

Face Covering Requirement for Montana State University-Northern (MSUN) Employees & Visitors

MSUN requires employees and visitors (including service providers, contractors, vendors, suppliers, families, and community members) to wear face coverings in all University-owned buildings, property and at all University-sponsored events and activities, under the following conditions:

1. Indoors at all times, except...
 - a. when an employee is alone in their individual office or other space where permitted by official notice;
 - b. when an employee is required to wear alternate or additional personal protective equipment that covers the nose and mouth, as designated by area-specific safety protocols (lab or shop settings, etc.);
 - c. when eating or drinking in a situation where social distancing is practiced;
 - d. when alone in a vehicle or utility vehicle used for MSUN business; however, face coverings are required in vehicles used for MSUN business when there is more than one person inside the vehicle;
 - e. or when approved for accommodation through MSUN Human Resources;
2. Outdoors when social distancing of 6 feet or more between individuals cannot be met or when gatherings include 50 or more people.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, children under the age of two, those who cannot physically remove a face covering without assistance, or those who have requested and received a necessary accommodation are not required to wear face coverings.

To request an exception, employees or visitors should contact the MSUN Human Resources Director at suzanne.hunger@msun.edu or hr@msun.edu. Cowan Hall 208. 406.265.3568.

Requirement for MSUN Students

MSUN requires students to wear face coverings in all University-owned buildings, property and at all University-sponsored classes, events and activities, under the following conditions:

1. Indoors at all times, except...
 - a. when a student is required to wear alternate or additional personal protective equipment that covers the nose and mouth, as designated by area-specific safety protocols (lab or shop settings, etc.);
 - b. when alone (or with their assigned roommate) in designated residence hall room or within own apartment in student family housing;
 - c. when eating or drinking in a situation where social distancing is practiced;

- d. when alone in a vehicle or utility vehicle used for MSUN business; however, face coverings are required in vehicles used for MSUN business when there is more than one person inside the vehicle;
 - e. or when approved for accommodation through MSUN Accessibility Services.
2. Outdoors when social distancing of 6 feet or more between individuals cannot be met or when gatherings include 50 or more people.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, children under the age of two, those who cannot physically remove a face covering without assistance, or those who have requested and received a necessary accommodation are not required to wear face coverings.

Students seeking an accommodation should contact the MSUN Office of Accessibility Services: Johnna Antonich, johnna.antonich@msun.edu; 406.265.3533.

What Counts as a Face Covering?

Appropriate face coverings are those that cover the mouth and nose of the wearer. Following CDC guidance, effective face coverings include simple cloth masks, scarves, buffs, or bandanas. Based on CDC guidance, the most effective face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
- securely stay in place, covering the nose and mouth;
- include multiple layers of fabric;
- allow for breathing without restriction; and
- be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damaging them or changing their shape.

While not ideal, disposable, single use paper masks are also acceptable when another face covering option is not available. Unless in healthcare or other specialized settings, N95 or surgical masks should not be used as they are critical supplies and should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.

While plastic face shields are not considered a face covering under the guidelines outlined above, face shields may be used in instances where an individual can consistently and reliably maintain appropriate social distancing and where the University has expressly approved the use of the face shield instead of a cloth mask. Such instances may include, but not be limited to, ADA and other medical accommodations. If an individual is approved to use a plastic face shield, the shield should cover from above the eyes to below the chin to reduce the risk of the spread of respiratory particles. MSUN will allow face shields to be used by faculty when instructing a class and maintaining six-foot distance from other people. Other employees interested in wearing a face shield should contact MSUN Human Resources for approval. Contact Director of Human Resources at suzanne.hunger@msun.edu or hr@msun.edu. 406.265.3568.

Accountability

Students, employees, and visitors engaging in sustained, willful non-compliance may be directed to leave campus spaces, taken off duty, and in certain cases subject to disciplinary action.

For instances of non-compliance that are not covered by existing or new policies, practices, and protocols on accountability in the classroom and other learning settings, employees should share any concerns about non-compliance with their immediate supervisor or department/division head and students should share any concerns about non-compliance with a campus student affairs officer: Dean of Students, Corey Kopp, corey.kopp@msun.edu or 406.265.4113.

1. Beginning with the distribution of this document to employees and students, MSUN will clearly communicate the face covering requirement and accountability practices and protocols to students and employees so they are applied consistently to all classroom, learning, work, and other environments across campus. (e.g. consistent language addressing the face covering requirement should appear on all course syllabi).

2. Clarify existing, relevant campus policies and the extent to which they allow classroom instructors to manage their classroom learning environment by directing non-compliant students to leave the classroom and, if necessary, to end a particular class meeting in response to a disruptive or aggressive student.

3. Here is an outline of graduated accountability measures that match the intensity of non-compliance.

- In isolated, unintentional instances of non-compliance (e.g. a student forgetting to bring a face covering to class or employee forgetting to wear face covering in hallway) should be met with an opportunity to comply (e.g. reminding the student or employee the requirement and providing a single use face covering).
- On the other hand, repeated, willful non-compliance (e.g. a student who refuses to wear a face covering in a classroom setting, even after multiple requests and being offered a free face covering; or an employee who refuses to comply) can be addressed more directly (e.g. directing the student to leave the classroom space or ending the class meeting if the student refuses to leave; appropriate supervisor talks to the employee about the options that the employee has as well as the possible disciplinary measures).
- Repeated, willful non-compliance should be reported to the appropriate department/division head and may lead to disciplinary action as outlined in the Collective Bargaining Units and MSUN policies concerning personnel and employment; these policies can be found on the Human Resources webpage.
- Human Resources should be consulted if the non-compliance issue is with an employees.
- Dean of Students should be consulted if it is a matter of student non-compliance outside of a classroom setting.
- Employees should contact Human Resources Director or the Dean of Students if a visitor refuses to leave when asked to by an employee.
- If anyone feels an immediate threat they should dial 911 for the Havre Police Department.
- Any decisions regarding face coverings and disciplinary action involving students or employees are appealable to the Chancellor.

Training

The Covid-19 Response team will coordinate a training for employees that ensures they will have a clear understanding of MSUN's face covering requirement and accountability practices and protocols. The COVID-19 Response team will recommend communications for students so they are aware of the face covering requirements before the Fall 2020 semester.

Please note: These requirements will be updated as the COVID-19 situation changes and in accordance to any changing directives from local and state government officials; from Office of Commissioner of Higher Education and Board of Regents; from Center for Disease Control; or from the Chancellor of Montana State University-Northern.