



Masks or Face Coverings				Class: A	
Approved By:	NOSM's Emergency Response Team				
Approval Date:	01 19 2022	Effective Date:	01 19 2022	Review Date:	As needed
Responsible Portfolio/Unit/Committee:	Administration and Operational Support/Emergency Response Team (ERT)				
Responsible Officer(s):	Chief Operating Officer				

1.0 Purpose

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine “NOSM” continues to take proactive steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our community members across the campuses. As part of those measures, NOSM is implementing this policy requiring non-medical face masks/coverings to be worn within NOSM’s indoor facilities, as mandated by the Provincial Government and the Ontario Public Health authorities. Where there are differences between the regulation and Public Health, whichever is the stricter expectation will be required.

The policy will remain in effect as long as the Provincial Government and the Ontario Public Health (OPH) authorities recommend that mask wearing is necessary in indoor public spaces. This policy is subject to change and its extension is at the discretion of the NOSM Emergency Response Team in accordance with government and public health guidance and as the understanding of COVID-19 evolves.

This policy is enacted and enforced in “good faith” and should be primary used to educate all individuals on the importance of face covering use.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all members of the NOSM community, students, researchers, staff, faculty, administration, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, visitors and guests who access NOSM facilities. All members of the NOSM community have a responsibility to uphold the principles outlined in this policy. This includes all individuals entering any indoor facility at NOSM at anytime and for any purposes, and for the purpose of non-medical use on campus.

This policy does not apply to NOSM Learners on placement. A learner on placement is expected to adhere to the face covering policy of the applicable clinical placement site.

3.0 Definitions

Mask or Face Covering means a medical mask, a multi-layer non-medical mask or a respirator that covers the mouth, nose and chin. A non-medical mask must be fitted well and have multiple layers, including at least two layers of breathable tightly woven fabric (such as cotton) and an effective third middle filter layer. A mask or face covering that contains an exhaust port or valve is not permitted. While non-medical masks can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, medical masks and respirators provide better protection.

Face Shield means a protective covering for all or part of the face that is made of clear plastic. Face shields are not acceptable forms of a face covering for the purpose of these instructions as they are not proven to limit the spread of droplets. Face shields may be used in conjunction with a face covering to give added protection. A face shield can also be used in situations where an individual is exempt from wearing a non-medical mask or face covering.

4.0 Procedures

All individuals permitted to enter or remain in the indoor spaces of NOSM, are required to wear a mask or face covering in a manner that covers the mouth, nose and chin without gaping. The mask or face covering must be worn inside NOSM buildings at all times, with the following exceptions:

- a) When eating or drinking in a physically distanced setting or behind a impermeable barrier (e.g. Plexiglas);
- b) When in a single person indoor space such as an office;
- c) When receiving services that require the removal of the face covering;
- d) When performing work in an area that is not accessible to members of the public and where individuals are able to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from every other person (such as a shared office space or meeting room).
- e) When an emergency or medical purpose or as may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety.

Certain exemptions apply, and these are listed below.

4.1 Exemptions

An individual shall be exempt from wearing a mask or face covering at NOSM if:

- a) The individual is a child under two years of age;
- b) For any medical reason, the individual cannot safely wear a face covering (for example, due to breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties);

- c) Individuals who cannot wear or are unable to apply/remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including those who are accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or who have protections under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19 as amended;

Individuals with an exemption will be given the option to wear a face shield when in NOSM's facilities.

Members of the community should not ask colleagues, students, researchers or others at NOSM for supporting documentation or other proof regarding exemptions or accommodations under this policy. Proof of exemption is not required.

4.2. Additional Personal Protective Equipment

During the course of providing services, an individual that is required to come within two (2) metres of another individual who is not wearing a mask or face covering, must wear appropriate personal protective equipment that provides protection of the individual's eyes, nose and mouth (e.g. face shield).

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

NOSM will focus on educating members of the NOSM community about the Policy, including the benefits of masks or face coverings with regard to community transmission of COVID-19, as well as the importance of accommodation and personal privacy regarding medical or other conditions.

5.1 Training

NOSM will ensure that all employees and learners complete the mandatory COVID-19 Prevention Training and Attestation upon receiving authorization by their Supervisor to attend campus. The training will include instructions on how to properly wear and remove a face covering. Visitors and contractors will complete an Informed Consent form that confirms the requirement for face coverings.

5.2 Verbal Reminders

Employees will provide verbal reminders to individuals entering NOSM without a face covering, or individuals unreasonably removing the face covering while within NOSM facilities. To the fullest extent possible, NOSM will establish practices such that individuals who enter without a face covering (i.e. who have an exemption) are not subject to verbal reminders.

5.3 Enforcement and Compliance

- 5.3.1** NOSM will manage compliance and enforcement of this policy in accordance with applicable policies and procedures and/or collective agreements.

- 5.3.2 Enforcement of this policy will depend on the individual's relationship with NOSM, the nature of an incident, the place in which it occurred and the impact on others in that place.
- 5.3.3 Supervisors and academic program areas are required to ensure all of their employees and respective learners have a thorough understanding of these requirements and adhere to them.

5.4 Additional Measures

- 5.4.1 NOSM will post visible signage indicating the requirement for face coverings upon entry at all entrances and exits.
- 5.4.2 NOSM will provide all employees with a personal care kit, which includes reusable face coverings, hand sanitizer and disinfecting cleaning supplies.
- 5.4.3 NOSM will make available alcohol-based hand sanitizer at all entrances and exits for all individuals entering or exiting the premises.
- 5.4.4 NOSM will ensure effective measures are in place to maintain physical distancing amongst all individuals. These measures may include, but are not limited to, directional signage, room occupancy limits, Plexiglas barriers and working from home.

6.0 Related Documents

[Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Reopening of Ontario Act, 2020](#) (O. Reg. 364/20)

[NOSM COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)

Getting Help

Queries regarding interpretations of this document should be directed to:

Director of Human Resources by email at hr@nosm.ca or by telephone at 705-662-7270.

This policy is available, upon request, to a Public Health Inspector or other individual authorized to enforce the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990 and related Regulations.

DO NOT REMOVE THIS VERSION RECORD FROM THIS DOCUMENT

Version	Date	Authors/Comments
1.0	08 13 2021	Original Policy –COVID-19 Pandemic
2.0	10 01 2021	Updated Policy – COVID-19 Pandemic
3.0	01 19 2022	Updated Policy – COVID-19 Pandemic