

October 23, 2020



COVID – 19 UPDATE 16

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

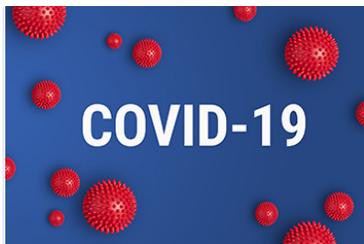
Due to the rapidly changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on workers, program support criteria are subject to change. Be sure to visit www.unifor.org/covid19 to download updated versions of the fact sheets available to our members and their families.

COVID-19

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

Find information about COVID-19, how to protect yourself, your family and your community and what to do if you suspect you have the virus.

Non-medical information about COVID-19 is available 7:30am-8pm, 7 days a week at 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).



Information from the CDC BC Centre for Disease Control Website:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

Masks

Facemasks can be worn to help protect those around you and should be worn by people who are sick.

Masks can have a role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19, especially for healthcare providers and for people that have COVID-19. This is because masks act as a barrier and help stop the spread of droplets from a person's mouth and nose when talking, laughing, yelling, singing, coughing, or sneezing.

Wearing a mask should be combined with other important preventative measures such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing. Using only a mask is not enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

When to wear a mask

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Wear a mask if you are sick

COVID-19 is spread through infected droplets from a sick person's mouth or nose. Wearing a mask when you are sick, helps protect people around you from the droplets that carry the virus. However, wearing a mask while sick does not change the need to stay home. If you cannot physically distance yourself from others at home, a mask can help prevent the spread of germs within the household.

Learn more about the precautions you should take if you are sick.

Wear a mask if you are caring for someone with COVID-19

It is recommended to wear a medical/surgical mask if you are caring for a person with symptoms of COVID-19, especially if you will be in direct contact with a sick person's droplets, saliva or body fluid.

If you do not have a medical/surgical mask, non-medical masks or facial coverings (e.g., homemade cloth masks, dust mask, bandanas) should be used by the person who is sick, as long as it does not make it more difficult to breathe, to reduce the spread of droplets containing the virus to others in the home. These non-medical masks may also be worn by any household member providing care to a person who is sick.

For more information see the guide for caregivers and household members of those with COVID.

Wearing a mask if you are healthy

If you are healthy, wearing a non-medical or cloth mask or face covering is a matter of personal choice and it might help to protect others. This is because some people can spread the virus when they have very mild symptoms or may not know that they are infected. In this case, wearing a mask can help protect others by containing your own droplets when talking, laughing, singing, coughing, or sneezing. Wearing a cloth mask might not protect you from COVID-19, but it is a good option in situations where you cannot keep a safe distance from others for an extended period of time, such as when you are on transit, getting a haircut or visiting someone indoors.

Any mask, no matter how good it is at catching droplets or how well it seals, will have minimal effect if it is not used together with other preventive measures, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing.

It is important to treat people wearing masks with respect.

Do not put a face mask or any covering including visors and eye protection on infants under two years of age. A facemask or covering will make it difficult for a baby to breathe because their airways are still small. There is also a risk that parts of the facemask, visor or eye protection can come off and become a choking hazard. See information about keeping your baby safe during COVID-19 from Perinatal Services BC.

Types of masks

Face masks: How are they different

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Medical/surgical masks should be reserved for healthcare workers and people caring directly for a person with COVID-19.

If you are healthy, but would like to wear a mask, homemade or cloth masks may be used. If you are making a mask, here is some information to help make an effective mask:

Homemade masks can be made from different materials, but some materials are better than others. Use clean 100% cotton, polyester or a cotton-polyester blend. For example, masks could be made from tea towels, sheets, t-shirts or pillowcases.

Homemade masks should have at least three layers to make sure that droplets don't pass through the fabric. The most important thing is having these three layers with a mask that fits well. An example of a mask with three layers could include:

an inner layer that is in contact with the person's face, be made of absorbent material (e.g. cotton or cotton blend)

a middle layer of non-absorbent or absorbent material (polyester or cotton)

If you are caring for someone who is sick and cannot purchase surgical/medical masks and are using a homemade mask, the an outer layer of the mask should be made of material that does not easily absorb liquid (e.g. polyester, polypropylene, or their blends). Non-absorbent material could help limit outside droplets from soaking into the mask, but it is not guaranteed.

It is not recommended to coat the outside of a mask with substances like wax to create a barrier as this can make it more difficult to breathe and air is more likely to escape out of the sides of the mask.

Here are some instructions on how to make cloth masks: Non-medical masks and face coverings: Sew and no-sew instructions

A properly fitted mask sits closely over the mouth, nose, cheeks and chin of the person wearing it. The mask will be less effective if the shape or the material has gaps in it because it will allow droplets to pass through.

