

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): face coverings guidance

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Answers INVERNESS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE August 2021**

### **Introduction:**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2021 Scotland moved beyond level 0, however some Covid-19 baseline preventive measures remain in place.

Specifically, it continues to be the law, subject to exceptions, that face coverings must be worn in indoor public places and on public transport.

This document aims to provide further information on the wearing of face coverings in Scotland and address some frequently asked questions.

#### **1. Where is the wearing of a face covering legally mandated?**

Face coverings are mandatory in most indoor public places, indoor communal spaces including retail, restaurants, cafes, bars and public houses, and in workplaces and on public transport. Further detail can be found [here](#).

#### **2. What are the rules around face coverings in the workplace?**

Face coverings must be worn by a staff member, visitor or volunteer in any indoor communal area in a workplace and where there are no measures in place to keep people separated by either a partition or distance of at least 1 metre. If employees choose to wear a face covering in the workplace even where there is 1 metre distancing or a partition then they should be supported to do so by employers. Full guidance can be found [here](#).

**3. Do I need to wear a face covering at all times in the office?**

No, as long as there are measures in place to keep staff separated by either a safety partition or distancing of at least 1m. Staff members and visitors will be required to wear a face covering in any indoor communal area unless there is an exemption for specific circumstance. All workplace guidance can be found [here](#).

**4. Do employees need to wear a face covering in staff canteens or break areas?**

No, face coverings do not have to be worn when eating or drinking in staff canteen or break areas, however additional mitigations should be put in place to reduce transmission risks in these areas. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

**5. Do I need to wear a face covering at a business event, such as networking?**

Possibly, depending on the location, setting, and catering options. For example, a meeting at a hotel may result in exemptions as the event is taking part “in a hospitality setting”. However, it’s important to note that if a face covering is removed, maintaining physical distancing as a precautionary measure is advised.

**6. Who is exempt from wearing a face covering?**

People must wear a face covering unless they are exempt from doing so because of specific circumstances. Legitimate reasons for not wearing a face covering are listed in full [here](#).

**7. Are children and young people also legally required to wear a face covering?**

Yes, face coverings are mandatory for children and young people of 12 years of age and over in most indoor public places including retail, restaurants, cafes, and in workplaces and on public transport. Some children and young people may be exempt from wearing a face coverings, you can see the list of exemptions [here](#).

**8. What do the Scottish Government say about the voluntary wearing of face coverings for those at higher risk?**

People at highest risk of Covid-19 may also want to consider any additional voluntary use based on their own personal risk and circumstances. Employers should not discourage those wishing to from doing this.

**9. Are there any circumstances where I can remove a face covering to help someone?**

Yes, if you are communicating with someone who needs to see your face or has difficulty understanding you can take off your own face covering where necessary. Stay at least 2 metres apart when removing your face covering and replace it immediately after you have finished speaking. More on helping others can be found [here](#).

**10. Am I responsible for enforcing the wearing of face coverings by customers?**

No, it's a personal responsibility and where face coverings are required, if a member of the public does not wear a face covering, Police Scotland have enforcement powers including issuing penalty notices of £60 (halving to £30 if paid within 28 days) if members of the public do not comply with this law. People responsible for relevant premises where face coverings are required should take reasonable steps to promote compliance with the law.

**11. I work in a close contact environment where masks may need removed, is this allowed?**

Yes, while face coverings must continue to be worn in indoor public places by customers and staff, unless exempt, a client/customer may temporarily remove a face covering to allow access to their mouth/nose area, as long as the person/practitioner providing the treatment/service is wearing appropriate protective equipment.

**Additional Information:**

- Full guidance on face coverings has been published and is available at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): face coverings guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).
- This also covers the specific circumstances when face coverings should be worn and this specific part addresses where exemptions may apply: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): face coverings guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).

If you have any further questions or there are areas where your network still have questions, please notify us as soon as possible and we will raise these with relevant Scottish Government officials as we seek to refine the remaining Covid-19 baseline mitigation measures.

**ENDS**