

## **PEI Civil Service Mask Protocol As of September 16, 2021**

**Effective Friday, September 17, 2021, wearing a non-medical mask is mandatory in all indoor public places in Prince Edward Island.** This precautionary measure will enable us to better protect each other and complement current modifications and safety protocols in place. Non-medical masks will be mandatory in all public spaces and include the following locations and spaces:

- Government buildings or offices where services are available to the public;
- Common and high traffic areas such as lobbies, reception areas, lunchrooms, stairwells or elevators in an office building;
- Stores and retail business;
- Spaces used to hold events, including conferences, conventions and receptions;
- Arts, cultural, entertainment, recreational, and sports facilities;
- Bus stations, ferry terminals, airports;
- Public transit, public passenger vehicles, taxis;
- Restaurants or drinking establishments (except when drinking or eating);
- Places of worship; and
- Common areas on university or college campuses.

Employees, clients and other visitors to Government buildings are to follow CPHO guidelines for wearing non-medical masks as outlined at <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/wearing-non-medical-masks-community> and are responsible for providing their own masks. Please be mindful when purchasing cloth masks that they are appropriate for the workplace.

It's important to ensure clients and others are advised of masking requirements before their arrival. The [Face Mask Required poster](https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/masks_required_poster.pdf) is available at [https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/masks\\_required\\_poster.pdf](https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/masks_required_poster.pdf).

While not required, if a service or operation identifies a need to have a supply of masks on hand and managers or directors require assistance in accessing or procuring non-medical masks, they should contact their respective Department Emergency Services Officer (DESO).

### **Exceptions**

Consideration will be given to individuals who cannot wear a mask due to certain health conditions and exceptions. Some individuals are unable to wear masks for various reasons. In some cases, these reasons may not always be visible to others.

Individuals who are exempt from wearing a mask include (but not limited to):

- Children under the age of 2;
- Children between the ages of 2 and 5 who cannot be persuaded to wear a mask;
- Anyone who cannot remove a mask without assistance; and
- Individuals with a valid medical reason that would prevent them from wearing a mask (most people with underlying medical conditions can wear a mask safely).

### **Clients and Other Visitors**

We are not expecting clients and other visitors to produce proof of exemption. We continue to ask for kindness, respect and understanding as we comply with these measures. Those arriving without a non-medical mask and who do not fall under an above-noted exception may be offered a disposable non-medical mask, if available. Regardless, they should still be served in a safe manner and the service or site may offer to provide the service over the phone or virtually where possible. We will be taking a cooperative approach to enforcement, relying on Islanders to make good decisions to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. Our primary objective is to gain voluntary compliance.

## **Employees**

If there is a medical reason why an employee is not able to wear a mask, they should discuss this immediately with their supervisor. The supervisor should seek support from their HR Manager regarding options.

**It is important to note** that some departments may have more specific safety requirements regarding masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) in place, given the nature of their services. This is not meant to supersede that direction.

### **Are masks still required if physical distancing can be maintained or barriers are present?**

Yes, masks are still required, even when physical distancing can be maintained or barriers (such as plexiglass) are present. While not our first line of defence, masks are an important added layer of protection. Masks supplement other public health measures but do not replace them.

### **I work somewhere the public does not have access to (such as a private cubicle), do I need to wear a mask?**

If the area in which you are working is not open to the public or in a high traffic area, including private office buildings and cubicles that are not accessible to the public, wearing a mask is not mandatory. However, even in private workplaces, masks are strongly encouraged, particularly when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Those working in locations not open to the public but in a high traffic area are to wear a mask.

### **In addition to masks, the following measures are most effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and must continue:**

- Staying home when ill; anyone experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 (<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/about-covid-19-coronavirus>) should contact their family physician, nurse practitioner, call 8-1-1 or visit one of the COVID-19 Drop-In Testing Clinics (<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/information-about-covid-19-testing-pei>).
- Physical distancing (2 metres/6 feet) at all times in your workplace and in common areas such as elevators, stairs, and lunchrooms, etc. This includes staggering lunch breaks, booking larger boardrooms, and limiting the number of people in the workplace at any given time where necessary by having people work remotely where possible, limiting public access where appropriate, meeting virtually or via teleconference, and offering virtual services, etc.
- Washing your hands and not touching your face with unwashed hands, covering your cough or sneeze with tissues or your sleeve, and enhanced cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.
- Stay informed by checking [www.princeedwardisland.ca/covid19](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca/covid19) regularly for CPHO updates.

### **Important to Note:**

Masks are effective in protecting those around the person wearing them, rather than protecting the wearer themselves. Good screening protocols, hand hygiene and physical distancing, where possible, remain vital in containing the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you all for your understanding and your compliance as we continue to ensure the safety of all during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**If you have further questions or concerns, please contact your Manager or your departmental HR Manager directly to discuss.**