

**Social Distancing and Face Covering
Procedure Number 50001.2P**

Type of Policy: Administrative

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Reason for Policy: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SUNY Cobleskill has adopted a Social Distancing and Face Covering policy. This Policy highlights the protections that are required to be implemented to protect the health and safety of our campus community including students, faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, and contractors.

Policy Statement: In the event of an outbreak of a communicable or highly infectious and/or deadly disease, including a pandemic, which jeopardizes the health, welfare, and safety of the campus community, SUNY Cobleskill may implement corrective measures aimed at limiting the transmission of disease through social distancing and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Decisions regarding the implementation of these corrective measures will be guided by such factors as the epidemiology of the disease, its response to vaccines or other medications, the availability of effective medications, proximate locations of confirmed infections, and other public health factors.

The College President, in consultation with the campus Emergency Management Director, NYS DOH, Schoharie County Health Department, SUNY Systems Administration, and other relevant partners, will determine the appropriate level of protective measures that will be employed for any given situation.

Federal, state, and local authorities may provide guidance in making the determination, and guidelines promulgated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) will be strongly considered.

Coronavirus

As recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NYS DOH, and the local health department, all faculty, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and lessees, are required, when acting in any official capacity as an employee or student on campus or off-campus, to:

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- **Wear face masks whenever indoors and in all instructional spaces, regardless of location. This applies to all individuals, including students, employees, auxiliary workers, vendors, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status.**
- **The only instances in which face masks are not required to be worn are when alone in one's own residence hall room, office or personal workspace, OR while seated and actively eating or drinking in a designated dining area.**
- **Masks should be worn by everyone when outside when unable to socially distance from others.**
- **Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, must observe proper social distancing measures whenever possible.**

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- Employees who are unable to wear face coverings due to a medical or other health condition should consult with Human Resources to discuss reasonable accommodations.
- Alternatives to cloth face coverings may be provided as an alternative if accommodations are needed.

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

Procedures: Units and Persons Affected

All employees, students, auxiliary organizations (Research Foundation, College Auxiliary Services), contractors, volunteers, lessees, and campus visitors.

Failure to Comply

Failure to comply may result in prosecution for any applicable violations of New York State law, rules, regulations, and/or orders. Certain additional actions may also be appropriate:

For students, failure to comply may result in a disciplinary referral to the Student Conduct Office for further action and/or removal from on-campus housing.

For employees, failure to comply may result in referral to Human Resources Office for review and resolution in accordance with their collective bargaining agreements, including progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination.

For visitors, lessees, revocable permit holders and contractors, failure to comply may result in removal of authorization to be on campus property and/or termination of the applicable lease/permit/contract.

Reporting and Enforcement

Criteria for violations of this policy are subject to a continued New York State Disaster Declaration and Executive Orders of the Governor of the State of New York. All persons on campus share a responsibility in ensuring compliance as we all have a duty to keep each other safe. Violations will be attempted to be resolved through educational conversations and voluntary compliance whenever possible. As a last resort, persistent violations may be referred for student disciplinary action, employee Human Resources action, and/or referral to the University Police for potential criminal action.

Definitions

Social Distancing: a “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home by staying at least six feet from other people, not gathering in groups, staying out of crowded places, and avoiding mass gatherings of any size.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that

cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Personal protective equipment may include items such as gloves, safety glasses, respirators, or face coverings.

Responsibilities

All campus community members (students, faculty, staff, Residence Halls - Common areas of residence halls will require the wearing of face coverings under the guidelines contained herein.

Related Procedures - Department and Unit Implementation

Supervisors are responsible for implementation of the following modifications to protect the health of their employees.

- Offices (single occupancy) - Space will be evaluated to ensure that at least six feet of distance exists between the entrance and the occupant while seated at their workstation.
- Offices (double occupancy or more) - Space will be evaluated to ensure that at least six feet of distance exists between the entrance and any occupant as well as between each occupant while seated at their workstation. In instances where the workstation cannot be reconfigured to accommodate six feet from the entrance, Facilities and Emergency Management should be consulted.
- Restrooms (single occupancy) - No modifications are required for the single occupancy restrooms. However, the waiting area outside of a single occupancy restroom will be evaluated to determine if signage is required to promote social distancing.
- Meeting spaces - Conduct meetings remotely using existing campus technologies such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, the telephone, etc. whenever possible. When such methods are not possible and in-person meetings are utilized, face coverings must be worn by all participants, and social distance must be maintained.
- Break rooms and common areas - Social distancing and cleaning is the responsibility of those utilizing the space.
- In instances where physical distancing is not possible, approval for further corrective action or modifications must be submitted in this order: the employee consults with supervisor, supervisor conducts and submits a needs assessment to Dean or division's vice president. Deans and VP will submit needs assessment to Emergency Management and Facilities. Any modifications or physical barrier needs will be provided by Facilities. No department is to purchase any products without prior approval.

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- **Personal Protective Equipment**

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- When the wearing of PPE (face coverings) is required in response to a pandemic or other health emergency, the following guidance will be followed. Face coverings will be made available to faculty, staff, or students. Requests may be made by emailing University Police at Unipol@cobleskill.edu.

Use of Cloth Face Coverings

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people, whether they are vaccinated or not, who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain will help slow the spread of the virus. It is critical to emphasize that maintaining six foot social distancing EVEN WHILE WEARING A FACE COVERING remains important to slowing the spread of the virus.

Individuals may wear their own store bought or homemade cloth face mask if they so choose, or the campus will provide a suitable one. Instructions on making a cloth face covering can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

Cloth face coverings are preferred over disposable masks since cloth face coverings can easily be washed and reused. This will cut down on the demand for a critical resource that is used by healthcare workers and first responders. Neck gaiters and bandannas are not recommended forms of face coverings.

If in receipt of a disposable face mask, it is important to understand that they are intended to be worn only once. However, due to supply shortages extended use of disposable masks is encouraged.

Disposable masks should be replaced after five days of continuous use or if it becomes damaged or soiled. Proper guidelines should be followed when extending the use of the mask.

How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering

1. Wash your hands with soap and water vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
2. If the face covering has ear loops, put one loop around each ear.
3. If the face covering has ties, pick up the mask by the ties and tie the upper ties behind your head with a bow.
4. If the face covering has a lower tie, then once the mask is fitted to the bridge of your nose, tie the lower ties behind your head with a bow.
5. Make sure the face covering is completely secure. Make sure it covers your nose and mouth so that the bottom edge is under your chin.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water vigorously for at least 20 seconds.

Removing the Face Covering

1. Wash your hands before removing the face covering.
2. Do not touch the inside of the face covering (the part over nose and mouth). It may be contaminated from your breathing, coughing, or sneezing.
3. Untie or remove the ear loops and remove the mask by the straps.
4. Wash after using the washing machine with hot water and completely dry on medium or high heat.

Procedure History:

Revision Date	Author/Owner	Description of the action on the revision date
June 1, 2020	Richard Bialkowski	Adoption of the procedure
July 22, 2020	Richard Bialkowski	Revised sections to include wearing of face coverings in designated places
Aug 3 rd , 2021	Richard Bialkowski	Revised to include universal masking indoors requirement