



# City of Bristol, Virginia

Transit Department  
300 Lee Street  
Bristol, Virginia 24201  
(276) 645-7474

February 4, 2021

TO: All Transit Drivers and Passengers

FROM: Jay Detrick, Transportation Planner

RE: Policy on wearing masks while riding public transit

In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) order issued on January 29, 2021, all drivers and passengers of the Bristol Virginia Transit system will be required to wear a mask in order to ride on a Bristol Virginia Transit vehicle. This order went into effect on February 1, 2021 at 11:59 pm and will remain in effect until further notice.

A summary of the order is as follows:

**The following are attributes of masks needed to fulfill the requirements of the Order. CDC will update this guidance as needed.**

- A properly worn mask completely covers the nose and mouth.
- Cloth masks should be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source).
- Mask should be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. If gaiters are worn, they should have two layers of fabric or be folded to make two layers.
- Mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Mask should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.

**The following attributes are additionally acceptable as long as masks meet the requirements above.**

- Masks can be either manufactured or homemade.
- Masks can be reusable or disposable.
- Masks can have inner filter pockets.
- Clear masks or cloth masks with a clear plastic panel may be used to facilitate communication with people who are hearing impaired or others who need to see a speaker's mouth to understand speech.
- Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of the Order.

**The following people are exempt from the requirement to wear a mask:**

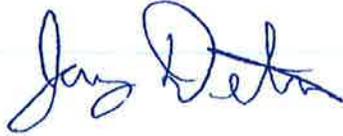
- A child under the age of 2 years;
- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq).

**The following do not fulfill the requirements of the Order.**

- Masks worn in a way that does not cover both the mouth and nose
- Face shields or goggles (face shields or goggles may be worn to supplement a mask that meets above required attributes)
- Scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, or bandannas
- Shirt or sweater collars (e.g., turtleneck collars) pulled up over the mouth and nose.
- Masks made from loosely woven fabric or that are knitted, i.e., fabrics that let light pass through
- Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as vinyl, plastic or leather)
- Masks containing slits, exhalation valves, or punctures
- Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight)

A copy of this memo along with the Executive Order, Federal Register Notice and a list of Frequently Asked Questions will be available on the Transit section of the City of Bristol Virginia website [www.bristolva.org](http://www.bristolva.org).

Jay Detrick

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Detrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Transportation Planner

## Quarantine and Isolation

# Federal Register Notice: Wearing of face masks while on conveyances and at transportation hubs

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an [Order](#)  [PDF - 11 pages] on January 29, 2021 requiring the wearing of masks by travelers to prevent spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Conveyance operators must also require all persons onboard to wear masks when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel. Operators of transportation hubs must require all persons to wear a mask when entering or on the premises of a transportation hub.

This Order must be followed by all passengers on public conveyances (e.g., airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, ride-shares) traveling into, within, or out of the United States as well as conveyance operators (e.g., crew, drivers, conductors, and other workers involved in the operation of conveyances) and operators of transportation hubs (e.g., airports, bus or ferry terminals, train or subway stations, seaports, ports of entry) or any other area that provides transportation in the United States.

People must wear masks that cover both the mouth and nose when awaiting, boarding, traveling on, or disembarking public conveyances. People must also wear masks when entering or on the premises of a transportation hub in the United States.

This [Order](#)  [PDF - 11 pages] will be effective on February 1, 2021 at 11:59 pm (EST).

For frequently asked questions, visit the [FAQs](#).

**The following are attributes of masks needed to fulfill the requirements of the Order. CDC will update this guidance as needed.**

- A properly worn mask completely covers the nose and mouth.
- Cloth masks should be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source).
- Mask should be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. If gaiters are worn, they should have two layers of fabric or be folded to make two layers.
- Mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Mask should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures.

**The following attributes are additionally acceptable as long as masks meet the requirements above.**

- Masks can be either manufactured or homemade.
- Masks can be reusable or disposable.
- Masks can have inner filter pockets.
- Clear masks or cloth masks with a clear plastic panel may be used to facilitate communication with people who are hearing impaired or others who need to see a speaker's mouth to understand speech.
- Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of the Order.

**The following do not fulfill the requirements of the Order.**

- Masks worn in a way that does not cover both the mouth and nose
- Face shields or goggles (face shields or goggles may be worn to supplement a mask that meets above required attributes)
- Scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, or bandannas
- Shirt or sweater collars (e.g., turtleneck collars) pulled up over the mouth and nose.
- Masks made from loosely woven fabric or that are knitted, i.e., fabrics that let light pass through

- Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as vinyl, plastic or leather)
- Masks containing slits, exhalation valves, or punctures
- Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight)

Additional guidance on the use of masks to slow the spread of COVID-19 is available on CDC's website.

Page last reviewed: February 2, 2021



**ACT NOW!**  
COVID-19



# Requirement for Face Masks on Public Transportation Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs

Updated Feb. 2, 2021



Traveling on public transportation increases a person's risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 by bringing people in [close contact](#) with others, often for prolonged periods, and exposing them to frequently touched surfaces. Air travel often requires spending time in security lines and busy airport terminals. Travel by bus, train, and other conveyances used for international, interstate, or intrastate transportation poses similar challenges. Staying 6 feet away from others is often difficult on [public transportation](#). People may not be able to distance themselves by the recommended at least 6 feet from other people seated nearby or from those standing in or passing through the aisles on airplanes, trains, or buses.

