




Updated Information on Mask Use Order and Additional Screening Questions



 In Pennsylvania, masks must be worn whenever anyone leaves home. On July 1, Secretary of Health Rachel Levine signed an official order requiring the universal use of face coverings. Masks are mandatory in all public spaces to stop the spread of COVID-19. The Department of Health has published an FAQ sheet to address immediate concerns related to the order. **It is required that staff who provide direct services wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth during the entirety of service provision. The mask must be a cloth covering or other mask that offers a higher degree of protection. This applies to *all* ODP services, unless the staff person lives with the individual receiving services. For staff, plastic face shields are not acceptable alternatives to masks.**

- Masks should be worn by individuals who receive services during activities in the community in line with the Secretary's order.
- Masks should not be placed on children younger than 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the covering without assistance. If an individual has trouble breathing or other medical or mental health conditions that may be worsened with wearing a mask, seek clarification with the health care practitioner regarding mask use.
- Mask use is not mandatory for individuals who are communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing or has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

- If, for medical or other reasons, an individual receiving services is unable to wear a mask as required in the Order, the use of a full face shield as an alternative may provide some benefit, particularly against spread of respiratory droplets, and should be permitted.



Please note: Cloth face coverings are not considered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and should not be worn in place of recommended PPE when caring for an individual with COVID-19.

For more information, please see [ODP's Reissuing Guidance on Masks, Screening, and Handwashing](#)