It is important to make sure the mask can be held in place comfortably with ties or ear loops to reduce the need to adjust the mask. If it is not comfortable, you won't want to wear it consistently.

Masks should only be used by one person and should never be shared.

Please see the How to wear a facemask poster for information on how to properly put on and take off a face mask or watch the video:

Cleaning and disposing of masks

Medical/surgical masks should not be cleaned and reused because putting medical/surgical masks in the washing machine may damage the protective layers, reducing their effectiveness. If you are sick or caring for someone who is sick, masks need to be changed frequently. All masks should be changed if wet or visibly soiled; a wet mask should not be used for an extended period of time.

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To dispose of masks after use:

Wash your hands with soap and water before taking off your mask.

Dispose of used masks in a wastebasket lined with the plastic bag.

After taking off your mask, wash your hands again with soap and water before touching your face or doing anything else.

When emptying wastebaskets, take care to not touch used masks or tissues with your hands. All waste can go into regular garbage bins.

Clean your hands with soap and water after emptying the wastebasket.

Homemade or cloth masks should be cleaned and changed often:

To clean a homemade cloth mask, wash it using the directions on the original material (for example, if the mask was made from t-shirt material, follow the washing instructions on the t-shirt tag) but in general, warmer water is better. Dry the mask completely (in the dryer using a warm/hot setting if possible).

Do not shake dirty masks to minimize spreading germs and particles through the air. If dirty cloth masks have been in contact with someone who is sick they can still be washed with other people's laundry.

Any damage, fabric break down, or change in fit will reduce the already limited protection of cloth masks.

Should my child wear a mask?

Remember that using a mask alone is not enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Children who wear a mask still need to: avoid touching their face, wash their hands often, stay home when sick and avoid physical contact with other children or adults.

Visit the COVID-19 and Children page for more information on children and masks.

Health care professionals

Due to worldwide shortages of personal protective equipment, medical/surgical masks should be reserved for healthcare professionals and people caring directly for a person with COVID-19. Healthcare professionals will wear surgical masks, eye protection and gowns in order to protect themselves and other patients. For some procedures, they will wear specialized masks. Medical N95 respirator masks should be reserved for healthcare workers performing specific medical procedures that create an increased risk of spreading the virus. If you are a health care provider, please refer to the information for health care providers about personal protective equipment.

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Unifor Masks:

Many locals and activists have been inquiring about the Unifor reusable facemasks that have been popping up at events and on social media.

Unifor masks are 2-layer fabric, washable and breathable and can now be ordered directly by locals by visiting: <https://myunionstore.com/p/438/UFP-MAS-002/unifor-cotton-face-mask/#.X4WxzjpKi9J>



\$8.00 each Contact the Local if you would like to purchase one.

Unifor's website is constantly being updated as new information is provided. Unifor has many websites to direct you to for assistance.

Resources:

Unifor COVID-19 Information and Resources: <https://www.unifor.org/covid19>

Government of Canada Outbreak Update: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Government of Canada Income Supports for Workers/Individuals: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

Please also check the websites of your respective provinces for any additional provincial supports or resources that may be available to you.

BCCDC website for Health info about COVID-19: www.bccdc.ca

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website: <http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

Health Issues: Dial 811 and follow your Provincial Protocols

Mental Health Issues: Dial 211 or access your EAP benefits:

Other useful websites with information

Federal Government Financial Support Resources:

Government of Canada COVID-19 Financial Assistance for Canadians Outside of Canada: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info/financial-assistance/covid-19-financial-help>

Government of Canada Economic Plan & How to Apply for Support: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

COVID - 19 Employment and Social Development Canada Information Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

Canada Revenue Agency COVID-19: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/covid-19-employee-info.html>

Provincial Government Financial Support Resources:

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BC Preparedness Response: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

Income Assistance: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance>

Income Assistance Offices in the Lower Mainland: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/access-services#lowermainland>

Health & Preparation Resources:

COVID-19: Being prepared: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>

Government of Canada Symptoms & Treatments: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>

BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment

Tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health/?fbclid=IwAR1NzQXV3eUgFa5bSimQ2wiRpXVRMZc1LPbpg5fUNIDFIK1Sc7yjhcc4aB>

Health Link BC & 811: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/about-8-1-1>

Other Useful Links:

World Health Organization Myth Busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>

World Health Organization Public Advice: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Government of Canada, Community-based Measures: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>

If you have any questions please contact your Local Union Representative.

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Follow phone directory to get to your Local Rep and if not available leave a message you will get a call back.

**Employment Insurance questions or EFAP: Barbie Zipp Cell # 1.250.881.3515
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