

## COVID-19 Guidance on Mask and Face Covering Bylaw

As businesses and services reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a pressing need for establishments to implement regulations and safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus, and to protect the health and wellbeing of Toronto residents. In particular, these measures are needed within enclosed spaces, where physical distancing is difficult to maintain.

As a result, the City of Toronto has enacted [By-Law 541-2020](#) requiring the use of face masks or face coverings, with some exceptions, in all indoor public spaces. This by-law is enforceable as of July 7, 2020, and **requires** all owners/operators of establishments open to the public to do the following:

1. **Develop a policy** to ensure members of the public wear a mask or face covering upon entry, and while remaining within all enclosed spaces of their establishment;
2. Upon request, provide a copy of said *policy* for inspection by any person authorized to enforce this bylaw;
3. Post *signage*, visible at all entrances of the Establishment, reminding people to wear a mask or face covering; and
4. Train all persons working at the Establishment on the requirements of the policy and this bylaw.

Every person, business or facility who contravenes any provision of this bylaw is guilty of an offence, and upon conviction is liable to a fine as provided for in the *Provincial Offences Act*. See the [City of Toronto By-Law 541-2020](#) for more information. There are fines associated with this by-law.

The by-law applies to indoor spaces that are openly accessible to the public. The establishments required to comply with this by-law include, but are not limited to:

- retail stores
- convenience stores
- malls, shopping plazas
- grocery stores, bakeries
- farmer's markets (indoor sections)
- restaurants, bars\* (indoors, when permitted to open)
- indoor recreational facilities, gyms, swimming pools\*\* (when permitted to open)
- libraries
- community centres
- community service agencies
- day camps (when indoors)
- personal service settings
- churches, mosque, synagogue, temples and other faith settings
- art galleries, museums, aquariums, zoos
- banquet halls, convention centres, arenas, stadiums, and other event spaces
- real estate settings or facilities such as open houses, presentation centres
- common areas in hotels, motels and short-term rentals (e.g. lobbies, elevators, meeting rooms)
- entertainment facilities including concert venues, theatres, cinemas, casinos

The bylaw does not apply to the following premises:

- schools
- post-secondary institutions
- child care facilities
- private and public transportation (the TTC has its own by-law)
- hospitals, independent health facilities
- offices of regulated health professionals
- apartment building or condominium common areas
- areas that are not enclosed or are indoors (e.g. restaurant patio)

### Checklist of Requirements for Establishment Owners/Operators

- Create a mask policy for your establishment (see sample policy on page 3).
- Communicate this new policy to staff and customers.
- Train your staff on the City bylaw and your policy, including who is exempt.
- Ensure that all staff, customers and visitors wear a mask indoors, with some exceptions (i.e. children under the age of two and people with certain health conditions).
- People who are unable to wear a face mask or covering due to health, age or other reasons do not require proof for the exemption.
- Post signs on the premises containing the following text:  
**ALL PERSONS ENTERING OR REMAINING IN THESE PREMISES SHALL WEAR A MASK OR FACE COVERING WHICH COVERS THE NOSE, MOUTH AND CHIN AS REQUIRED UNDER CITY OF TORONTO BY-LAW 541-2020.**
- Download the [mandatory mask or face covering poster](#) and post in high visibility areas at all entrances to the premises.
- Provide a verbal reminder to staff, visitors and customers to wear a face covering. Use the bylaw to educate people on the use of masks or face coverings.
- For services that require longer interactions or close contact, consider offering alternative services to customers who are unable to wear a mask. For example, provide online, telephone, curbside pickup or off-peak hour services.
- More information about masks and face coverings is available [here](#).

**Sample Policy****Mandatory Use of Mask or Face Covering within *[Name of Establishment]***

Beginning July 7, 2020, all staff, visitors and customers are required to wear a mask or face covering upon entering and remaining within *[name of Establishment]*. The mask or face covering must cover the nose, mouth and chin.

Temporary removal of the mask is permitted where necessary for the purposes of receiving services, or while actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity.

The following persons are exempted from requiring a mask or face covering and will not be required to provide proof of such exemption:

- Children under two years of age.
- Persons with an underlying medical condition which inhibits their ability to wear a mask or face covering.
- Persons who are unable to place, remove, or use a mask or face covering without assistance.
- Employees and operators of the Establishment, in a designed area not for public access, or within or behind a physical barrier.
- Persons who are reasonably accommodated by not wearing a mask or face covering under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Train staff on the policy including how to respond if various circumstances:

- customer arrived without a mask because they forgot or don't have one
- customer who is exempt from wearing a mask
- customer wanting more information about the policy and bylaw
- customer who becomes aggressive about the new requirement
- customer wanting information about the importance of wearing a mask or the science on the use of masks
- customer asking about the availability of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration)
- customer who wants to know if they can be fined.

Ensure that a sign on the bylaw is posted and visible to the public. A sample [mandatory mask or face covering poster](#) is available to download, print and post.

This policy has been created in compliance with the [City of Toronto By-Law 541-2020](#).