

HS2

MWCC Best Practice Guidance Note – March 2021

Face Coverings

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This guidance note should be read in conjunction with the Construction Leadership Council guidance including their Site Operating Procedures (CLC SOP), currently at version 7 at time of writing and all applicable HM Government guidance relating to working safely during COVID-19. The MWCCs are all committed to working in accordance with these procedures and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#when-you-can-leave-home> and [Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/face-coverings)

Objective

This guidance note provides a set of best practice guiding principles and behaviours that builds upon previous best practice guidance note but specifically targeted at Face Covering provision.

These guiding principles represents the MWCC IPTs further commitment to 'I care, You Count, We Matter'. The health, safety and wellbeing of all staff stakeholders, the local communities in which we work, our supply chain and their families comes first whilst we will consistently apply our 4 values of Safety, Integrity, Respect and Leadership to COVID-19 controls and best practice.

As a government project, and to protect our reputational risk, it is important that we recognise the role we can play in helping prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

This guidance note should be taken as valid until further notice.

Face coverings do not overrule other controls such as hand hygiene and social distancing.

ALIGN

Balfour Beatty

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SYSTRA

COSTAIN

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EKFB

fusion

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Defining Face Coverings

- Face coverings are an important control measure for preventing further transmission of COVID-19 through asymptomatic persons.
- In the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, a face covering is something which safely covers the nose and mouth.
- Face coverings are not classified by the HSE as either Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)
- Face coverings are instead largely intended to protect others, not the wearer, against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of virus that causes coronavirus infection (COVID-19).

Exemption

- In line with government guidance, people may be exempt from wearing face coverings if they have an age, health or disability reason.
- In line with all guidance face coverings must be worn unless medically exempt.
- Those that are exempt from wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces should be asked to redesign their activities to avoid enclosed spaces or to work from home during alert level 5 to help reduce the likelihood of transmission.
- Where it is not possible to redesign activities, to avoid potential confrontation, anyone exempt from wearing a face covering should wear a green lanyard provided through their parent company/JV.

How to wear a face covering

- Government guidance is very clear on how to wear a face covering and can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

Face Fit Testing

- As Face Coverings are not PPE/RPE, Face fit testing is therefore not required to be given on any face covering provisions.
- Face coverings must be tight fitting and users should be instructed / provide with guidance on how to check that this is the case. (i.e. face covering moving in/out when breathing.
- If there are fitting concerns over face coverings not providing the necessary protection, then alternative coverings should be considered and provided.
- If operations require working within 2m, then a task review should be undertaken and if a face covering is deemed as a suitable control measure, then whilst not PPE/RPE,

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consideration should be given to issuing a face covering that can be face fit tested to provide the individuals with additional protection.

Wearing Face Coverings

- In accordance with The Use of Face Coverings in Construction, where workers on site are not required to wear Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) and their workplace (which may include welfare and changing facilities, site offices or site meeting rooms) meets all of the criteria below, their employer should make face coverings available and they should be worn in:
 - an enclosed space;
 - where social distancing isn't always possible; and
 - where someone can come into contact with others they do not normally meet.

Inside Buildings

- Face coverings should be worn at all times inside buildings.
- Eating/Drinking without a face covering should only be undertaken when seated (i.e. not whilst standing or walking around inside buildings – regardless of social distancing).

Travel

- Face coverings MUST be worn at all times when travelling on public transport.
- When travelling in private vehicles, there should be single occupancy unless:
 - You are part of a bubble / same household with the other occupant(s);
 - Or, there are partitions between the seats.

Issuing Face Coverings

- Face coverings will be issued free of charge to any person involved with MWCC.
- If face coverings are provided by IPT's they should be FFP2 /KN95.
- It is acceptable for people to bring/use their own face covering but this must be a minimum of 2ply minimum.
- Face coverings should be available to be used for personal use to support the strategy of reducing the risk of bring COVID into the workplace.

Assurance

- If people are using their own face covering, then they must be able to demonstrate it is at least 2 layers of fabric in compliance with UK Gov recommendations.

Duration of face coverings

- Disposable face coverings should be replaced daily (or as required).
- Re-usable coverings should be maintained and cleaned regular in accordance with supplier/manufacture instructions.

Protecting the Individual

- Traditional face coverings protect others and not the individual.
- MWCC contractors may wish to consider upgrading face coverings to protect the individual and therefore increase safety and minimise overall risk of bringing COVID-19 into the workplace.

Providing FFP Face Coverings

- Using Filtering Face Piece (FFP) masks as face coverings is acknowledged as giving increased protection to the individual as well as others.
- A hygienist should be consulted when selecting a FFP mask for use as a face covering.
- FFP coverings should not have a valve which can release unfiltered air back out.
- FFP1 are recognised as providing up to 80% additional protection and FFP2 up to 94% which is significantly more than the predicted 30-40% of face coverings.
- FFP2 face coverings are being recognised as industry best practice for giving the individual protection. This has recently been mandated in countries such as Germany, Austria and Australia.
- FFP3 face coverings should not be issued as face coverings.
- FFP3 masks where used as RPE can continue to be used and these scenarios do also therefore act as a face covering.

If any further clarification is required, then this should be sought through either line management or the local Health and Safety Manager.