Travel has led—and continues to lead to—interstate and international spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Wearing [masks](#) that completely cover the mouth and nose reduce the spread of COVID-19. People who never develop symptoms (asymptomatic) or are not yet showing symptoms (pre-symptomatic) might not know that they are infected but can still spread COVID-19 to others. Masks also offer protection to the [wearer](#).

CDC has issued an [order](#) that requires face masks to be worn by all travelers while on public transportation (which includes all passengers and all personnel operating conveyances). People must wear masks that completely cover both the mouth and nose while awaiting, boarding, disembarking, or traveling on airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways,

buses, taxis, and ride-shares as they are traveling into, within, or out of the United States and U.S. territories. People must also wear masks while at transportation hubs (e.g., airports, bus or ferry terminals, train and subway stations, seaports) and other locations where people board public transportation in the United States and U.S. territories.

Operators of public conveyances and transportation hubs must use best efforts to ensure that any person on the conveyance wears a mask when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel or while entering or on the premises of the transportation hub. Depending on the circumstances, operators must take the following actions:

- Board/allow entry only people who wear masks;
- instruct people that wearing a mask on the conveyance/premises is a requirement of federal law and that not complying with the requirement is a violation of federal law;
- monitor the conveyance/premises for any person who is not wearing a mask and seek compliance from such a person;
- at the earliest safe opportunity, disembark/remove from premises any person who refuses to comply; and
- notify people of the requirement to make sure they are aware of and comply with the requirement to wear a mask. Examples of such notifications are messaging in apps, on websites or through email; posters in multiple languages with illustrations; and printing the information on tickets.

People are not required to wear a mask under the following circumstances:

- while eating, drinking, or taking medication for brief periods of time;
- while communicating, for brief periods of time, with a person who is hearing impaired when the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- if, on an aircraft, wearing of oxygen masks is needed because of loss of cabin pressure or other event affecting aircraft ventilation;
- if unconscious (for reasons other than sleeping), incapacitated, unable to be awakened, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance; or
- when necessary to temporarily remove the mask to verify one's identity such as during Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screening or when asked to do so by the ticket or gate agent or any law enforcement official.

The following categories of people are exempt from the requirement to wear a mask:

- A child under the age of 2 years;
- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, for reasons related to the disability;
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

People on board the following categories of conveyances are exempt from the requirement to wear a mask:

- Private conveyances operated only for personal, non-commercial use;
- Commercial motor vehicles or trucks, if the driver is the only person in the vehicle or truck;
- Conveyances operated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) as long as the operator of the conveyance follows all DOD requirements to prevent spread of COVID-19.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is a public transportation conveyance?**

A public transportation conveyance is any mode of transportation other than a private vehicle. Types of public transportation conveyances include airplanes, trains, subways, buses, taxis, ride-shares, ferries, ships, trolleys, and cable cars.

**Which public transportation conveyances does the order apply to?**

The order applies to all public transportation conveyances traveling into the United States (i.e., arriving from a foreign country) or within the United States (including within states or territories or traveling between states or territories). It also applies to all conveyances leaving the United States until they arrive at a foreign destination.

**What kind of mask should I wear?**

People should wear masks that completely cover the mouth and nose and fits snugly against the sides of the face. See CDC's guidance for attributes of masks needed to fulfill the requirements of the Order.

**What is a transportation hub?**

A transportation hub is any location where people gather to await, board, or disembark public transportation. This include airports, bus and ferry terminals, marinas, train and subway stations, seaports, and ride-share pick-up locations.

**Which transportation hubs does the order apply to?**

The order applies to all transportation hubs in the United States and U.S. territories, except those operated by the U.S. Department of Defense.

**Who is an operator of a public transportation conveyance?**

A public transportation conveyance operator is any individual or organization causing or authorizing the operation of a conveyance and includes the transportation company, as well as crew, drivers, conductors, ticket takers, and other workers involved in the operation of the conveyance.

**What happens if I don't wear a mask on a public transportation conveyance?**

Operators of public transportation conveyances must refuse to board anyone not wearing a mask that completely covers the mouth and nose and require that everyone on board wears a mask for the entire duration of travel. If a passenger refuses to comply, the operator must disembark the person at the earliest safe opportunity.

**What happens if I don't wear a mask in a transportation hub?**

Operators of public transportation conveyances must deny entry to anyone not wearing a mask that completely covers the mouth and nose and require that everyone on the premises wears a mask. If a person refuses to comply, the operator must remove the person from the premises at the earliest safe opportunity.

**What if I need to take my mask off during travel or in a transportation hub?**

There are some circumstances when taking your mask off would be necessary, including brief periods of time while eating, drinking, or taking medication. Other reasons include medical emergencies, to verify identity during security screenings, or if asked to do so by ticket/gate agents or law enforcement. On a plane, masks should be removed if oxygen masks are needed because of loss of cabin pressure.

