

BATH LOCAL SCHOOLS

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FACE COVERING/MASK EXEMPTION INFORMATION

****UPDATED****

August 17, 2020

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Please see the attached documents regarding face covering/mask opt out for the upcoming 2020-21 school year. All exemptions require a doctor's note supporting one of the exemptions listed on the following pages. Please turn in the doctor's note to the main office of the building in which your child attends. If you should have any questions regarding exemption status, please contact your nurse in your child's building.

Sincerely,



Rich Dackin

Superintendent



DIRECTOR'S ORDER

Re: Director's Order Requiring the Use of Facial Coverings in Child Education Settings

I, Lance D. Himes, Interim Director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), pursuant to the authority granted to me in R.C. 3701.13 to "make special orders...for preventing the spread of contagious or infectious diseases" **Order** the following to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the State of Ohio:

1. **Facial Coverings (Masks).** Except as provided herein, all students, faculty, and staff in any child care setting, school building, or other location that provides care or education to any child in kindergarten through grade twelve in the State of Ohio shall wear facial coverings at all times when:
 - a. In any indoor location including, but not limited to, classrooms, gymnasiums, offices, locker rooms, hallways, cafeteria, and/or locker bays;
 - b. Outdoors on school property and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household;
 - c. Waiting for a school bus outdoors and unable to maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household; or
 - d. Riding a school bus.

For purposes of this Order, a facial covering (mask) is any material that covers an individual's nose, mouth and chin.

2. **Exemptions.** The requirement to wear a facial covering does not apply when:
 - a. The individual has a medical condition including respiratory conditions that restricts breathing, mental health conditions, or a disability that contraindicates the wearing of a facial covering; or
 - b. The individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or has another disability, where an accommodation is appropriate or necessary;
 - c. The individual is actively participating in outdoor recess and/or physical activity where students are able to maintain a distance of six feet or more or athletic practice, scrimmage, or competition that is permitted under a separate Department of Health Order;
 - d. The individual is seated and actively consuming food or beverage;
 - e. Where students and staff can maintain distancing of at least six feet and removal of the facial covering is necessary for instructional purposes, including instruction in foreign language, English language for non-native speakers, and other subjects where wearing a

facial covering would prohibit participation in normal classroom activities, such as playing an instrument;

- f. Students are able to maintain a distance of six feet or more and a mask break is deemed necessary by the educator supervising the educational setting;
 - g. The individual is alone in an enclosed space, such as an office; or
 - h. When an established sincerely held religious requirement exists that does not permit a facial covering.
3. **Duration:** This Order shall be effective at 12:01 a.m. on August 14, 2020 and remains in full force and effect until the State of Emergency declared by the Governor no longer exists or the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order, whichever occurs sooner.
4. **Conflicting Orders:** The requirements of this Order are controlling and effective over any conflicting provisions of the "Director's Order for Facial Coverings throughout the State of Ohio", issued on July 23, 2020.

Accordingly, I hereby **ORDER** that all persons wear facial coverings subject to the circumstances and requirements of this Order. This Director's Order shall remain in full force and effect until the State of Emergency declared by the Governor no longer exists, or the Director of the Ohio Department of Health rescinds or modifies this Order. To the extent any public official enforcing this Director's Order has questions regarding the effect of this Order, the Director of Health hereby delegates to local health departments the authority to answer questions in writing and consistent with this Order.



Lance D. Himes
Interim Director of Health

August 13, 2020



Ohio Children's Hospital Association

Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Ohio Chapter

The Ohio Children's Hospital Association (OCHA) and the Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) join together in support of the wearing of face coverings/masks in our hospitals, schools, and communities. Coronavirus (COVID-19) affects individuals differently and many can be infected with the virus without realizing it – an asymptomatic infection. Wearing a face covering/mask reduces the chances of an infected individual passing the virus onto others, but only if worn properly, covering both one's nose and mouth. Use of a mask is an important component of COVID-19 control, along with regular hand washing and physical distancing.

Families may have mixed feelings of their children wearing face coverings/masks and wonder if their child should be exempt from the practice.

OCHA supports the AAP's and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines for children's use of face coverings/masks.

OCHA recommends all children wear face coverings/masks when returning to school consistent with AAP and CDC guidelines – *and specifically children in grades K-12* – with the following exemptions:

1. Children under the age of 2 years
2. Any child unable to remove the face covering without assistance
3. A child with a significant behavioral/psychological issue undergoing treatment that is exacerbated specifically by the use of a facial covering (e.g. severe anxiety or a tactile aversion)
4. A child living with severe autism or with extreme developmental delay who may become agitated or anxious wearing a mask
5. A child with a facial deformity that causes airway obstruction

Beyond these categories, there are no diagnoses that warrant blanket exemptions from wearing a face covering/mask. Specifically, asthma, allergies and sinus infections are not a contraindication for using a face covering/mask.

Families may struggle to get their child to wear a face covering/mask. The challenges to accomplishing this for their child may lead them to seek an inappropriate exemption for the child upon returning to school. The AAP provides helpful tips to normalize mask wearing and make your child feel more comfortable.

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Cloth-Face-Coverings-for-Children-During-COVID-19.aspx>

Wearing masks is crucial to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Almost all people, including young children, can wear face coverings and surgical/cloth masks safely.