Guidance Regarding UW Medicine Policy Requiring Masking in Non-Clinical Areas

- Effective April 27, 2020, the UW Medicine Masking Policy was extended to non-clinical space.
- Under the new requirement, all UW Medicine personnel who are working in areas with no clinical activity (including research, administrative and educational work areas in the School of Medicine) are required to wear, at a minimum, a cloth face covering or a personal mask, as recommended by the CDC, while on premises and within 6 feet of another person.
- The following FAQs are designed to provide guidance to all School of Medicine faculty, staff, students or post-docs to apply the UW Medicine masking requirements in non-clinical areas such as research laboratories and offices. Additional information about masking and additional FAQ’s are contained in the full masking policy, which is posted on the Huddle: https://huddle.uwmedicine.org/sites/huddle/files/202004/Required%20and%20Extended-use%20Masking%20Policy_4.22.2020%20%282%29.pdf

Definitions:

Procedure, surgical, or hospital mask: a mask that is supplied by UW Medicine for the purposes of patient care and meets standards per Infection Prevention & Control.

Cloth face cover: a self-made or purchased cloth “mask” that has been supplied either by the employer or the employee/individual. Cloth face covers have not been reviewed by Infection Prevention and Control. Cloth face covers must comply with CDC recommendations at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

Personal mask for face cover: a mask purchased by the employee. This may be a clinical-level mask but has not been reviewed by UE Medicine Infection Prevention & Control. The personal mask must comply with the CDC fit and performance requirements at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

Frequently Asked Questions about procedure masks, cloth face coverings and personal masks or face covers for use in UW School of Medicine Non-Clinical Spaces

When do I need to wear a cloth face cover?
Until further notice cloth face covers are required to be worn whenever work might temporarily result in being within 6 feet of another person such as in research labs, offices, hallways, restrooms, elevators, stairways and associated areas. Wear one cloth face cover a day, refrain from touching the face cover during the day and wash the face cover daily in detergent and water. Due to the shortage of procedure masks, a cloth face cover can be worn in the vivarium when doing BSL1 level work with animals. The cloth face cover worn in the vivarium cannot afterwards be worn outside of the vivarium before it is washed. Please plan accordingly by bringing a clean cloth face cover to wear outside of the vivarium when exiting. A personal mask or face cover can be substituted for a cloth face mask.

**Will the School of Medicine provide cloth face covers?**

Cloth face covers are available for purchase on UW budgets (this is an allowed cost on grant budgets) at the following sites.

- SLU: order via sluinfo@uw.edu and pick up at C Building reception desk,
- Ninth and Jefferson Building (Harborview Medical Center Campus): order via sluinfo@uw.edu with receipt on site coordinated with Nicole Gibran [nicoleg@uw.edu](mailto:nicoleg@uw.edu).

Please limit your orders to the number needed for critical employees who are actually working on site. We have ordered 5,000 cloth face covers to meet the need of critical employees currently working on site. Some are on hand now and more will be received over the next couple of weeks.

Please do not request masks at this time for employees potentially returning in June or later. We have additional orders coming in later this month for those employees.

**When do I need to wear a procedure mask?**

Procedure masks are required in clinical space, except when a non-clinical employee wearing a cloth face cover is briefly transiting a main entrance lobby or hallway (e.g., the third-floor entrance to UWMC and hallway leading west from that entry) to get to their worksite. Procedure masks also are required in some types of research work, for example BSL2 research activity as per EH&S regulations. Procedure masks can be substituted for cloth face covers, but cloth face covers cannot be substituted for procedure masks.

**Will the School of Medicine provide procedure masks?**

Yes, when a procedure mask is required as above for BSL2 or animal research activity or other research activity that requires a procedure mask. In the research environment, the procedure mask will be provided through your department, principal investigator or the vivarium if working with animals in the vivarium. Quantities are limited to preserve procedure masks for the specific tasks for which they are required.

Procedure masks for research use are available for purchase on UW budgets at:
What are the masking requirements when I work in a facility that houses both clinical and non-clinical activity (research, administrative or educational activity)?

Clinical space and non-clinical are connected in three locations: Health Sciences Building, SLU 3.2 (Building F), and the Ninth and Jefferson Building on the Harborview campus. As above, procedure masks are required in the clinical space, but a cloth face cover is sufficient to briefly transit the clinical space (e.g., hallways, lobbies, restrooms, elevators, stairways and associated areas) when entering or exiting the building to get to your worksite.

**Health Sciences Building / UW Medical Center – Montlake/ HSB:** While the boundaries are somewhat indistinct, a good rule is to use BB tower as the dividing line. To the east of BB tower is UWMC-Mountlake clinical space, to the west is not UWMC clinical space. BB tower itself is hybrid, with departmental and research areas above the third floor. The third floor is a mixed area (without patient care) and floors below three are generally hospital support spaces. Cloth face covers can be worn in all of the BB tower areas, but only for transit through a space if it is shared by patients or is a clinical support area. A procedure mask (but not a procedure mask that has been used while doing BSL2 work in a research lab or vivarium) or cloth face covering must be worn in the Plaza Café to purchase food and leave the Café.

**Ninth & Jefferson Building:** A cloth face covering can be worn to briefly transit a shared entrance lobby, shared elevator, hallway, restroom or stairway when entering or leaving the building in transit to or from your worksite (e.g., research laboratory or departmental administrative or educational space).

**South Lake Union 3.2 (Building F)** – Clinics are located on floors 1-3 and research space is located on floors 4-8. Procedure masks are required on floors 1-3, except that cloth face coverings can be worn when briefly transiting lobbies, restrooms, elevators and stairways on the way to or from your worksite.