

State Releases FAQ on Mask Requirements

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Pennsylvania has offered further guidance to businesses regarding the mask requirement and the other mandates imposed in the effort to stop the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The full "Frequently Asked Questions" document, which spells out particular situations and a business's responsibilities, [can be found here](#).

The document reiterates the requirement that employers provide masks to all employees to wear during business hours, whether or not the business is open to the public. The rule applies equally to employees working outside and regardless of how much distance employees maintain. Employees are excused from wearing a mask only if it would impede their vision, if they have a medical condition, or if it would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task. The guidance also notes that drivers need not wear masks if they are alone but must wear one if they need to travel through a toll-booth or other drive-through. Likewise, an employee in a personal office space, not shared with other colleagues, need not wear a mask when in that office alone.

With commercial masks difficult to obtain, the guidance states that homemade masks, disposable face shields, and masks owned by employees are allowable. The Department of Health has also published guidance on how to make cloth masks and has created a "Business-2-Business" Directory identifying potential vendors of masks and other personal protective equipment.

Businesses open to the public are also instructed to refuse service to a customer who will not wear a mask, unless the individual has a medical condition or is under 2 years old. Such customers are not required to provide medical documentation of their condition. If the business provides medication, medical supplies, or food, the business must refuse entry to the customer but should provide an alternative means of obtaining services, such as curbside pickup or delivery.

The guidance also clarifies an employer's other public health obligations regarding cleaning, temperature checks, and other tasks in the event there is probable exposure to COVID-19 at the workplace. A person is considered to have a probable cause of COVID-19 if the person has appropriate symptoms, including fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath and has been exposed in a high-risk situation.

If you have any questions on the secretary's order or follow-up guidance, please [contact me](#) or any member of the [Barley Snyder COVID-19 Response Service Team](#).

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