



Frequently Asked Questions about Face Masks and Use of Personal Protective Equipment in Small Businesses to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

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Can I require my customers to wear masks?

Yes, you can require your customers to wear masks while inside your business. On May 18, The [City of Tucson](#) repealed its mandatory mask-wearing ordinance for fully vaccinated people, indoors and outdoors, while encouraging those not vaccinated to continue wearing masks. [Tucson Council](#) states businesses can still require mask usage within their setting. The [Pima County Board of Supervisors](#) allows businesses to require mask usage within their business setting.

What is the difference between a face mask and a respirator?

The CDC provides information about the [difference between respirators, surgical masks, and cloth masks](#). Face masks can block large droplets from entering the air after being exhaled by the wearer. They provide some protection against breathing in airborne viruses. Respirators (like N95s) trap more than 95% of particles in the air, including smaller droplets like those that happen when we sneeze or cough. They provide personal protection against inhaling airborne viruses, as long as they don't have a valve. They are also effective at blocking viruses exhaled by the wearer. Both [face masks and respirators](#) are effective at reducing COVID-19 spread in workplaces. Information about how masks work can be found [here](#).

What is a KN95 / KF94 mask?

A KN95 is the Chinese equivalent to an N95 mask. While a KF94 is the Korean equivalent. The 95 in N95 and KN95 means the mask can filter out greater than 95% of airborne particles. While the 94 means a minimum of 94% particles are filtered out. You should make sure to buy KN95s or KF94s from a trusted [seller](#), as there are counterfeits on the market. The CDC has advice on what to consider when [buying respirators from another country](#).

How do I correctly put on a face mask or respirator? Can I wear the same mask all day?

For information about choosing the right mask, visit the CDC page on [improving how your mask protects you](#). For more information on proper mask wearing and removal, visit the CDC page on [how to wear a mask](#). You can wear the same mask for up to 8 hours without removing it as long as neither the inside nor the outside have become completely wet, such as from the steam from your breath. N95s should be fit-tested by someone authorized to conduct the test.

Cloth face masks should be [washed after every use](#). Surgical masks should be discarded after every use. N95 or KN95 / KF94 respirators can be worn up to 5 times, if necessary. If reusing a respirator, store it in a breathable container such as a paper bag (*not* plastic) between uses.



Do I have to train my staff in mask use? Do I have to document that training?

It is highly recommended that you train your staff to use face masks properly. You are not required to document the training for face covering and face masks, but it is recommended that you do.

If you require staff to use respirators like N95s, you are required to implement a respirator protection program according to [OSHA regulations](#). If you allow employees to voluntarily use any respirator including N95s, then you must provide them with the information in [Appendix D of the OSHA Respirator Protection standard](#). It is highly recommended for employers to provide the most up-to-date information on the use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and limitations of the face mask or respirator the employee wears.

Will wearing two masks help protect me more?

In order for double masking to be effective, they must fit your face very well when used in combination. One well-fitting mask is better than two poorly fitting masks.

Do not combine two disposable masks. Instead, use a cloth mask that has multiple layers of fabric or wear a disposable mask underneath a cloth mask. Also do not use two masks with KN95 or KF94 masks. Additional recommendations from the CDC can be found [here](#).

After someone has recovered from COVID-19, do they have to continue wear face masks?

People should continue to wear face masks and practice social distancing, even after having COVID-19 or getting vaccinated. There is a chance of getting reinfected and spreading the virus after recovering or getting vaccinated. The more health conditions you have, the more important it is to continue doing preventive measures for COVID-19 like social distancing, hand washing, social distancing, and vaccinations.

In addition to masks, what other personal protective equipment should we be using to protect ourselves and others from COVID-19?

Goggles, safety glasses, or face shields can also help protect you from COVID-19 infection. These should be worn in combination with a face mask.

Surgical gloves (latex or nitrile) should be worn as was the usual practice before COVID-19. These gloves should be worn when cleaning with disinfectants, completing symptom screening checks of staff or customers, or operating a cash register for a longer time period. Wearing gloves when not necessary may spread germs.

Do I still need to wear a mask after being fully vaccinated?

Individuals are not considered to be [fully vaccinated](#) until 2 weeks after their final vaccine dose. The CDC recommends that those who are not fully vaccinated still wear a mask in public and practice social distancing. Fully vaccinated people are no longer required to wear a face mask or social distance, unless requested by an institution or business. Fully vaccinated people can still become infected with COVID-19, and should get tested if symptoms appear. Symptomatic individuals should isolate, even if previously vaccinated.