



Kingdom of Lesotho

INTERIM GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF NON-MEDICAL MASK IN PUBLIC PLACES

Public mask wearing is potentially beneficial as source control when worn by a person with respiratory symptoms when exposure to public spaces is unavoidable and physical distancing is not possible. However, some persons with the Coronavirus may still be healthy and asymptomatic (not having any symptoms) or may not know they are infected, unless tested for the virus. The purpose of wearing non-medical (cloth) face masks prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading respiratory droplets when talking, sneezing, or coughing, normally referred to as source control from infected person.

In addition, potential advantages of the use of mask by healthy people in public setting include reducing potential exposure to risk from infected person during the “pre-symptomatic” period and stigmatization of individuals wearing mask for source control.

This document serves as interim guidelines for use of non-medical masks beyond health care setting, to guide users on the proper use and care.

NB: Cloth face masks are only intended to help contain the wearer’s respiratory droplets from being spread. It is therefore important to note that, this is an additional prevention strategy that should not be promoted alone. It does therefore complement the key public health prevention strategies:

- 1. Maintain physical distancing**
- 2. Wash hands with soap and running water or hand sanitizer**
- 3. Cough/sneezing etiquette**
- 4. Do not touch mouth, nose and eyes**

Wearing cloth face mask therefore is recommended in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores, malls, public gatherings), commuters travelling in taxis and other forms of public transport. **Medical masks and respirators (N95) should be reserved for health care workers.**

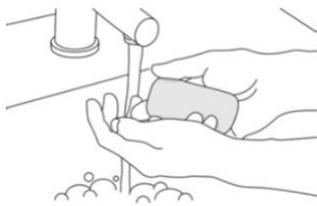
The features of masks should be taken into considerations by suppliers:

1. Number of layers
2. Breathability of material used
3. Water repellence/ hydrophobic qualities
4. Shape and fit of mask

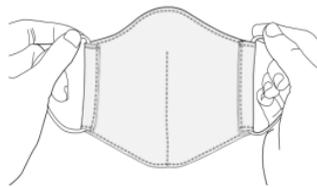
Other considerations for use of cloth masks

1. Masks must not be exchanged. Every individual should have their own mask not to share or exchange with others. (The mask could be marked on the ties)
2. Do not use cloth mask immediately after buying. Only use a mask that has been washed (using water and a mild detergent) and ironed.
3. Mask should be washed regularly (e.g., daily and whenever soiled). Masks should be washed with soap and hot water, rinsed thoroughly dried and ironed.
4. Every individual must have at least two cloth masks per person so that they can be able to wash one and have a clean one ready for use.
5. Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has difficulty in breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
6. Clean hands with soap and running water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately, before putting on, after touching or adjusting, and after removing the cloth face mask.
7. Place the mask carefully, ensuring it covers the mouth and nose, and tie it securely to minimize any gaps between the face and the mask.
8. Place the mask with the correct side facing your face- Masks are not reversible
9. While wearing, avoid touching the mask, adjusting when speaking, coughing or sneezing
10. Masks should be stored separately in dry clean area, bag or container, and not mixed.
11. Remove the mask using the appropriate technique: do not touch the front of the mask but untie it from behind.
12. Replace masks as soon as they become damp with a new clean, dry mask.
13. Do not torn mask

Steps for putting on a mask (Donning)



1. Ensure you are using a clean mask.
2. Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer before touching mask.



3. Pick up mask by touching ear loops (or ties) only.
4. Avoid touching mask itself.



5. Hold both ear loops and place a loop around each ear.
6. Fit mask around mouth, nose, and chin.

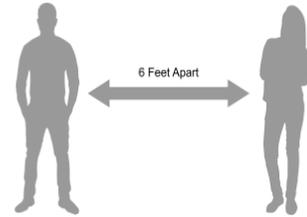
Precautions while wearing a mask:



- Mask should be either completely on or off; do not wear or rest under chin.
- Never wear mask inside-out.
- Remove mask if soiled or damp; do not reuse a single-use mask.



- Do not touch mask, face, or adjust mask while it is on.
- If you touch mask, wash hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer right away.



- Always follow physical distancing and good hygiene practices.

Removing a mask (Doffing)

Wash hands with soap and water first before removing a mask



1. Grab ear loops only and lift the mask off ears.



2. Pull bottom of mask off and away from mouth and chin.

NB: If the mask is to be re-used either maybe after eating right away, place it in a clean paper bag so it will not contaminate other surfaces and follow the steps for putting it on. Otherwise, wash separately immediately with soap and water, rinse and dry.

Masks Dos and Don'ts



Dr. Nyane Letsie

Director General- Health Services
Ministry of Health Lesotho