

# FACE COVERING – UNIVERSAL MASKING

HELPFUL GUIDANCE FOR USE OF FACE MASKS WITH CHILDREN  
INFORMATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

[Guidance for Children wearing masks from the PA Department of Health](#)

## WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD NOT WEAR A MASK?

**The CDC does not recommended children under age 2 to wear a mask.**

It is also recommended that your child not wear a mask or other face covering if it is a possible choking or strangulation hazard, or if your child has trouble breathing with the mask. If your child is unconscious, incapacitated or unable to remove the cover without help, they should not wear a mask either. *Additionally, if your child is touching his or her face more frequently while wearing a mask, then they should not wear it because this increases their risk of being exposed to the virus.*

## Practical Guidance for assisting children and individuals with intellectual disabilities to cope with universal face covering guidelines:

- Desensitization: <https://paautism.org/resource/desensitization-mask-communication/>
- Social Stories: <https://paautism.org/resource/wearing-mask-social-story/>; <https://www.autism.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/face-mask-social-story.pdf>; and <https://famieltogetherinc.org/forms/covid-19/WearingAMaskStoryforChildren.pdf>
- Parent Guide: <https://rwjms.rutgers.edu/boggscenter/Links/documents/ParentGuide-HelpingYourChildWearaFaceMask-F.pdf>

**ASL Resource related to Universal Masking:** [CDC ASL YouTube](#)

**Persons with Disabilities generally are not exempt from wearing a face mask. Only those with a medical condition** that cause choking, a strangulation hazard, trouble breathing, incapacitated or unable to remove the cover without help are exempt from wearing a mask.

Covid-19 has been determined a threat to public health. ADA's title 3 regulation, applies where a threat to the public's health overrules not wearing a mask for someone with a disability in a public setting. Services or business transactions still need to be provided but in an alternate setting or way that mitigates the spread of disease.

## Important Considerations related to Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Persons who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing depend on facial cues and seeing lips moving to know someone is communicating. American Sign Language also depends on facial expression as part of the communication. This makes communicating while wearing a mask more difficult and burdensome for the Deaf. Clear masks are an option to assist with clearer communication in the presence of individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

## What about people with medical conditions who are not required to wear face coverings?

People who have medical conditions that put them in high-risk groups are advised to stay home as much as possible and avoid situations where they could be exposed to COVID-19.

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