

Face coverings to be required in IRS facilities and workspaces

Effective April 27, 2020, the IRS will be recalling certain employees in mission-critical functions to handle work that must be conducted onsite. We are thankful for these employees that are coming back to their worksite to conduct the critical work for the IRS as well as the country. Throughout, the health and safety of our employees remains our highest priority. Therefore, we are implementing the following requirements regarding face covering based on recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings.

People have differing levels of concern associated with the current situation. As we return to the worksite, we need to respect and balance the concerns of others with the requirement to continue our mission-critical functions. Further, CDC is advising the use of at least having simple cloth face coverings to potentially slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, public health measure.

Accordingly, effective April 27, 2020, all individuals are to wear cloth face coverings while in IRS facilities and workspaces. Although the IRS is seeking to procure personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves, each IRS facility may not be able to initially procure the PPE for all employees immediately. Employees are therefore required to bring personal face coverings for their nose and mouth area when they come to work. As stated in the [CDC recommendations](#), these face coverings can be [fashioned from common household materials \(.pdf\)](#), such as clean t-shirts or bandanas. Materials used to create the covering must be conducive to a professional work environment and not contain any images or text that may be deemed inappropriate or offensive to others.

If an employee's workspace is a private office or an individual cubicle with barriers between other cubicles, the employee may remove their face covering while working in their individual workspace. However, employees must appropriately use their face coverings when in common spaces (such as, walkways, elevators, staircases, bathrooms, cafeterias) or entering or leaving their work facility.

We appreciate your understanding and respect for the concerns of both your colleagues and the agency in wearing a face covering until further notice. An employee who fails to adhere to the requirements in the memo may be required to return home until such time the employee adheres to these requirements. Please remember, the intent of this requirement is to ensure the health and safety of *all* our employees and their families.

Robin D. Bailey, Jr.
IRS Human Capital Officer

Kevin Q. McIver
Deputy IRS Human Capital Officer