

Hamilton College

Spring 2021 Face Coverings Strategy

(from the Health and Safety sub-group of the COVID-19 Task Force)

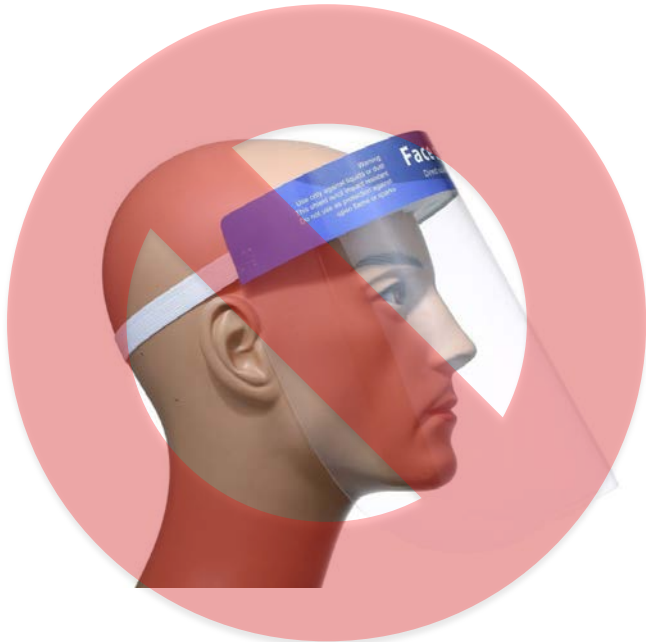
The universal wearing of face coverings for droplet/aerosol control, when combined with other mitigation strategies (physical distancing chief among them), remains the best way to protect our community from COVID-19 transmission – including new strains.



#1—Reminder: Avoid Poor Performing Face Coverings

Examples of unapproved face covering solutions

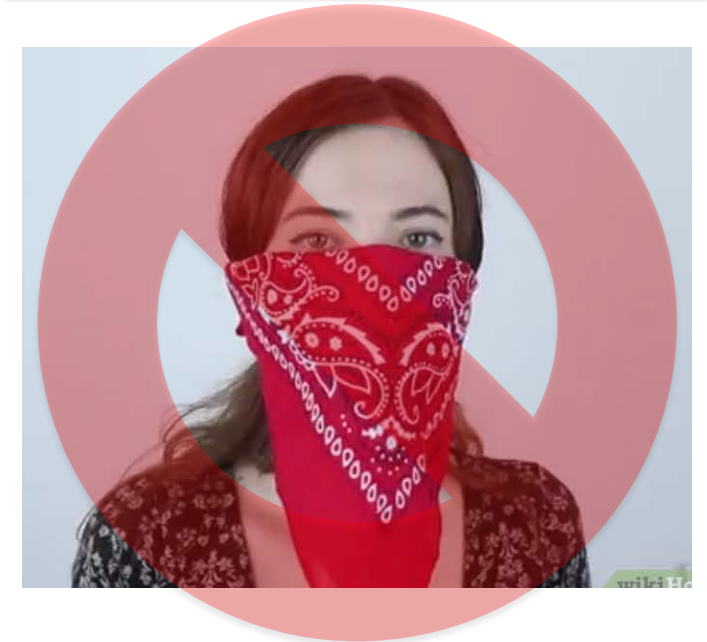
Face shields without a mask underneath



Neck gaiters



Bandanas



#2—“Double-Up” Strategy

- Use a disposable surgical mask **AND** a reusable cloth mask
 - More fabric over the mouth/nose means aerosols generated by others must navigate more obstacles to access the wearer’s respiratory system
- The surgical mask should be exterior
 - It has higher likelihood of exposure to the aerosols of others and can be easily changed out (multiple times in a day if necessary)



#3—Deploy KN95 Masks

- KN95 masks are foreign-made face coverings intended to fill US-made N95 supply chain gaps
- While NIOSH (safety standards institute) has determined KN95's **DO NOT** meet US N95 respirator standards, studies **HAVE** suggested they are more protective than surgical masks



#3—KN95 Masks (continued)

- KN95 masks (i.e. “enhanced face covering protection”) are prioritized for employees in high-density work environments where 6’ of physical distancing is difficult to maintain:
 - Food Services (Bon Appetit, Café Opus, Euphoria)
 - Facilities Management (custodians mandatory, other shops as necessary)
 - Mail Center

#3—KN95 Masks (continued)

- As long as we can maintain a steady KN95 supply for high-density environments, we will make them available to lower risk environments – with the following reminders:
 - Traditional COVID-19 mitigation strategies (including “doubling-up”) remain the priority independent of more protective masks
 - Caution is recommended for in-person teaching due to increased stress on the respiratory system from long periods (45+ minutes) of speaking
 - KN95 masks will be distributed at the testing center by request

#3—KN95 Masks (continued)

- KN95 usage tips:
 - Donning/doffing practices are similar to surgical masks
 - Keep clean/sanitary by only handling the ear loops and storing in bags when not in use
 - Usage should generally not exceed eight hours:
 - Usage time may be extended by good hygiene habits or may be reduced by surficial contamination/fabric deterioration
 - Good face-to-mask seal optimizes filter efficiency; therefore if you are not clean shaven the mask will afford no more protection than a surgical mask

#4—N95 Respirators

- N95 respirators are restricted to those with “high” or “very high” COVID-19 exposure risk, including:
 - Health Center & HCEMS
 - Campus Safety
 - Athletic Trainers
 - Facilities Management
 - EHS



#4—N95 Respirators (continued)

- N95 respirators have also been deployed in a few other areas:
 - For risk-based reasons (i.e., the COVID-19 Testing Center personnel)
 - For other select workstations where close/side-by-side work activities are essential (i.e. critical FM activities, climbing wall students/employees)
- Approval and training through EHS is necessary