If individuals touch their mask while removing or wearing it back, wash hands with water and soap for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.

**Do I need to wear a mask if I have recovered from COVID-19?**

Yes, the order requires all travelers to wear a mask, including those who have recovered from COVID-19.

**Do I need to wear a mask if I have had a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes, the order requires all travelers to wear a mask, including those who have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

**What if another person near me refuses to wear a mask?**

If you are on a conveyance and a passenger near you refuses to wear a mask, alert personnel working on the conveyance (e.g., crew member, driver, conductor) for assistance. If you are in a transportation hub, notify a staff member or security personnel.

**Why is CDC making this a requirement now?**

Scientific evidence shows that consistent and universal use of masks on public transportation systems and in transportation hubs will protect Americans and help to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Mask use will enable Americans to travel responsibly and as safely as possible when they need to travel during the pandemic.

Last Updated Feb. 2, 2021

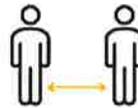


# COVID-19

**ACT NOW!**



WEAR A MASK



STAY 6 FEET APART



AVOID CROWDS

## Your Guide to Masks

Updated Jan. 30, 2021

[Print](#)

CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people. Effective February 2, 2021, **masks are required** on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

### How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

#### DO choose masks that



Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps

#### DO NOT choose Masks that



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents which allow virus particles to escape



Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks

### Special Considerations

#### Gaiters & face shields



Wear a gaiter with two layers, or fold it to make two layers



Not recommended: Evaluation of face shields is ongoing, but effectiveness is unknown at this time.

#### Glasses

If you wear glasses, find a mask that fits closely over your nose or one that has a nose wire to limit



fogging.

## Children



Find a mask that is made for children to help ensure proper fit



Check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin and that there are no gaps around the sides



Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old

## Cold weather gear



Wear your scarf, ski mask or balaclava over your mask



Scarves, ski masks and balaclavas are not substitutes for masks

## How to Wear

Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to **wash your hands** or **use hand sanitizer** before putting on a mask.
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it. If you have to often touch/adjust your mask, it doesn't fit you properly, and you may need to find a different mask or make adjustments.

For more information, visit our [How to Wear Masks](#) web page.

## Do wear a mask that



- Covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face.

## How NOT to wear a mask



Around your neck



On Your forehead



Under your nose



Only on your nose



On your chin



Dangling from one ear



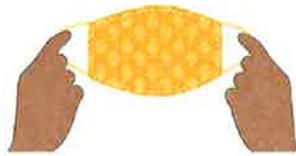
On your arm

## How to Take off a Mask



1

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



2

Handle only by the earloops or ties



3

Fold the outside corners together



4

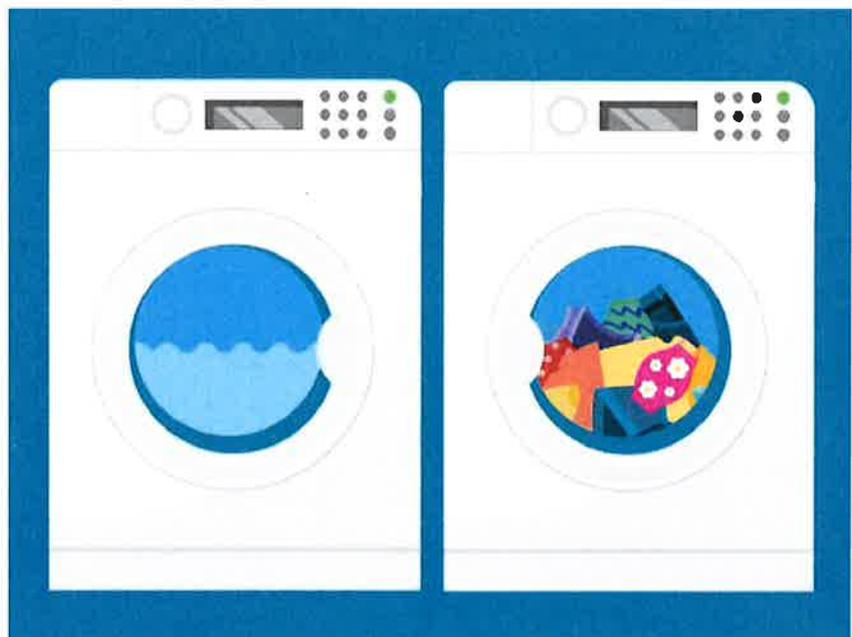
Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

## How to Clean

Reusable masks should be washed regularly. Always remove masks correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used mask.

- Include your mask with your regular laundry
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask
- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry

For more information, visit our [How to Wash Masks](#) web page.



For more information, see our [Masks](#) web site. For information on the sources for our mask guidance, see [Recent Studies](#).

