



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
P.O. Box 41101 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1101

April 10, 2020

**TO:** All DOC Staff

**FROM:** Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

**SUBJECT: Mandatory Use of Face Coverings – ALL DOC Locations**

The safety of our employees, incarcerated individuals, residents and supervised population continues to be our top priority. The [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) reports the COVID-19 virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity – for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing – even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms. The CDC is now recommending cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

All persons entering any DOC location to include Prisons, Work Releases, Headquarters, Field offices, Correctional Industries and Satellite offices will be required to wear a face covering, specifically over their nose and mouth while in any area other than a clinic, hospital, or area deemed for isolation or quarantine. Staff will continue to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), as directed in the [Screening, Testing, and Infection Control Guidelines](#), when in those designated areas.

Approved face coverings include:

- Self-provided Surgical mask
- Expired N95 respirator, voluntary (limited supply available)
- Cloth face covering (Purchased or Homemade)

Employees who prefer to make their own face coverings, the CDC has [online instructions](#) on how to make sew and no-sew face coverings from cotton sheets, t-shirts or bandanas. They also provide instruction on how to properly wear cloth and safely sanitize face coverings. Face coverings must meet requirements as noted in [DOC 870.400 Personal Appearance/Uniform Standards](#), which states, “Clothing that depicts violence, gang affiliation, alcohol, or drugs, or which could be construed as sexual in nature, is not authorized.”

Each appointing authority should establish a time for full implementation. Staff should not

***“Working Together for SAFER Communities”***

## Mandatory Use of Face Coverings

April 10, 2020

Page 2

be turned away until this has been fully implemented. Please do not use PPE items that are for use in isolation, quarantine, or used by medical providers as PPE is in short supply across the nation.

The mandatory use of face coverings within our facilities will help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect our employees and those in our care. Please continue to practice social distancing, take care of yourselves, stay positive, stay home if you are sick or have symptoms and remember to wash your hands.