

# York University Mask Protocol

January 2022



## York University's Mask Protocol

The City of Toronto By-law 541-2020, as amended by By-law 664-2020, requires everyone to wear a mask in all indoor public settings. The provincial government also requires that masks be worn in indoor settings under the *Reopening Ontario Act*. The *Reopening Ontario Act* requires mask use in all workplaces, even those that are not open to the public. As per government and public health directive, York University's is required to implement and enforce this mandatory mask protocol.

All Persons entering an indoor space on York University property are required to wear a face mask in a manner that covers their mouth, nose and chin when entering and for the duration of their stay, unless an exemption applies.

Wearing a mask is used for source control. This means that, when we wear a well-fitted mask, we protect ourselves and others. If there are individuals who are not wearing masks due to exemptions or other reasons, additional applicable control measures need to be implemented (e.g., physical distancing).

There are different types of masks available on the market for public use. As of November 2021, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) [noted](#) that: "Different types of masks are available for public use. Non-medical masks, medical masks and respirators can all be used in the community." PHAC further noted, "In general, while non-medical masks can help prevent the spread of COVID-19, medical masks and respirators provide better protection. No matter which type of mask you choose, proper fit is a key factor in its effectiveness."

Masks are not a substitute for personal protective equipment (PPE). Questions about masks, and/or PPE may be directed to the reporting manager, supervisor or member of the Dean's/Principal's Office, Student Accessibility Services at [sasreg@yorku.ca](mailto:sasreg@yorku.ca), the Office of Student Community Relations ([OSCR](#)), or Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being ([HSEWB](#)).

This Protocol should not be interpreted in a way that conflicts with or replaces existing requirements or obligations under [O. Reg. 364/20](#), the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) or other applicable statutes and regulations.

### Where Does this Protocol Apply?

This Protocol applies to all those who are present on University property at any time and for any purposes including, but not limited to employees, students, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.

*\*And outdoors when waiting in line or congregating and when physical distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained.*

Indoor university spaces include: lobbies, elevators, hallways and corridors, stairwells, washrooms, service desks, cafeterias and lunchrooms, common areas in residences, study lounges, meeting rooms, classrooms, research and teaching labs, shared or open-space offices, and other locations used in common, particularly where practicing physical distancing may be difficult or unpredictable.

### **Exemptions**

As per [O. Reg. 364/20](#), there are exemptions from the requirement to wear a mask. Some of the exemptions relevant to the University community include:

- Children who are under two years of age;
- Persons with an underlying medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask
- Persons who are unable to place or remove a mask without assistance;
- Persons who are being accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, or persons who require accommodation in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code that preclude the wearing of a mask; and
- York University departments and faculties may have specific practices that fall under provincial guidelines and/or operational requirements. For any questions, please contact [HSEWB](#).

York University community members are not required to provide proof of any of the exemptions identified above. We ask that community members exercise discretion and patience should they observe a fellow community member not wearing a mask. If concerned, questions may be directed to the reporting manager, supervisor or member of the Dean's/Principal's Office, Student Accessibility Services at [sasreg@yorku.ca](mailto:sasreg@yorku.ca), the Office of Student Community Relations ([OSCR](#)), or Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being ([HSEWB](#)).

If a student believes that they have a medical reason to be exempt from York's mandatory mask protocol, they must engage [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) to review and confirm the request for a formal exemption so that further applicable and necessary health and safety precautions (such as physical distancing) can be implemented.

Masks may be temporarily removed while in an indoor area, in the following circumstances and only when public health guidance permits:

- To receive services that require the removal of a mask;

- While actively consuming food or drink in **designated areas for meals as determined by the area** or as needed to take medication. **\*Please take extra care to maintain physical distancing during such activities;**
- When individuals are alone in a secured and enclosed space such as a private office, their mask may be temporarily removed while the door is closed (e.g., to drink or eat). If the door is open or someone enters the room, the mask must be donned.
- Eating and drinking in instructional spaces are not permitted unless under for urgent health reasons (e.g., to take a sip of water or to ingest a small amount of food for urgent health purposes such as low blood sugar or to take medication).
- To engage in an athletic or fitness activity;
- when performing or rehearsing in a film or television production or in a concert, artistic event, theatrical performance or other performance as approved by the University; and
- As may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety.

Signs have been posted at entrances to all buildings reminding community members of the need to wear masks while indoors. For more information, please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the [Better Together](#) website.

**References:**

- [YU Better Together](#)
- [Toronto Public Health: Use of Face Masks Fact Sheet](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada [COVID-19 mask use: Advice for Community Settings](#)