

# POLICY ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) COMPLIANCE

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

It is critical that everyone follow the University's requirements to maintain the health and safety of our on-campus environment during this on-going COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this policy is to address the mandatory requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) which is required for all individuals on campus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PPE has been provided for all staff and faculty who are required on campus, as well as any students who will be participating in on-campus lab and instructional activities.

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## POLICY GUIDELINE

In order to continue to maintain necessary discipline around personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements, the University is adopting a no-tolerance policy for individuals and groups that do not adhere to USAHS PPE policies and procedures.

At a minimum, all individuals must adhere to the following requirements listed below.

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## INDOOR PPE REQUIREMENTS

A **three-ply, surgical/procedural face mask** must always be worn when entering/exiting campus and while on campus – including when going to the restroom, talking on the phone, on video conferences, walking in hallways, accessing common areas, and even when physically distanced from others. **USAHS will provide surgical/procedural masks for all students and employees who do not have them.**

- As an alternate to a three-ply, surgical mask, N95 or KN95 masks are approved to wear on campus.
- Cloth masks may only be worn over a three-ply surgical mask.
- Face masks will continue to be required regardless of COVID-19 vaccination or booster status.

The only exception to this practice is as follows:

- Individuals may temporarily remove their face mask if you are in a fully enclosed private room with four walls and with a closed door and this room is not utilized or

shared by others (i.e., a personal office). Cubicles **do NOT** qualify as a personal office/room due to the inability to fully restrict access to area/airspace.

- Individuals may not invite others into a private office space unless all individuals wear face masks at all times. It is best practice, to step outside the private room and have a physically distanced interactions with others, whenever possible, to decrease shared airspace.
- When eating or drinking while practicing physical distancing requirements (6 feet), masks may be temporarily removed and are to be immediately put back on following the actual act of consuming food or drinking fluids. Even when eating or drinking, a physical distance of at least 6 feet from all other individuals must be adhered to at all times when masks are removed.
- Whenever possible, it is strongly recommended to eat or drink in a physically distanced manner outdoors, in your private car, or in a private work room with a closed door, etc. Please do not congregate with others and avoid approaching colleagues while masks are removed to eat or drink.

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#### OUTDOOR PPE REQUIREMENTS

- When outdoors on campus, individuals are not required to wear face masks. For individuals who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19, however, wearing a mask outdoors is recommended in areas where there is a high transmission rate of the virus.
- It is recommended to practice social distancing and limit group gatherings while outdoors.

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#### LAB PPE REQUIREMENTS

All students and faculty are required to wear a three-ply, surgical/procedural face mask during a lab session. Additional PPE such as gloves and face shields are optional. Accommodations will be considered for those individuals who may have special needs and requests and provided the appropriate accommodations process is followed and approved via:

- Faculty and Staff - [Temporary Hardship Accommodation Request](#)
- Students - [accommodations@usa.edu](mailto:accommodations@usa.edu)

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#### NON-COMPLIANCE ACTIONS

The University has a zero-tolerance policy for any individual-- faculty, staff, students, visitors or external vendors--who does not comply with the PPE requirement.

Any individuals who are not adhering to these PPE requirements will be reported to the Campus Director or person in charge of the program or campus operations. These individuals or groups may be asked to leave campus for their non-compliant behavior and

will not return that day. If non-compliant behavior is observed during a lab, individuals will be asked to leave, and that entire session may be shut down. In addition, if repeat violations of this policy occur, the individual will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action. Students may be referred to the Professional Misconduct Committee.