

Personal Protective Equipment - Use of Face Masks

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has updated the guidance regarding the use of cloth face coverings in public settings. These face masks should be worn when “social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.”

In accordance with the updated guidance, UDOT is implementing the following guidelines in an effort to help protect our fellow employees when required to work in proximity to each other. While cloth face coverings are not shown to protect the person wearing it, they have been shown to reduce the possibility of the wearer unknowingly transmitting the virus to others. We are doing this to protect our co-workers.

Effective immediately:

- Where social distancing (i.e., distances >6 ft.) can be achieved while conducting work, face masks are **strongly recommended**.
- Face masks **are required** to be worn when working within 6 feet of any individual cannot be avoided; including where more than one individual will be in the same vehicle.
- If you have been exposed to someone that has COVID-19 or suspected of having it, you **are required** to wear a face mask at **all times for a period of 14 days while at work**. CDC guidelines will be followed in these cases (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>)

Why is UDOT Implementing This Guideline?

- We now know from recent studies that a significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms (“asymptomatic”) and that even those who eventually develop symptoms (“pre-symptomatic”) can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing—even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms.
- In light of new data about how COVID-19 spreads, along with evidence of widespread COVID-19 illness in communities across the country, CDC recommends that people wear a [cloth face covering](#) to cover their nose and mouth in the community setting. This is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) social distancing, frequent hand cleaning and other everyday preventive actions. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but may prevent the spread of the virus from the wearer to others. This would be especially important in the event that someone is infected but does not have symptoms.
- UDOT wants to ensure that we are doing our part to slow the spread by protecting the health of our employees, contractors and the general public with whom we may come in contact.

Who Does This Requirement Apply to?

This guideline applies to the following:

- All UDOT employees.
- All Contractors and all levels of Sub-Contractors
- All visitors and vendors

Where Do I Get a Face Mask?

UDOT has purchased 15,000 masks to be distributed throughout the department. The anticipated delivery date for the masks is April 20th.



*The masks are made of a combination of cotton and polyester and are **washable***.*

While we are waiting for the order to be received we are asking that employees take steps to comply with this guideline. Some options are:

- CDC has provided guidance on how to make a homemade mask (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf>)
- Wear a bandana that covers your mouth and nose
- A scarf covering the mouth and nose
- Dust mask

How Do I Safety Sterilize/Clean a Cloth Mask & How Often?

According to the CDC, washing the mask in a washing machine will suffice for ensuring they are properly cleaned.

Face masks should be washed regularly depending on the use. However, UDOT will be supplying enough masks (7 masks) to each employee that they should be able to wash them daily.

When removing the mask from your face, you should be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Place the mask in a sealable bag and wash/sanitize your hands immediately.