

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY POLICY ON FACE MASKS

August 20, 2020 (updated August 27, 2021)

Victoria University is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its faculty, librarians, staff, students, visitors, and other community members. As part of this commitment, the University has implemented this temporary Policy requiring face masks to be worn in indoor spaces on University property.

This Policy will remain in effect as long as Ontario public health authorities and/or the Ontario government recommend or mandate that mask-wearing is a necessary measure to protect health and safety in indoor spaces.

Guiding Principles

1. The health and safety of the Victoria University community is the University's primary consideration as faculty, librarians, staff, and students engage in in-person on-site activities.
2. The University will continue to align its approach with applicable public health directives and guidelines and applicable provincial regulations and municipal bylaws.
3. The University is committed to accessibility and equity and is cognizant of the unique needs of different stakeholders to advance academic participation and community engagement.
4. Through its policies and guidelines, the University promotes a supportive and respectful environment, including accommodating individual health needs.
5. The University will apply a consistent approach where practicable.

Masks Requirement

1. **Wearing of masks:** Wearing of face masks is required in all indoor University spaces, as defined below, subject to any exceptions and accommodations provided in an accompanying administrative guideline.
2. **Application:** This Policy applies to all who are present on Victoria University property at any time and for any purposes, including employees, students, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.
3. **Definitions:**
 - a. Face mask means a medical or non-medical disposable or cloth mask that covers the nose, mouth and chin without gaping. In order to control the spread of respiratory droplets and aerosol particles, masks should be made of at least two layers of tightly woven fabric and, if possible, a middle filter layer. In order to support those for whom the ability to view the mouth is required for communication, the wearing of masks meeting these requirements but with a clear portion in the centre is permitted.
 - b. Indoor University spaces include lobbies, elevators, hallways and corridors, stairwells, washrooms, service desks, cafeterias and lunchrooms, common areas in residences, study lounges, meeting rooms, classrooms, research and teaching labs, shared or open space offices, and other locations used in common, particularly where practicing physical distancing may be difficult or unpredictable.
4. **Enforcement:** Enforcement will depend on the individual's relationship with the University, the nature of an incident, the place in which it occurred, and the impact on others in that place.

5. **Accommodation:** This Policy is subject to the duty to accommodate persons in accordance with the Ontario [Human Rights Code](#).
6. **Signage:** Signs indicating the requirement to wear face masks will be posted at University buildings, and other appropriate locations.
7. **Education:** The University will provide education to members of its community about the benefits of face masks in limiting community transmission of COVID-19, and with regard to personal privacy pertaining to accommodations for medical and other reasons.
8. **Occupational Health and Safety Act and other statutes:** This Policy should not be interpreted in a way that conflicts with or replaces existing requirements or obligations under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) or other applicable statutes and regulations.

The University, through the Office of the President may issue further guidance regarding expectations under and application of this *Policy*.