

# TU TEMPORARY COVID-19 MASKING PROTOCOLS

*Effective Date: July 2, 2020*

## I. AUTHORIZATION:

The following protocols have been approved in accordance with Towson University (“TU”) and University System of Maryland (“USM”) policies and guidance.

## II. GENERAL OVERVIEW:

Beginning with the fall 2020 Semester, TU will be operating under a hybrid on-line/in-person learning environment that will necessitate implementation of several protocols due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under these extraordinary circumstances, TU has developed the following Masking Protocols deemed necessary for operations in the COVID-19 environment. Unless otherwise indicated below, all other existing related University policies, procedures, and practices remain in effect as written.

## III. MASKING PROTOCOLS:

### A. TU IS A “MASK-ON” COMMUNITY

Effective immediately, TU is a “mask-on” community for all students, faculty, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors. This means masks or face coverings should be worn as feasible and are most essential in times when recommended physical distancing is difficult or not possible.

This will include inside any and all TU buildings, facilities as well as outdoor campus areas where recommended physical distancing is difficult or not possible.

Masks or face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected, but does not have symptoms.

Standard masks or face coverings are not intended for use as surgical masks, respirators, or other equipment utilized specifically in medical and/or clinical contexts.

While we encourage all students, faculty, staff, contracted workers, visitors and volunteers to wear a mask or face covering at all times on the TU campus grounds, a mask/face covering will be **REQUIRED** when:

- **Any/all faculty, student, staff, contracted worker, visitor and volunteer is inside any and every TU facility, to include, but not be limited to:**
  - **All academic buildings including classrooms, labs, and common areas. This is inclusive of all lecturing, teaching and learning activities.**

- **All non-academic and administrative buildings and work spaces which are open such as cubicles, meeting rooms, lobbies, waiting areas and restrooms;**

**NOTE: A face mask/face covering must still be worn even if there is a plexiglass barrier present or a face shield is being worn**

- Outside on the campus where recommended physical distancing is difficult or not possible;
- Utilizing TU transportation services, such as Shuttle Bus Service, Paratransit, or SafeRide.

Exceptions to required daily mask/face covering wear may include:

- Time spent in a single-occupancy office alone, with a closed door;
- Eating or drinking, while practicing physical distancing;
- Active participation in a sanctioned athletic and/or campus recreation event or practice;
- Playing a wind instrument, while practicing physical distancing;
- Performing a strenuous exercise required by a course syllabus, including, but not limited to dancing and/or singing, while practicing physical distancing; or
- Performing other such required job duties that necessitate removal of the mask/face covering, while practicing physical distancing.

**NOTE:** The presence of a plexiglass barrier or the wearing of a face shield do/es NOT substitute for the wearing of a mask or face covering

## **B. GENERAL EXEMPTIONS TO MASKING REQUIREMENTS**

Masks/face coverings should not be placed on:

- Anyone who has trouble breathing;
- Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance;
- Anyone that is unable to wear a mask/face covering due to a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); or
- Babies and children younger than 2 years old.

## **C. CRITERIA FOR MASKS/FACE COVERINGS**

While TU will provide masks for anyone who does not have one, individuals are encouraged to supply their own mask or face covering for regular daily use. TU will also maintain a supply of masks that have clear panels and/or face shields to allow for lip reading or other necessary modes of nonverbal communication.

*REMINDER: A face shield is not a substitute for a mask/face covering.*

Recognizing that masks or face coverings may vary, all must:

- Fit snugly and comfortably against the side of the face;
- Be secured with ties, strap(s) or ear loops OR be continuous piece of cloth that encircles the head while covering the nose and mouth;
- Cover the mouth AND nose (no mesh or open holes) and extend below the chin;
- Allow for breathing without restriction;
- Be able to be laundered without damage or change to shape; and
- Be consistent with USM Personnel Policy on Professional Conduct for Nonexempt and Exempt Staff, and/or the TU Code of Student Conduct.

#### **D. PROPER CARE OF MASKS/FACE COVERINGS**

It is expected that each person will care, store and launder/clean their own mask or face covering. This should include:

- Avoid touching the mask or face covering and to wash their hands frequently to prevent contamination.
- Storing the mask or face covering in a paper bag when not in use;
- Washing a cloth mask or face covering after each daily use;
- Immediately replacing any mask or face covering that is soiled, damaged (ripped, punctured, broken strap(s), etc.), or visibly contaminated; and
- Limiting use of a disposable mask or face covering to no more than one per day.

#### **E. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH MASKING PROTOCOLS**

Failure to comply with these protocols places our campus community at risk for spreading COVID-19, which could endanger community health and further disrupt educational activities. Failure by any individual or groups of individuals can result in limitation of access and/or the shutdown of facilities or activities where non-compliance occurs.

Non-compliance with this or other workplace Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines may result in suspension of access to the applicable facility for a period of time and/or corrective/disciplinary action depending on the severity and/or frequency of the non-compliance. Any consideration regarding possible corrective/disciplinary action must be made in consultation with Human Resources for faculty/staff or with Student Affairs for students. Issues with contract workers should be referred to the Human Resources department for follow-up.

#### **IV. DURATION OF PROTOCOLS:**

These Masking Protocols will be in effect until further notice. The evaluation of the need to further modify these protocols or implement additional practice modifications will be continuous. The decision regarding when and under what conditions these protocols will be rescinded will be based upon the evaluation of information and guidance received from federal, state, and local government and prevailing health authorities.