Last Updated Jan. 30, 2021

**CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**ORDER UNDER SECTION 361  
OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT (42 U.S.C. 264)  
AND 42 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS 70.2, 71.31(b), 71.32(b)**

**REQUIREMENT FOR PERSONS TO WEAR MASKS  
WHILE ON CONVEYANCES AND AT TRANSPORTATION HUBS**

SUMMARY:

Notice and Order; and subject to the limitations under “Applicability,” pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 CFR 70.2, 71.31(b), and 71.32(b):

(1) Persons<sup>1</sup> must wear<sup>2</sup> masks over the mouth and nose when traveling on conveyances into and within the United States. Persons must also wear masks at transportation hubs as defined in this Order.

(2) A conveyance operator transporting persons into and within the United States<sup>3</sup> must require all persons onboard to wear masks for the duration of travel.

(3) A conveyance operators operating a conveyance arriving at or departing from a U.S. port of entry must require all persons on board to wear masks for the duration of travel as a condition of controlled free pratique.<sup>4</sup>

(4) Conveyance operators must use best efforts to ensure that any person on the conveyance wears a mask when boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel. Best efforts include:

- boarding only those persons who wear masks;
- instructing persons that Federal law requires wearing a mask on the conveyance and failure to comply constitutes a violation of Federal law;
- monitoring persons onboard the conveyance for anyone who is not wearing a mask and seeking compliance from such persons;
- at the earliest opportunity, disembarking any person who refuses to comply; and
- providing persons with prominent and adequate notice to facilitate awareness and compliance of the requirement of this Order to wear a mask; best practices may include, if feasible, advance notifications on digital platforms, such as on apps, websites, or email;

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<sup>1</sup> As used in this Order, “persons” includes travelers (*i.e.*, passengers and crew), conveyance operators, and any workers or service providers in the transportation hub.

<sup>2</sup> To “wear a mask” means to wear a mask over the nose and mouth.

<sup>3</sup> This includes international, interstate, or intrastate waterways, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

<sup>4</sup> As a condition of this controlled free pratique to commence or continue operations in the United States, conveyance operators must additionally require all persons to wear masks on board conveyances departing from the United States and for the duration of their travel until the conveyance arrives at the foreign destination if at any time any of the persons on the conveyance (passengers, crew, or conveyance operators) will return to the United States while this Order remains in effect. This precaution must be followed regardless of scheduled itinerary.

posted signage in multiple languages with illustrations; printing the requirement on transit tickets; or other methods as appropriate.

(5) Operators of transportation hubs must use best efforts to ensure that any person entering or on the premises of the transportation hub wears a mask. Best efforts include:

- allowing entry only to those persons who wear masks;
- instructing persons that Federal law requires wearing a mask in the transportation hub and failure to comply constitutes a violation of Federal law;
- monitoring persons on the premises of the transportation hub for anyone who is not wearing a mask and seeking compliance from such persons;
- at the earliest opportunity, removing any person who refuses to comply from the premises of the transportation hub; and
- providing persons with prominent and adequate notice to facilitate awareness and compliance with the requirement of this Order to wear a mask; best practices may include, if feasible, advance notifications on digital platforms, such as on apps, websites, or email; posted signage in multiple languages with illustrations; printing the requirement on transit tickets; or other methods as appropriate.

#### DEFINITIONS:

*Controlled free pratique* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 71.1, meaning “permission for a carrier to enter a U.S. port, disembark, and begin operation under certain stipulated conditions.”

*Conveyance* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 70.1, meaning “an aircraft, train, road vehicle,<sup>5</sup> vessel . . . or other means of transport, including military.” Included in the definition of “conveyance” is the term “carrier” which under 42 CFR 71.1 has the same definition as conveyance under 42 CFR 70.1.

*Conveyance operator* means an individual operating a conveyance and an individual or organization causing or authorizing the operation of a conveyance.

*Mask* means a material covering the nose and mouth of the wearer, excluding face shields.<sup>6</sup>

*Interstate traffic* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 70.1, meaning

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<sup>5</sup> This includes rideshares meaning arrangements where passengers travel in a privately owned road vehicle driven by its owner in connection with a fee or service.

<sup>6</sup> A properly worn mask completely covers the nose and mouth of the wearer. A mask should be secured to the head, including with ties or ear loops. A mask should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face. Masks do not include face shields. Masks can be either manufactured or homemade and should be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, or punctures. Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of this Order.

CDC guidance for attributes of acceptable masks in the context of this Order is available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>

“(1):

- (i) The movement of any conveyance or the transportation of persons or property, including any portion of such movement or transportation that is entirely within a state or possession—
- (ii) From a point of origin in any state or possession to a point of destination in any other state or possession; or
- (iii) Between a point of origin and a point of destination in the same state or possession but through any other state, possession, or contiguous foreign country.

(2) Interstate traffic does not include the following:

- (i) The movement of any conveyance which is solely for the purpose of unloading persons or property transported from a foreign country or loading persons or property for transportation to a foreign country.
- (ii) The movement of any conveyance which is solely for the purpose of effecting its repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or storage.”

*Intrastate traffic* means the movement of any conveyance or the transportation or movement of persons occurring solely within the boundaries of a state or territory, or on tribal land.

*Possession* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 70.1 and 71.1, meaning a “U.S. territory.”

