

TITLE: Staff Face Covering Policy
POLICY NO.: POL-ADMIN-02-2020
APPROVAL DATE: August 12, 2020
EFFECTIVE DATE: August 17, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity and direction for the mandatory use of face coverings for all employees with the Township of West Lincoln. The procedures outlined in this policy are in compliance with the [Niagara Region By-law 2020-46](#) and shall be practiced in a consistent and appropriate manner.

Wearing a face covering is not an alternative to physical distancing. In addition to the implementation of this policy, the Township of West Lincoln will continue to follow essential risk mitigation principles and measures in order to keep staff members and the public safe.

Staff members are required to wear a face covering in any establishment, common workplace areas, municipal vehicles, and when meeting or serving the public.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff members (full time, part-time, casual, volunteers, members of council).

Definitions

Common Workplace Areas – means any area within an establishment which may be used by more than one employee at a time. This includes, photo copy rooms, lunch rooms, lobby, front counter, walkways/hallways, file and storage rooms, and committee rooms.

Establishment - means any enclosed space owned, occupied, operated or used by the Township of West Lincoln where members of the public are ordinarily invited or permitted access, either expressly or by implication, and whether or not a fee is charged for entry and shall include without limitation.

Face Coverings – for the purpose of this policy, face coverings are medical, non-medical or other face coverings such as a balaclava, bandana, scarf, cloth, or other similar item that covers the nose, mouth, and chin without gapping

Face Shield – a type of personal protective equipment that is made of see-through material which shields the face from substances

Screening – for the purpose of this policy, screening is a checklist that includes basic questions relating to COVID-19 symptoms

Procedure

1. Face Coverings

- 1.1. All staff members will be required to wear a face covering when physical distancing (two (2) metres) cannot be met or maintained as well as in any public enclosed establishment, common workplace areas, municipal vehicles (double occupancy or more), and when meeting or serving the public.
- 1.2. Staff members will be able to remove their face covering, when in their own workspace/cubicle/office or where protective barriers are placed.
- 1.3. All staff members will be provided with three (3) reusable face coverings at the expense of the Township. Staff are responsible for the proper maintenance of their workplace face coverings and must discard any damaged or defective face coverings when necessary.
- 1.4. Face coverings can be any medical or non-medical mask or other face covering such as a balaclava, bandana, scarf, cloth, or other similar items that covers the nose, mouth, and chin without gapping.
- 1.5. Face shields do not provide any filtering against respiratory droplets, therefore are not considered a substitute for wearing a face covering. If an individual chooses to wear a face shield, it is to be worn in addition to a properly fitted face covering.

2. Exemptions

- 2.1. If a staff member is unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability, they are to speak with their direct supervisor immediately.
- 2.2. Staff must be understanding and respectable when someone is exempt from wearing a face covering. As outlined within the [Niagara Regions Temporary Face Covering By-law](#) the following person(s) are exempt from wearing a face covering:
 - Children under the age of five (5) years old;
 - Person(s) who are unable to wear a face covering as a result of a medical condition or a disability pursuant to the Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, who is unable to put on or remove a face covering without assistance or for whom a face covering would inhibit the person's ability to breathe;
 - A person while consuming food or drink provided by a business that is permitted to operate under the Provincial Emergency Orders and provided that all other conditions of the Emergency Orders are met;
 - Person(s) while receiving services involving the face and requiring the temporary removal of a face covering provided such services are permitted to operate under the Provincial Emergency Orders and provided 2 metres distance is maintained from all other persons other than the person providing the service;
 - Person(s) engaged in a sport or other strenuous physical activity;
 - Person(s) assisting or accommodating another person with a hearing disability; and
 - Employees and agents for the owner or operator of the enclosed public space within an area not for public access, or within or behind a physical barrier

2.3. There are no requirements for people to provide proof of their medical condition or disability for a face covering exemption and staff members shall not ask for any proof.

2.4. If an individual requests to enter a facility and cannot wear a face covering, staff will provide additional measures to ensure the safety of all staff members and the public.

