinfected after use, and may only be recommended by the manufacturers as single use items.

Definitions

- Face Mask: Triple layer cloth or disposable surgical face covering that fits snugly on the face but does not inhibit breathing.
- Face Shield: Clear plastic visor that fits around the top of the head and loosely covers the entire face.
- Plexiglas Shield: Panel fabricated from Plexiglas that serves as a room barrier.

References, Related Resources, or Appendices

Airborne transmission:

CDC guidelines for cloth face coverings:


CDC guidelines for wearing cloth masks:


First approved/Last revised July 14, 2020

Effective date Month August 1, 2020

Next review required by August 7, 2020

Sponsor: Katherine Andrews, Ph.D. Sponsored Research Specialist
Contact the Office of Sponsored Research with any questions.