*State* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 70.1, meaning “any of the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia.”

*Territory* shall have the same definition as “U.S. territory” under 42 CFR 70.1 and 71.1, meaning “any territory (also known as possessions) of the United States, including American Samoa, Guam, the [Commonwealth of the] Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.”

*Transportation hub* means any airport, bus terminal, marina, seaport or other port, subway station, terminal (including any fixed facility at which passengers are picked-up or discharged), train station, U.S. port of entry, or any other location that provides transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

*Transportation hub operator* means an individual operating a transportation hub and an individual or organization causing or authorizing the operation of a transportation hub.

*U.S. port* shall have the same definition as under 42 CFR 71.1, meaning any “seaport, airport, or border crossing point under the control of the United States.”

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

This Order shall be interpreted and implemented in a manner as to achieve the following objectives:

- Preservation of human life;
- Maintaining a safe and secure operating transportation system;
- Mitigating the further introduction, transmission, and spread of COVID-19 into the United States and from one state or territory into any other state or territory; and
- Supporting response efforts to COVID-19 at the Federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal levels.

#### APPLICABILITY:

This Order shall not apply within any state, locality, territory, or area under the jurisdiction of a Tribe that (1) requires a person to wear a mask on conveyances; (2) requires a person to wear a mask at transportation hubs; and (3) requires conveyances to transport only persons wearing masks. Such requirements must provide the same level of public health protection as — or greater protection than —the requirements listed herein.

In addition, the requirement to wear a mask shall not apply under the following circumstances:

- While eating, drinking, or taking medication, for brief periods;
- While communicating with a person who is hearing impaired when the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- If, on an aircraft, wearing of oxygen masks is needed because of loss of cabin pressure or other event affecting aircraft ventilation;
- If unconscious (for reasons other than sleeping), incapacitated, unable to be awakened, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance;<sup>7</sup> or
- When necessary to temporarily remove the mask to verify one's identity such as during Transportation Security Administration screening or when asked to do so by the ticket or gate agent or any law enforcement official.

This Order exempts the following categories of persons:<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Persons who are experiencing difficulty breathing or shortness of breath or are feeling winded may remove the mask temporarily until able to resume normal breathing with the mask. Persons who are vomiting should remove the mask until vomiting ceases. Persons with acute illness may remove the mask if it interferes with necessary medical care such as supplemental oxygen administered via an oxygen mask.

<sup>8</sup> Operators of conveyances or transportation hubs may impose requirements, or conditions for carriage, on persons requesting an exemption from the requirement to wear a mask, including medical consultation by a third party, medical documentation by a licensed medical provider, and/or other information as determined by the operator, as well as require evidence that the person does not have COVID-19 such as a negative result from a SARS-CoV-2 viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. CDC definitions for SARS-CoV-2 viral test and documentation of recovery are available in the Frequently Asked Questions at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-international-air-travelers.html>. Operators may also impose additional protective measures that improve the ability of a person eligible for exemption to maintain social distance (separation from others by 6 feet), such as scheduling travel at less crowded times or on less crowded conveyances, or seating or otherwise situating the individual in a less crowded section of the conveyance or transportation hub. Operators may further require that persons seeking exemption from the requirement to wear a mask request an accommodation in advance.

- A child under the age of 2 years;
- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).<sup>9</sup>
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

This Order exempts the following categories of conveyances, including persons on board such conveyances:

- Private conveyances operated solely for personal, non-commercial use;
- Commercial motor vehicles or trucks as these terms are defined in 49 CFR 390.5, if the driver is the sole occupant of the vehicle or truck;
- Conveyances operated or chartered by the U.S. military services provided that such conveyance operators observe Department of Defense precautions to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 that are equivalent to the precautions in this Order.

This Order applies to persons on conveyances and at transportation hubs directly operated by U.S. state, local, territorial, or tribal government authorities, as well as the operators themselves. U.S. state, local, territorial, or tribal government authorities directly operating conveyances and transportation hubs may be subject to additional federal authorities or actions, and are encouraged to implement additional measures enforcing the provisions of this Order regarding persons traveling onboard conveyances and at transportation hubs operated by these government entities.

To the extent permitted by law, and consistent with President Biden’s Executive Order of January 21, 2021 (Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel),<sup>10</sup> Federal agencies are required to implement additional measures enforcing the provisions of this Order.

#### BACKGROUND:

There is currently a pandemic of respiratory disease (coronavirus disease 2019 or “COVID-19”) caused by a novel coronavirus (SARS-COV-2). As of January 27, 2021, there have been 99,638,507 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally, resulting in more than 2,141,000 deaths. As of January 27, 2021, there have been over 25,000,000 cases identified in the United States and over 415,000 deaths due to the disease. New SARS-CoV-2 variants have emerged in recent weeks, including at least one with evidence of increased transmissibility.<sup>11</sup>

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads very easily and sustainably between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) mainly through respiratory droplets

<sup>9</sup> This is a narrow exception that includes a person with a disability who cannot wear a mask for reasons related to the disability. CDC will issue additional guidance regarding persons who cannot wear a mask under this exemption. <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/21/executive-order-promoting-covid-19-safety-in-domestic-and-international-travel/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/science-and-research/scientific-brief-emerging-variants.html>

produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths, eyes, or noses of people who are nearby and possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Infected people without symptoms (asymptomatic) and those in whom symptoms have not yet developed (pre-symptomatic) can also spread the virus. In general, the more closely an infected person interacts with others and the longer those interactions, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. COVID-19 may be transmitted by touching surfaces or objects that have the virus on them and then touching one's own or another person's eyes, nose, or mouth.