This may include the following:

- Alternative meeting arrangements if possible
- Additional cleaning measures
- Adjusted appointment times and additional number restrictions on bodies entering an enclosed space

3. Additional Screening

3.1. Active screening is required for all staff members with the Township of West Lincoln. This will be used for contact tracing and risk management and must be completed daily upon arriving to your scheduled workplace. Please follow the COVID-19 Screening Procedure for further instructions and direction.

3.2. Passive screening is present for any walk-ins, appointments, contactors, drop-in programs, pass-through entry and registered programs. Passive screening measures such as informational posters referencing signs of COVID-19 will be placed at every point of entry to remind people not to enter if they are showing any symptoms of COVID-19 or feeling ill.

3.3. Appointment bookings are encouraged during this time and can be done by booking a time and location through the Township's Outlook Calendar (your West Lincoln Email). Passive screening can be done by the staff member arranging the meeting, before the public member enters the facility. For additional information and direction view the COVID-19 Screening Procedure.

4. Enforcement

3.4. Staff members are to not engage in confrontations with public members who are not wearing and do not wish to wear a face covering.

3.5. The Townships primary focus is to promote awareness and to educate the public about the importance of wearing face coverings in enclosed public places and gain voluntary compliance. When a public member is seen without a face covering, staff are to be respectful and while maintain physical distancing, provide assistance such as, offering hand sanitizer, encourage them to practice physical distancing, offer alternative service delivery (if possible).

3.6. Township By-law Enforcement or Niagara Regional Police Service may respond to reports of significance or on-going non-compliance.

5. How to Properly Wear a Face Covering

5.1. When wearing a face covering:

- Immediately wash your hands before putting the face covering on, before adjusting it, before taking it off and after taking it off. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to wash your hands.

- Make sure the face covering fits well, covering your mouth, nose and chin. The face covering should fit your face, leaving no gaps on the sides.
- Make sure your face covering is secured to your head with ties or ear loops without the need to adjust frequently.
- Ensure that the pleats on the outside are facing down, if your face covering has pleats.
- Gently mold the metal strip over the bridge of your nose to ensure a close fit, if your face covering has one.
- Avoid moving the face covering around or touching the covering while using it.
- Do not share your face covering with others, even within your own household.
- Do not leave your face covering tucked under your chin, hanging from your ear, or on your forehead.

5.2. Replace the face covering as soon as it becomes damp, dirty, damaged or if it has shrunk after washing and drying.

6. Removing & Disposing of Face Coverings

6.1. Touching or constantly adjusting face coverings as well as not properly washing hands before putting one on or taking one off can increase risk of possible transmission and infection. The following steps should be taken when applying and removing a face covering:

- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based (70% or higher) hand sanitizer before applying or removing a face covering.
- Put the face covering into a bag to keep it separate from other items until it can be washed or thrown out in a lined garbage bin
- If your face covering has a removable, non-reusable filter, make sure to remove and throw it out before washing your covering.
- To wash the face covering, put it directly into the washing machine. Throw out the bag it was stored in. Wash your hands again with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after handling your face covering.
- Disposable face coverings should not be washed, reused or recycled and should be appropriately thrown away

Responsibility

The Township of West Lincoln will continue to follow essential risk mitigation principles and measures in addition to the face covering requirements. These measures include, but are not limited to the following:

- Physical Distancing (keeping 2 metres apart)
- COVID-19 Screening posters at all municipally owned facility entrances
- Personal preventative practices
 - Frequent hand hygiene, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, etc.
- Physical barriers between employees and the public
- Discourage people who are ill from entering the facility

Everyone is responsible for doing their part to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19.

Communication

This policy will be communicated with staff via email and alternative methods if necessary. All staff will be notified of any changes if and when amendments are applied. Any concerns with the implementation of this policy by any staff member are to be directed to their supervisor.

Related Policies and Procedures

COVID-19 Screening Procedure

Public Face Covering Policy

[Niagara Region Face Covering By-law](#)

References

[Niagara Region Face Covering Information](#)

[Public Health Face Covering Information](#)