

STUDENT, EMPLOYEE, AND VISITOR MASK POLICY

Due to the evolving need for emergency measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the highest priority for the Portsmouth School Committee is the health and safety of all students and employees. Until further notice, all students, employees, and visitors are required to wear a mask or cloth face-covering that covers his or her mouth and nose at all times while in the school, on school grounds, or on a school bus.

All face coverings must be disposable surgical masks or multi-layer clean, reusable cloth masks. The following masks do not effectively stop droplets from being released and therefore are considered ineffective and unacceptable: masks with valves; neck gaiters, scarves, bandanas, and other single-layer masks; masks with openings, holes, or gaps in the design material; and masks that are wet, damaged, ripped, or torn.

STUDENTS

All students are required to wear face masks or cloth face-coverings in school, on school property and on a school bus.

School personnel will work with younger students, students with medical or other health conditions, disabilities, or developmental needs on exceptions where needed. Students whose health or safety is put at risk by wearing a mask or cloth face-covering are required to provide medical documentation. Face shields will be provided for these instances.

Each school will have age-appropriate procedures established for mask wearing to include opportunities for mask breaks. These procedures will be added to each school's student/parent handbook.

Any student who refuses to wear a mask or face covering shall be removed from their instructional setting and redirected. If the issue cannot be resolved the student will be required to participate in full distance learning.

EMPLOYEES

Employees must come to work/school each day with their own mask or cloth face-covering. Should an employee forget his/her mask or cloth face-covering or lose or damage during the work/school day, the District will have spare reusable and/or disposal face coverings.

Please note the following exceptions:

- Employees whose health or safety is put at risk by wearing a mask or cloth face-covering are required to provide medical documentation. Face shields will be provided for these instances.

- Employees who work on their own in an enclosed space (e.g., their own office) are permitted to remove their mask if they are seated at least six feet from the doorway. However, they must wear their mask or face covering at all other times.
- Employees who wish to eat or drink may remove their mask to do so, provided they are situated six feet away from others, perform the necessary hand hygiene and replace the mask when they are done.

Any employee who refuses to wear a mask or face covering shall be placed on administrative leave, as a first step, until such time as the mask wearing issue is resolved.

VISITORS

All visitors to the Portsmouth School Department shall be required to wear a mask or face covering while present in any school building, facility, and anywhere on school property/grounds.

This policy is to be enforced for any person or entity using Portsmouth School Department facilities or on school grounds at any time.

Policy Adopted: 8/25/2020

Portsmouth School Department
Portsmouth, Rhode Island