Masks help prevent people who have COVID-19, including those who are pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic, from spreading the virus to others.<sup>12</sup> Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus-laden droplets, i.e., they act as source control by blocking exhaled virus.<sup>13</sup> This is especially relevant for asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic infected wearers who feel well and may be unaware of their infectiousness to others, and who are estimated to account for more than 50% of transmissions.<sup>14,15</sup> Masks also provide personal protection to the wearer by reducing inhalation of these droplets, i.e., they reduce wearers' exposure through filtration.<sup>16</sup> The community benefit of wearing masks for SARS-CoV-2 control is due to the combination of these effects; individual prevention benefit increases with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly.

Appropriately worn masks reduce the spread of COVID-19—particularly given the evidence of pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19. Seven studies have confirmed the benefit of universal masking in community level analyses: in a unified hospital system,<sup>17</sup> a German city,<sup>18</sup> a U.S. State,<sup>19</sup> a panel of 15 U.S. States and Washington, D.C.,<sup>20,21</sup> as

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

<sup>13</sup> Leung NHL, Chu DKW, Shiu EYC, et al. Respiratory virus shedding in exhaled breath and efficacy of face masks. *Nature Medicine*. 2020;26(5):676-680. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-0843-2>

<sup>14</sup> Moghadas SM, Fitzpatrick MC, Sah P, et al. The implications of silent transmission for the control of COVID-19 outbreaks. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 2020;117(30):17513-17515. 10.1073/pnas.2008373117. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32632012>

<sup>15</sup> Johansson MA, Quandelacy TM, Kada S, et al. SARS-CoV-2 Transmission From People Without COVID-19 Symptoms. Johansson MA, et al. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2021 Jan 4;4(1):e2035057. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.35057.

<sup>16</sup> Ueki H, Furusawa Y, Iwatsuki-Horimoto K, et al. Effectiveness of Face Masks in Preventing Airborne Transmission of SARS-CoV-2. *mSphere*. 2020;5(5).10.1128/mSphere.00637-20. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/33087517>

<sup>17</sup> Wang X, Ferro EG, Zhou G, Hashimoto D, Bhatt DL. Association Between Universal Masking in a Health Care System and SARS-CoV-2 Positivity Among Health Care Workers. *JAMA*. 2020.10.1001/jama.2020.12897. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32663246>

<sup>18</sup> Mitze T., Kosfeld R., Rode J., Wälde K. *Face Masks Considerably Reduce COVID-19 Cases in Germany: A Synthetic Control Method Approach*. IZA – Institute of Labor Economics (Germany);2020.ISSN: 2365-9793, DP No. 13319. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp13319.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Gallaway MS, Rigler J, Robinson S, et al. Trends in COVID-19 Incidence After Implementation of Mitigation Measures – Arizona, January 22–August 7, 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2020;69(40):1460-1463.10.15585/mmwr.mm6940e3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/33031366>

<sup>20</sup> Lyu W, Wehby GL. Community Use Of Face Masks And COVID-19: Evidence From A Natural Experiment Of State Mandates In The US. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2020;39(8):1419-1425.10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00818. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32543923>

<sup>21</sup> Hatzius J, Struyven D, Rosenberg I. Face Masks and GDP. *Goldman Sachs Research* <https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/pages/face-masks-and-gdp.html>. Accessed January 20, 2021.

well as both Canada<sup>22</sup> and the United States<sup>23</sup> nationally. Each analysis demonstrated that, following directives from organizational and political leadership for universal masking, new infections fell significantly. Two of these studies<sup>24,25</sup> and an additional analysis of data from 200 countries that included localities within the United States<sup>26</sup> also demonstrated reductions in mortality. An economic analysis using U.S. data found that, given these effects, increasing universal masking by 15% could prevent the need for lockdowns and reduce associated losses of up to \$1 trillion or about 5% of gross domestic product.<sup>27</sup>

Wearing a mask especially helps protect those at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19<sup>28</sup> and workers who frequently come into close contact with other people (e.g., at transportation hubs). Masks are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings. Using masks along with other preventive measures, including social distancing, frequent handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, is one of the most effective strategies available for reducing COVID-19 transmission.

Traveling on multi-person conveyances increases a person's risk of getting and spreading COVID-19 by bringing persons in close contact with others, often for prolonged periods, and exposing them to frequently touched surfaces. Air travel often requires spending time in security lines and crowded airport terminals. Social distancing may be difficult if not impossible on flights. People may not be able to distance themselves by the recommended 6 feet from individuals seated nearby or those standing in or passing through the aircraft's aisles. Travel by bus, train, vessel, and other conveyances used for international, interstate, or intrastate transportation pose similar challenges.

