

Information on Non-Medical Masks for Caregivers and Children or Youth in Care

June 8, 2020

Albertans are encouraged to wear non-medical masks in public when it is difficult to maintain physical distancing of 2 metres at all times. In support of caregivers, we are providing caregivers and children and youth in care with disposable *non-medical masks*. These masks are similar to those currently available to all Albertans at various fast-food drive-through locations.

Wearing a homemade or non-medical mask in public is another tool to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. It has not been proven that masks protect the person wearing it, but it can help protect people from being exposed to your germs.

Masks should complement – not replace – [other prevention measures](#). Continue physical distancing and good hand hygiene, and stay home when sick.

When to use a mask

- When it's difficult to maintain 2 metres distance from people for a prolonged period of time:
 - public transit and airplanes
 - grocery stores and pharmacies
 - hair salons and barbershops
 - some retail stores

When not to use a mask

- If it's dirty or damaged in any way
- If it gaps or doesn't fit well
- If it's been used by another person
- Children under 2 years of age
- Anyone that has trouble breathing
- When you are only with people from your own household

What to do

- Wash or sanitize your hands:

- before putting it on
 - before taking it off
 - after taking it off
- Tighten with ties or ear loops to reduce gaps
- Keep nose, mouth and chin covered at all times
- Remove if wet, torn or dirty and dispose in a lined garbage bin
- Store cloth masks in a sealed bag until it can be washed in hot, soapy water

What not to do

- Don't touch your face under the mask
- Don't touch the front of the mask – remove or adjust using the ties or ear loops
- Don't wear it under your nose or your chin
- Don't wear a wet, torn or dirty mask
- Don't wear the same mask for a long period of time – change when it becomes damp
- Don't share with another person

This link has more information on masks and how and when to use non-medical masks.

<https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx>

Thank you for your assistance with this important task as we begin our re-launch of regular casework practice