



Mandatory Mask Order: FAQs from the municipal sector

Effective August 24, 2020, in accordance with the [Special Measures Order \(Masks\)](#) wearing a non-medical mask that covers the nose and mouth will be mandatory in Newfoundland and Labrador for people five years old and above in public indoor places.

This includes in places where municipal or government services are offered, and other municipally owned/operated indoor spaces such as places where sports or recreational activities are practiced.

Requirements under the OHS Act and Regulations continue to apply for the protection of all workers. Click [here](#) to view the government website on **Non-Medical Mask Use in Indoor Public Spaces**.

What is a public indoor space?

A public indoor space is any space, workplace or otherwise inside, where two or more people are co-located and/or gathered.

Do I have to wear a mask at work?

Masks are required at work in common spaces such as hallways and when employees cannot physically distance by 6 feet from other employees. Masks are not required when employees are seated and are physically distanced from others. Requirements under the OHS Act and Regulations continue to apply for the protection of all workers. MNL recommends reading more information from Stewart McKelvey on mask wearing at work [here](#).

Do councillors/staff have to wear masks at in-person council meetings?

Once councillors and staff are seated (2 meters apart) for the meeting, masks can be removed. Masks must be worn at all other times when moving around indoor spaces. Guidance on specific places, as provided by Stewart McKelvey, can be found [here](#).

Do members of the public require masks when they attend a public meeting?

If members of the public attend a council meeting, they must wear a mask until they are seated 2 meters apart from others at the meeting. Masks must be worn at all other times when moving around indoor spaces. All other regulations concerning the size of the gathering must be followed.

If employees are fully covered by plexiglass barriers and their only interaction with members of the public is through slots, do they also need to wear masks?

If employees are completely separated via an appropriate barrier, the protection provided would be ok to permit them to not wear a mask. Discretion should be used. Requirements under the OHS Act and Regulations continue to apply for the protection of all workers.

Who is exempt from wearing a mask?

- **Children under the age of 5;**
- **People with physical or mental health conditions** – people whose particular physical condition or mental health prevents them from wearing a mask (please see [here](#) for further explanation of these conditions);
- **During treatments, services, or physical activity** where a mask must be removed, for the duration of the treatment, service or activity only;
- **Showing identification;**
- **Seated areas** – provided physical distancing of two metres can be achieved between individuals or bubbles and provided they wear a mask when moving around the indoor setting, masks are not required when individuals are seated, including in these places:
 - in the classrooms of a post-secondary educational institution,
 - in a place where activities or services of a religious, cultural, or entertainment nature are offered, and
 - in a restaurant, food court, or a lounge.

Is a doctor's note required for those individuals who are exempt?

The Special Measures Order (SMO) does not require individuals who are not able to wear a mask to provide medical documentation.

Related to this and given that we are still under a public health emergency, it is our understanding that employees are still exempt from providing a sick note to their employer when they stay home due to illness, as per earlier COVID guidelines.