Intrastate transmission of the virus has led to—and continues to lead to—interstate and international spread of the virus, particularly on public conveyances and in travel hubs, where passengers who may themselves be traveling only within their state or territory commonly interact with others traveling between states or territories or internationally. Some states, territories, Tribes,

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<sup>22</sup> Karaivanov A., Lu S.E., Shigeoka H., Chen C., Pamplona S. *Face Masks, Public Policies and Slowing the Spread of Covid-19: Evidence from Canada* National Bureau of Economic Research 2020. Working Paper 27891. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w27891>

<sup>23</sup> Chernozhukov V, Kasahara H, Schrimpf P. Causal Impact of Masks, Policies, Behavior on Early Covid-19 Pandemic in the U.S. *J Econom.* 2021 Jan;220(1):23-62. doi: 10.1016/j.jeconom.2020.09.003. Epub 2020 Oct 17.

<sup>24</sup> Hatzius J, Struyven D, Rosenberg I. Face Masks and GDP. *Goldman Sachs Research* <https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/pages/face-masks-and-gdp.html>. Accessed January 20, 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Chernozhukov V, Kasahara H, Schrimpf P. Causal Impact of Masks, Policies, Behavior on Early Covid-19 Pandemic in the U.S. *J Econom.* 2021 Jan;220(1):23-62. doi: 10.1016/j.jeconom.2020.09.003. Epub 2020 Oct 17.

<sup>26</sup> Leffler CT, Ing EB, Lykins JD, Hogan MC, McKeown CA, Grzybowski A. Association of country-wide coronavirus mortality with demographics, testing, lockdowns, and public wearing of masks. *Am J Trop Med Hyg.* 2020 Dec;103(6):2400-2411. doi: 10.4269/ajtmh.20-1015. Epub 2020 Oct 26.

<sup>27</sup> Hatzius J, Struyven D, Rosenberg I. Face Masks and GDP. *Goldman Sachs Research* <https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/pages/face-masks-and-gdp.html>. Accessed January 20, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>

and local public health authorities have imposed mask-wearing requirements within their jurisdictional boundaries to protect public health.<sup>29</sup> Any state or territory without sufficient mask-wearing requirements for transportation systems within its jurisdiction has not taken adequate measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 from such state or territory to any other state or territory. That determination is based on, *inter alia*, the rapid and continuing transmission of the virus across all states and territories and across most of the world. Furthermore, given how interconnected most transportation systems are across the nation and the world, local transmission can grow even more quickly into interstate and international transmission when infected persons travel on non-personal conveyances without wearing a mask and with others who are not wearing masks.

Therefore, I have determined that the mask-wearing requirements in this Order are reasonably necessary to prevent the further introduction, transmission, or spread of COVID-19 into the United States and among the states and territories. Individuals traveling into or departing from the United States, traveling interstate, or traveling entirely intrastate, conveyance operators that transport such individuals, and transportation hub operators that facilitate such transportation, must comply with the mask-wearing requirements set forth in this Order.

America's transportation systems are essential. Not only are they essential for public health, they are also essential for America's economy and other bedrocks of American life. Those transportation systems carry life-saving medical supplies and medical providers into and across the nation to our hospitals, nursing homes, and physicians' offices. Trains, planes, ships, and automobiles bring food and other essentials to our communities and to our homes. Buses bring America's children and teachers to school. Buses, trains, and subways, bring America's workforce to their jobs.

Requiring masks on our transportation systems will protect Americans and provide confidence that we can once again travel safely even during this pandemic. Therefore, requiring masks will help us control this pandemic and aid in re-opening America's economy.

The United States and countries around the world are currently embarking on efforts to vaccinate their populations, starting with healthcare personnel and other essential workers at increased risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 and people at increased risk for severe illness from the virus. While vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe or symptomatic COVID-19, at this time there is limited information on how much the available COVID-19 vaccines may reduce transmission in the general population and how long protection lasts.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, this mask requirement, as well as CDC recommendations to prevent spread of COVID-19,<sup>31</sup> additionally apply to vaccinated persons. Similarly, CDC recommends that people who have

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<sup>29</sup> Based on internet sources, 37 states plus D.C. and Puerto Rico mandate the wearing of masks in public. Among the jurisdictions that have imposed mask mandates, variations in requirements exist. For example, exemptions for children range in cutoff age from 2 to 12, but masks are generally required in indoor public spaces such as restaurants and stores, on public transit and ride-hailing services, and outdoors when unable to maintain 6 feet of distance from others. See <https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2020/states-mask-mandates-coronavirus.html> (accessed January 28, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

recovered from COVID-19 continue to take precautions to protect themselves and others, including wearing masks;<sup>32</sup> therefore, this mask requirement also applies to people who have recovered from COVID-19.

ACTION:

Until further notice, under 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 CFR 70.2, 71.31(b), and 71.32(b), unless excluded or exempted as set forth in this Order, a person must wear a mask while boarding, disembarking, and traveling on any conveyance into or within the United States. A person must also wear a mask at any transportation hub that provides transportation within the United States.

