



# USC University of Southern California

DT: January 5, 2022  
TO: USC Faculty and University Staff  
CC: USC Students  
FR: Deona Willes, MPH, CLS, Executive Director  
USC Environmental Health and Safety

Sarah Van Orman, MD, MMM, FACHA, Chief Health Officer, USC Student Health  
Division Chief for College Health, Keck School of Medicine of USC

RE: Updated Masking Guidance for Campus Environments

As many of you may know, the guidance on masking as a public health measure for mitigation of COVID-19 transmission has recently been updated by the [California Division of Occupational Safety and Health \(Cal/OSHA\)](#) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

Per these [revised guidelines](#) for workplaces, individuals on USC campus premises in locations where masking is required are now required to **wear medical grade masks**, which at minimum are surgical masks and may also include higher grade respirator masks (N95, KN95, or KF94). Campus premises where PPE is required include indoor common spaces, public areas, classrooms, libraries, offices, and laboratories (unless higher grade PPE is already specified). Faculty, staff, and students in clinical settings should follow guidance for health care settings as determined by the facility. If you are an employee who has been directed by USC Environmental Health and Safety to wear (and previously fit-tested for) a respirator mask as PPE for occupational safety, continue to wear this level of protection.

**Masking is most effective when there is both a good fit (no gaps, covering the nose, mouth, chin) and good filtration.**

The following items no longer meet the current requirements for masking: bandanas, neck gaitors, scarves, cloth masks (unless worn in combination with a medical mask underneath, for improved fit and additional layering.) Additionally:

- Masks with a one-way valve are not permissible.
- Wearing two medical masks, or a medical mask on top of a respirator mask, is NOT recommended.

This protocol will go into effect campus-wide on January 18; individuals are recommended to follow this guidance earlier if they are able to obtain supplies.

**Employees (faculty and staff)** are directed to contact their divisional/academic administrative unit for instructions on obtaining surgical masks for use at work.

**Students and visitors** who do not have medical grade masks may obtain one when entering campus at the entry points to the main gates. Employees may obtain masks at these points as well.

To obtain N95 respirators for voluntary use, employees should work with their department's authorized purchaser to place an order via the USC Bookstore PPE Portal. Alternatively, employees can request N95s according to the [EH&S Voluntary Use Guide Sheet](#). Students interested in wearing N95 respirators can purchase them at cost at the Bookstore on UPC and HSC campuses or by using their USC Card via the USC Bookstore PPE Portal ([register here](#)).

Thank you for your attention to this safety measure for our campuses. Questions may be directed to [covid19@usc.edu](mailto:covid19@usc.edu) or the phone line 213-740-6291.

