

Face Covering/Mask Policy



Effective Date: 1/12/2022

PURPOSE:

The Town of Stow is committed to providing a safe, healthy working environment for our employees, their families, our residents, and other visitors to our facilities, while promoting economic recovery for the Town and working together to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The Town, like all employers, is trying to control an as-yet-uncontrollable virus that has killed over 800,000 Americans since March of 2020. To control outbreaks among our workforce, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends achieving full vaccination to ensure that Town employees can provide the full measure of public services our residents require and deserve. In response to the spread of the Delta variant and the emerging Omicron variant, the Town of Stow requires employees wear a mask or face covering when in town buildings, facilities, and town vehicles in accordance with the requirements in this policy.

SCOPE:

This Mandatory Face Covering Policy applies to all paid employees of the Town of Stow, including full time, part time, temporary and per diem employees. The policy is based upon the guidance provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

DEFINITIONS:

Mask: must cover nose and mouth, cannot have any valves, vents, holes, or gaps. It should have multiple layers, and not thin fabric that doesn't block light.

POLICY DESCRIPTION:

The use of face coverings or face masks in the workplace continues to be necessary to address these risks and to control hospitalization and risk of severe illness and death due to COVID-19. Employees not in compliance with this policy will be subject to discipline action, up to and including termination.

REQUIREMENTS:

Unvaccinated employees must wear face coverings at all times over the nose and mouth when indoors and when occupying a vehicle with another person for work purposes. The following are exceptions to the Town's policy requirements for face coverings for unvaccinated employees:

1. When an employee is alone in a room with floor to ceiling walls and a closed door.
2. For a limited time, while an employee is eating or drinking at the workplace or for identification purposes in compliance with safety and security requirements.

Vaccinated employees must wear face coverings when in any public space in any municipal building, including hallways, bathrooms, copy rooms, kitchens, and meeting rooms. Vaccinated employees may be mask-free in their own office space if they so choose. All vaccinated employees are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccinations.

Per the Center for Disease Control, when you wear a face covering or cloth mask, it should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
- Be secured with ties or ear loops,
- Include multiple layers of fabric,
- Allow for breathing without restriction, and
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

The Town will provide face coverings for employees, if needed.

Exemptions:

Employees who have documented medical concerns regarding the wearing of a face covering, will be required to work with the Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director to make alternative arrangements that will keep all employees safe.

Enforcement:

Employees who do not follow the Face Covering requirements will be disciplined in accordance with the progressive discipline steps outlined in the personnel bylaw or respective Collective Bargaining Agreement, up to and including unpaid suspension and/or termination.

Questions

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to Assistant Town Administrator/HR Director or Town Administrator.