Conveyance operators traveling into or within the United States may transport only persons wearing masks and must use best efforts to ensure that masks are worn when embarking, disembarking, and throughout the duration of travel. Operators of transportation hubs must use best efforts to ensure that any person entering or on the premises of the transportation hub wears a mask.

As a condition of receiving controlled free pratique under 42 CFR 71.31(b) to enter a U.S. port, disembark passengers, and begin operations at any U.S. port of entry, conveyances arriving into the United States must require persons to wear masks while boarding, disembarking, and for the duration of travel. Conveyance operators must also require all persons to wear masks while boarding and for the duration of their travel on board conveyances departing from the United States until the conveyance arrives at the foreign destination, if at any time any of the persons onboard (passengers, crew, or conveyance operators) will return to the United States while this Order remains in effect. These travel conditions are necessary to mitigate the harm of further introduction of COVID-19 into the United States.

Requiring a properly worn mask is a reasonable and necessary measure to prevent the introduction, transmission and spread of COVID-19 into the United States and among the states and territories under 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 CFR 71.32(b). Among other benefits, masks help prevent dispersal of an infected person's respiratory droplets that carry the virus. That precaution helps prevent droplets from landing in the eye, mouth, or nose or possibly being inhaled into the lungs of an uninfected person, or from landing on a surface or object that an uninfected person may then touch and then touch his or her own or another's eyes, nose, or mouth. Masks also provide some protection to the wearer by helping reduce inhalation of respiratory droplets.

This Order shall not apply within any state, locality, territory, or area under the jurisdiction of a Tribe, where the controlling governmental authority: (1) requires a person to wear a mask on conveyances; (2) requires a person to wear a mask at transportation hubs; and (3) requires conveyances to transport only persons wearing masks. Those requirements must provide the same level of public health protection as—or greater protection than—the requirements listed herein.

In accordance with 42 U.S.C. 264(e), state, local, territorial, and tribal authorities may impose additional requirements that provide greater public health protection and are more restrictive than

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>

the requirements in this Order. Consistent with other federal, state, or local legal requirements, this Order does not preclude operators of conveyances or transportation hubs from imposing additional requirements, or conditions for carriage, that provide greater public health protection and are more restrictive than the requirements in this Order (e.g., requiring a negative result from a SARS-CoV-2 viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 or imposing requirements for social distancing or other recommended protective measures).

This Order is not a rule within the meaning of the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”) but rather is an emergency action taken under the existing authority of 42 U.S.C. 264(a) and 42 CFR 70.2, 71.31(b), 71.32(b). In the event that a court determines this Order qualifies as a rule under the APA, notice and comment and a delay in effective date are not required because there is good cause to dispense with prior public notice and comment and the opportunity to comment on this Order and the delay in effective date. Considering the public health emergency caused by COVID-19, it would be impracticable and contrary to the public’s health, and by extension the public’s interest, to delay the issuance and effective date of this Order. Similarly, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has determined that if this Order were a rule, it would be a major rule under the Congressional Review Act, but there would not be a delay in its effective date as the agency has determined that there would be good cause to make the requirements herein effective immediately under the APA.

This order is also an economically significant regulatory action under Executive Order 12866 and has therefore been reviewed by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget. The agency is proceeding without the complete analysis required by Executive Order 12866 under the emergency provisions of 6(a)(3)(D) of that Order.

If any provision of this Order, or the application of any provision to any carriers, conveyances, persons, or circumstances, shall be held invalid, the remainder of the provisions, or the application of such provisions to any carriers, conveyances, persons, or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid, shall remain valid and in effect.

To address the COVID-19 public health threat to transportation security, this Order shall be enforced by the Transportation Security Administration under appropriate statutory and regulatory authorities including the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 106, 114, 44902, 44903, and 46301; and 49 CFR part 1503, 1540.105, 1542.303, 1544.305 and 1546.105.

This Order shall be further enforced by other federal authorities and may be enforced by cooperating state and local authorities through the provisions of 18 U.S.C. 3559, 3571; 42 U.S.C. 243, 268, 271; and 42 CFR 70.18 and 71.2.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> While this Order may be enforced and CDC reserves the right to enforce through criminal penalties, CDC does not intend to rely primarily on these criminal penalties but instead strongly encourages and anticipates widespread voluntary compliance as well as support from other federal agencies in implementing additional civil measures enforcing the provisions of this Order, to the extent permitted by law and consistent with President Biden’s Executive Order of January 21, 2021 (Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel).

EFFECTIVE DATE:

This Order shall enter into effect on February 1, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. and will remain in effect unless modified or rescinded based on specific public health or other considerations, or until the Secretary of Health and Human Services rescinds the determination under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d) that a public health emergency exists.

In testimony whereof, the Director of the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has hereunto set his hand at Atlanta, GA, this 29th day of January 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Martin S. Cetron" with "M.D." written to the right. The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Martin S. Cetron, M.D.  
Director, Division of Global Migration and Quarantine  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention