

## **Guidance on limited re-use of facemasks**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated that mask can be reused in a limited way during the nationwide shortage that is occurring, if those masks are handled properly.

When you plan to re-use facemasks, be careful not to touch the outer surfaces of the mask, and remove the mask carefully and deliberately. Do not reuse a face mask if it is soiled, damaged, or it becomes hard to breathe through.

### How to put on a barrier/surgical face mask correctly:

- Wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer, before touching the mask
- Hold the mask so the stiff bendable strip is on top and the colored part is facing outward
  - If the mask has **EAR LOOPS**, grasp each ear loop and place a loop around each ear.
  - If the mask has **TIES**, grasp the top ties on each side and bring the stiff bendable strip to the middle of the bridge of your nose; wrap the top ties around to the crown of your head and tie in a bow. Then grasp the lower ties and bring these to the back of your neck and tie again in a bow. **DO NOT KNOT THE TIES** - you need to be able to remove the mask without tearing them.
  - If the mask has **ELASTIC BANDS**, use one hand hold the mask to your face with the mask starting about the middle of the bridge of your nose; with the other hand, take the top elastic and stretch it around to rest at the crown of your head. Then take the lower elastic and stretch it around to rest at the back of your neck.
- After the mask is secured to your face, adjust the mask so it rests in the middle of the bridge of your nose, pressing down on the bendable strip to fit your nose, and pull the bottom of the mask so it goes to the bottom or below your chin.
- After your mask is adjusted and fitting well, **DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE OR MASK AGAIN**, until you need to remove your mask. If you have to adjust your mask again you must wash your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer, before and after any adjustments.

### How to wear a barrier/surgical mask properly:

- The mask **MUST** cover your nose and sit about the middle of the bridge. Do not lower the mask so it only covers your mouth.
- Do not remove/lower/raise the mask to talk on the phone, to eat or drink around anyone within a 6ft radius, or for any other reason while you are in the Library
- If you cannot tolerate wearing a mask the proper way, do not come into the Library.

### How to remove a barrier/surgical mask correctly:

- Clean hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer
- DO NOT TOUCH THE OUTER PART OF THE FACEMASK, only the ear loops, ties, or elastic bands.
- If the mask has **EAR LOOPS**, grasp one ear loop in each hand and at the same time, unloop the mask and pull away from the face
- If the mask has **TIES**, untie the bottom ties first, then untie the ties at the crown of your head while keep a hold of these ties so you can pull the mask away from your face
- If the mask has **ELASTIC BANDS**, grasp the bottom band from your neck and stretch and remove over your head. Then with both hands grasp the band at the crown of your head, stretching the band over your head and removing the mask from your face. The mask should NOT be dragged up and over your eyes when removing it.
- Soft/flat facemasks should be carefully folded so that the colored outer surface of the mask is held inward and against itself to reduce chances of you coming in contact with the contaminated surface during storage. The folded mask can be stored between uses in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container.
- Molded facemask can be stored in a clean sealable paper bag or breathable container
- Wash your hand with soap and water, or hand sanitizer

There is no proven method for cleaning of these types of masks. Lysol and disinfecting sprays can cause skin irritation if exposed for prolonged periods of time, and if masks are subjected to water or moisture, it will break down the integrity of the mask. Heating the masks in an oven is also not safe. Proper removal and storage of disposable face masks in a paper bag, NOT plastic as directed in the instructions above will help to ensure that they stay clean and re-usable.

According to the FDA re-use of barrier masks used to protect the wearer in a low risk transmission area (such as the Library) does not create a risk to the wearer. Proper removal and storage (in a paper bag, NOT plastic) of these masks as directed above will help ensure they stay clean and re-usable.

### How to wear and use cloth face coverings properly

For the general public, the use of cloth face coverings, barrier masks and other similar products can successfully and with relative ease block outward transmission of the virus at the source. The CDC has a [fact sheet](#) that includes instructions that can help you make your own cloth face mask with items that you may have at home.

Instructions for putting on and taking off cloth masks varies by design and maker – follow the instructions provided with a cloth mask carefully. Cloth masks need to fit snugly over the nose and mouth so that movement of your head or neck will not raise or lower the mask causing you to constantly touch your face and mask to adjust. Cloth face coverings can typically be hand washed daily (as long as no filters are sewn in) and left out to air dry overnight.