

# **MANDATORY FACE COVERINGS**

## **STATEMENT**

The United States Postal Service has modified its policy on face coverings and is now requiring all employees to wear cloth face coverings or masks where a mandatory local or state directive exists.

Face coverings or masks are also mandatory for employees in all facilities — postal or otherwise — where social distancing practices cannot be properly maintained. These measures have been put in place to continue to ensure the safety and well-being of our employees and the communities they serve. The policy will remain in effect until further notice.

The Postal Service has been following the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) throughout the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak as it continues to fulfill its critical mission to bind the nation together and deliver for our customers.

## **FAQS**

### **1. Why did the Postal Service change its employee policy?**

The Postal Service has been following the guidance of the CDC throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on data relating to how COVID-19 spreads and evidence of widespread COVID-19 illness in communities across the country, the CDC recently started recommending that people wear a cloth face covering to cover their nose and mouth in community settings. The Postal Service made the decision to align our employee policy with state and local ordinances which implemented CDC recommendations by requiring face coverings where social distancing or other protective measures cannot be implemented and maintained.

### **2. When are face coverings mandatory?**

If there is a state or local ordinance in place mandating the wearing of face coverings, the Postal Service has elected to follow those ordinances and require our employees to wear face coverings in those jurisdictions. Face coverings include both Postal Service provided disposable masks and reusable cloth face coverings, as well as personal face coverings which employees may wish to use while on duty. Employees are also required to wear face coverings whenever social distancing practices (six feet from others) cannot be properly maintained, regardless of whether there is a local or state order in place.

### **3. How many locations require face coverings?**

The list is fluid. Employees should check local requirements. Some information can be found at: <https://web.csg.org/covid19/executive-orders/>.

### **4. When are retail clerks required to wear face coverings?**

Retail clerks are required to wear face coverings while working the counter serving customers in those jurisdictions that have implemented mandatory face covering orders. This requirement is in effect and is in addition to social distancing measures where there is tape on the floors separating customers by six feet and where there are shields in place in our retail units. However, retail clerks are not required to use a face covering in

the back-office areas of a retail unit, provided that proper social distancing (six feet from others) can be achieved. This includes non-use of face coverings during their breaks while within the facility, and while the employee is retrieving mail items from the back-office areas, provided that proper social distancing can be maintained with other employees.

**5. Are employees required to wear face coverings in the back office and/or on the workroom floor?**

Employees are required to wear face coverings wherever they cannot maintain the required six feet of distance from others, including in back offices and on the workroom floor.

**6. Does the Postal Service have enough face coverings?**

Yes. The Postal Service has been continually purchasing masks and face coverings for its employees and has an ample supply.

**7. How do I care for my reusable cloth face covering?**

Reusable cloth face coverings issued to postal employees can be machine washed in warm water and tumbled dry up to 15 times before discarding. Do not use bleach, chemicals or disinfectant to wash the cloth face coverings.

**8. Are employees wearing N-95 respirators?**

Postal employees are generally not wearing N-95 respirators unless their responsibilities are consistent with this level of barrier protection in accordance with normal procedures outside of COVID-19. Employees who may require an N-95 respirator as a reasonable accommodation can request one and such requests will be reviewed in accordance with normal postal policy.

**9. What do employees do if they cannot wear masks, face coverings or face shields for health reasons?**

Employees that fall into this category need to discuss the matter with their supervisor. The supervisor should then confer with local Occupational Health Nurse and offer a reasonable accommodation. The District Reasonable Accommodation Committee can review as to whether an accommodation should be made.