

# COVID-19 Resources: Policy and Approaches for Interactions Regarding Face Coverings

Following municipal directives in both Peterborough and the Durham Region, and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community, all persons who enter or remain in the indoor spaces of Trent University, or in outdoor spaces where physical distancing cannot be achieved, are required to wear a face covering that covers the nose, mouth, and chin. Full details including a list of exceptions and exemptions can be found in the [full policy](#).

The University recognizes that there may be circumstances in which a Trent student, faculty or staff encounter another individual who may arrive or be inside the University without a face covering. The following guides are designed to help provide clear language and an empathic approach to these encounters.

## **Take the Trent Approach: Collegial, Caring, Conversational**

It is helpful to remember that Trent University favours prevention and education in the use of face coverings, as opposed to an enforcement approach. Courtesy and understanding are key to our efforts to maintain a safe, healthy and collegial campus for all, especially at a stressful time that presents new challenges for all of us. Being conversational instead of confrontational can turn an encounter about a face covering into a moment that helps someone to feel part of a caring campus community.

## **How to Talk About Face Coverings**

It can be awkward and intimidating to ask people to physically distance or to wear a mask. If someone is unable to wear a mask, we encourage everyone on Trent's campuses to maintain physical distancing, and respect that some individuals may have health or other issues that prevent them from wearing a face covering. It is important to understand that not all people are able to wear a mask, and for privacy reasons, we cannot ask someone why they are not wearing a mask.

When engaging in a conversation, it is helpful to provide reasons for why you are asking them to wear a mask or to physically distance. Reasons can be personal, or community-related. Some helpful examples are as follows:

### **PERSONAL**

I am worried about my health/I have a relative at risk

Ex. "Do you mind standing back so we're two meters apart? I have an older relative who's at risk and I want to protect them."

#### COMMUNITY

This will help keep us all safe/This will help cut down COVID transmission

Ex. "Let's make sure that we give enough space in order to keep everyone on campus healthy and safe./Did you know that masks are available at the Student Support Hubs?"

### Key Talking Points: Scenarios Involving Face Coverings

The scenarios below present potential interactions that you may have regarding face coverings at Trent University. Key talking points have been included to help you enter into a courteous and collegial conversation should you find yourself in any of the following various scenarios.

<b>Scenario:</b> Student, visitor or employee arrives or is inside without a face covering
<b>Interaction Key Points</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Remember that the emphasis is on education, not enforcement – while you can suggest that others wear a mask, you cannot ask why they are not wearing a mask. You can instead be informative, and let people know that masks are available at Student Support Hubs. <b>Talking lead point: "If you need a mask, disposable masks are available at nearest Student Support Hub"</b> – for reference, hubs are located in: College Offices; Blackburn Hall; Bata Library; Student Centre; Athletics Centre; DNA Building; and Trent Durham</li><li>▪ Keep in mind exemptions from policy and that no person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in the policy.</li><li>▪ If they continue to enter without wearing a mask, remind them that they must physically distance from others by at least 2m while on campus. <b>Talking lead point: "Physical distancing is an important way to help stop the spread of COVID-19. I would appreciate it if you would give us some space so we can stay two meters apart."</b></li></ul>

<b>Scenario:</b> Student, visitor or employee is exempt from wearing a face covering
<b>Interaction Key Points</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Remember that the emphasis is on education, not enforcement – while you can suggest that others wear a mask, you cannot ask why they are not wearing a mask.</li><li>▪ No person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in the policy.</li><li>▪ Remind exempt individuals they must still maintain physical distance of at least 2m and practice safe hygiene practices. <b>Talking lead point: "I recognize that you aren't able to wear a mask. To keep us both safe, let's ensure we follow physical distancing guidelines and stay two meters apart."</b></li><li>▪ Remind employees that they may be able to work remotely if possible, and to consult manager/supervisor. <b>Talking lead point: "I know some employees are continuing to work remotely or from home at this time. Since you aren't able to wear a mask, perhaps this would be a good option for you. Have you spoken with your manager?"</b></li></ul>

- Depending on exemption, contact HR for accommodation.

**Scenario:** Student, visitor or employee removes the face covering for any other purpose other than eating or drinking, prior to exiting the premise

**Interaction Key Points**

- Remember that the emphasis is on education, not enforcement – while you can suggest that others wear a mask, you cannot ask why they are not wearing a mask
- Remind them that they must physically distance by at least 2 m while on campus. **Talking lead point: “Physical distancing is a great way to help stop the spread of COVID-19. If you are unable to wear a mask, we will need to keep two meters apart.”**
- Keep in mind exemptions from policy and that no person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in the policy.

**Scenario:** Student, visitor or employee refuses to wear face covering, and also does not physically distance themselves from others

**Interaction Key Points**

- Remember that the emphasis is on education, not enforcement – while you can suggest that others wear a mask, you cannot ask why they are not wearing a mask
- Remind student, visitor or employee of the Mandatory Use of Face Coverings to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 policy. **Talking lead point: “To keep us both safe, the University requires the wearing of face coverings or following physical distancing and staying two meters apart if that is not possible.”**
- Call Human Resources or Student Affairs to discuss next steps to determine if progressive discipline or follow up under the Student Charter is appropriate.

**Scenario:** Student, visitor or employee becomes aggressive about the new requirement

**Interaction Key Points**

- If you, or anyone else, are in immediate danger, call 911 then contact Campus Security at 748-1333(Peterborough) or 435-5111 (Durham) at once.
- Emergency phones, yellow in colour with the word “Emergency” in large blue letters, can be used to contact security if someone becomes aggressive.
- Report the situation to your supervisor or the next level of supervision if your supervisor is involved.
- Workplace violence and harassment will not be tolerated at Trent University. Trent will take all reasonable steps to protect employees from workplace violence and harassment and will respond appropriately to all incidents and complaints in a fair and timely manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned unless disclosure of identifying information is necessary for the purposes of protecting. [Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy](#)

**Scenarios Involving Requests from Additional Information**

**Scenario:** Student, visitor or employee wants more information about the policy

**Interaction Key Points**

- Direct student, visitor or employee to the Mandatory Use of Face Coverings to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 policy, which will be posted on all H&S boards and at Student Hubs. **Talking key point: “The University has pulled together some really helpful resources on the Trent Forward website, including the full face mask policy. Be sure to check it out at [trentu.ca/trentforward](https://trentu.ca/trentforward).”**
- Employees can speak with their supervisor
- Employees can speak to their [Joint Health and Safety Committee](#) Representative
- Employees can speak to [Human Resources](#)
- Employees, students, and visitors can visit the Trent University [COVID-19 website](#)
- Employees, students, and visitors can visit the [Peterborough Public Health](#) website or [Durham Region Health Department](#) website

**Scenario:** Student, visitor or employee asks about the availability of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol concentration)

**Interaction Key Points**

- Direct to fixed hand-sanitizer stations located at the main entrances for all buildings, in large common spaces, as well as inside all classrooms that are approved for use in fall 2020. **Talking lead point: “The University has added a bunch of sanitizer stations in all buildings. You can find the nearest one [\[here\]](#).”**