

COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY

Policy Number: 120

Categorized: [General Policies](#)

Responsible Office: Human Resources and Student Services

Subject: Prevention of the spread of COVID-19

Related Policies: [Contagious Diseases](#)

Procedures: N/A

Additional Information: [CDC Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings](#), [NOVA's Return to Campus Plan – Fall 2020](#), Return to the Workplace Guide

Effective Date: July 16, 2020

Last Reviewed Date: November 19, 2020

1. Scope

This policy applies to all Northern Virginia Community College faculty, staff, students, college contractors, and visitors.

2. Policy

In accordance with recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Governor Northam's Executive Order 63, NOVA has adopted this temporary policy. This policy is subject to change based on orders, requirements, and guidance from federal, state, and local authorities.

All NOVA faculty, staff, students, college contractors, and visitors are required to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose at all times while on College property, indoors or outdoors. Face coverings can be removed when an individual is alone in a vehicle on College property.

Employees who work alone in an enclosed space (e.g., personal office) are permitted to remove their face covering if the door is closed but must put on the face covering before opening the door or leaving the enclosed space. Professional courtesy should be observed by knocking on the door prior to entering an enclosed space to allow the occupant to put on a face covering prior to entry.

Face coverings and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 but do not guarantee that a person will not spread or become sick with COVID-19. No guarantees of safety are implied with this policy.

Exceptions

NOVA recognizes and honors the exceptions listed in Governor Northam's Executive Order 63:

- While eating or drinking
- Individuals exercising or using exercise equipment
- Any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance
- Any person seeking to communicate with the hearing impaired and for which the mouth needs to be visible
- When temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to secure medical services
- Persons with health conditions that prohibit wearing a face covering. Nothing in this Executive Order shall require the use of a face covering by any person for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition.

Any person who declines to wear a face covering because of a medical condition shall not be required to produce or carry medical documentation verifying the stated condition nor shall the person be required to identify the precise underlying medical condition.

Employees who are unable to wear a face covering must ask for accommodations at ada@nvcc.edu and follow the steps as outlined in the interactive process of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Students who are unable to wear a face covering must ask for accommodations through the [Office of Disability Support Services](#).

Non-Compliance

Individuals who fail to wear face coverings in accord with this policy may be reported for non-compliance to the appropriate campus Dean of Students (students) or the Office of Human Resources (employees) at employeerelations@nvcc.edu. Visitors and third parties who do not adhere to this policy may be asked to leave the campus in accordance with NOVA's [Trespass Notices Policy](#).

While disciplinary action may be a possibility for the refusal to wear a face covering, the primary focus is to encourage personal responsibility and voluntary compliance with this policy.

3. Definitions

College property: Any property owned, leased, or controlled by Northern Virginia Community College.

Face covering: Homemade or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions. **A face shield alone is not an approved face covering.**

4. Procedures

N/A

5. Authority

[Commonwealth of Virginia Executive Order Number 63](#)

[Commonwealth of Virginia Executive Order Number 63 \(Amended\)](#)

[Commonwealth of Virginia Higher Education Reopening Guidance](#)