

Facemask and Face Covering Use

Use of Facemasks and Cloth Face Coverings in the Food and Agriculture Sector During COVID-19

The CDC recommends that face coverings be considered when individuals are unable to maintain social distance of six feet or more. Many food bank and pantry partners (retail grocery and food warehouses) are now requiring employees and visitors to wear masks or cloth face coverings during their operational hours. This has led to questions from the Food and Agriculture Sector about what respirators, disposable facemasks, such as surgical or medical masks, or cloth face coverings are most appropriate for various settings. This fact sheet provides a quick reference to these items potentially worn by workers in the Food and Agriculture Sector. If, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, you were required to wear

a respirator or disposable facemask on the job, based on a workplace hazard assessment, you should continue to do so.

NOTE: Cloth face coverings are recommended for food bank and pantry workers. If you have trouble breathing or are unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance, cloth face coverings are not recommended.

When should I cover my face:

- When required by local authorities
- When required by food banks and partners
- In situations where social distancing cannot be effectively maintained

RESPIRATORS, DISPOSABLE FACEMASKS, AND CLOTH FACE COVERINGS:



Respirators

- Respirators are required equipment for workers performing some jobs in the Food and Agriculture Sector.



Disposable Facemasks

- Disposable facemasks act as a protective barrier to prevent splashes, sprays, large droplets, or splatter from entering the wearer's mouth and nose. The protective quality of disposable facemasks varies depending on type of material used to make the facemask.



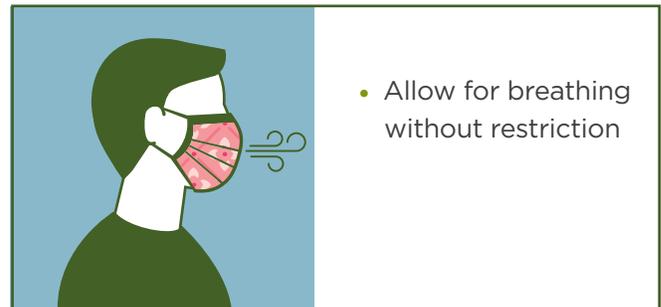
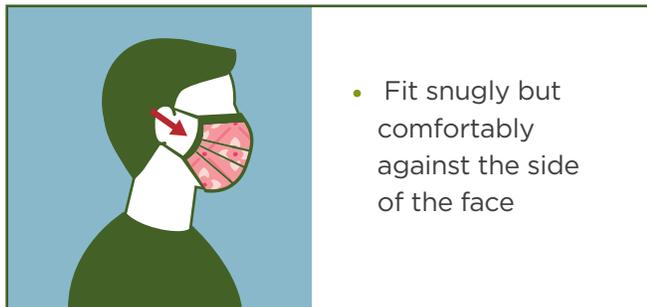
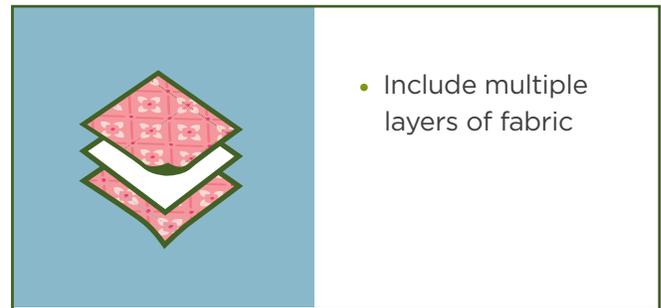
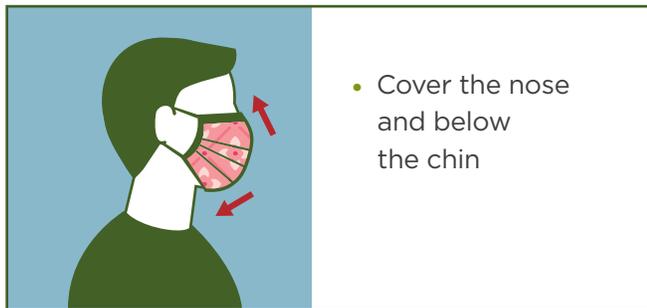
Cloth Face Coverings

- Cloth face coverings, whether provided by the employer or brought from home by the worker, are not respirators or disposable facemasks and do not protect the worker wearing them from exposures.
- Wearing them may help people who unknowingly have the virus from spreading it to others.
- Clean cloth face coverings should be used and changed out as needed.
- A cloth face covering is intended to protect people around you. If you are symptomatic or infected, please stay home.

Considerations for use of cloth face coverings

Consider the following if you choose to wear a cloth face covering to slow the spread of COVID-19:

PROPER WEAR AND CARE OF A CLOTH FACE COVERING



IMPORTANT: [Hand hygiene](#) is an important infection prevention and control measure. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after putting on, touching, or removing respirators, masks, or cloth face coverings.

The use of cloth face coverings in the work environment should be used in addition to other control measures, including engineering controls such as implementing social distance practices and physical partitions or barriers; and administrative controls such as frequent cleaning and disinfection protocols.

While this guidance was developed with information from the CDC, food banks should consult local public health agencies, the CDC COVID-19 site, the Feeding America COVID-19 site for updates, or other sources as needed. For more information see CDC's Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19.

If you have symptoms and feel sick, stay home.