

Members. We are here to support you.



On Thursday 6th August 2020, The Northern Ireland Executive announced that the use of face coverings in certain indoor settings will be mandatory from Monday August 10.

Face coverings should be worn in shops and other enclosed spaces and no one should delay adopting this crucial measure. It will help to protect you and others.

The Executive has this week launched a public information campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of face coverings

The 'Wear One for Everyone' campaign will be rolled out over the coming weeks and will help inform the public why they must wear a face covering to help stop the spread of Coronavirus and save lives.

Most people carrying the virus don't know they have it and can infect others unintentionally. Wearing a face covering can help to prevent this from happening. The campaign will urge people to think carefully about the risk they pose to loved ones and others by not doing so.

Hotel Guidance on Face Coverings: 6th August 2020

Face coverings are only **mandatory** on public transport, in shops and in shopping centres.

Staff are exempt from having to wear face coverings.

Restaurants including restaurants in hotels are explicitly excluded in the regulations from requiring face coverings to be worn. It is now mandatory to wear a face covering:

- a) on public transport, in train stations and bus stations and
- b) As from the 19th August, in a shop or shopping centre. "Shop" means any building, room or other indoor establishment

Hotels are not specifically mentioned in the regulations apart from the above reference to hotel restaurants; therefore face coverings are not required for guests in a public place of the hotel e.g. the hotel reception. It will however be mandatory for guests to wear face coverings if for example a guest enters a golf shop located at a hotel resort or if the guest visits the hotel beauty salon that permits guests to attend without prior appointment. If however the beauty salon operates on an appointment only system where attendance can be regulated, then face coverings are not mandatory.

Hotel staff are not specifically highlighted in relation to the wearing of face coverings, but it should be considered dependent on their role.

which is open to the public in whole or in part and is used wholly or mainly for the purposes of retail sale or hire of goods or services. This not only includes ordinary day to day shopping for items such as clothes, food or electrical goods, a face covering is required in any other indoor place where goods or services are available to buy or rent. This includes, for example, a bookmakers, a food takeaway business, a dry cleaner etc.

The wearing of a face covering in these settings is mandatory unless you have a reasonable excuse

Please note that this advice may change as intelligence and regulations on the virus evolve. It is also important that hotels carry out a regular risk assessment and take into account customer and staff sentiment on this matter.

Full details and updated information:
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-face-covering>

FAQS

Do all staff have to wear face masks now at all times if they are not behind a screen?

Exceptions exist to the requirement to wear face coverings. In particular, they are not required to be worn: by a person responsible for a relevant place (e.g. owner, proprietor, manager, tenant of a shop), an employee of that person acting in the course of their employment or any other person providing services in the relevant place under arrangements made with a person responsible for a relevant place;

Do guests have to wear masks whilst moving about the hotel?

It is not mandatory, You are strongly advised to use face coverings in all indoor public spaces where 2m social distancing is not possible. Guests are strongly advised to maintain social distancing and hygiene measures

Do those attending meetings have to wear masks

Indoor environments are still higher risk than outdoor meetings therefore you should follow public health advice and limit the duration of visits; ensure good ventilation; maintain good hand hygiene; and practise social distancing where possible. The use of a face covering is also strongly advised.

4. Do we refuse entry to those who do not have masks on ?

If a person does not have a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering, then if a business has a face mask policy they can refuse entry onto private premises. Enforcement is a matter for the police or other specified persons.

It is important to be aware that there are circumstances that make it difficult for some people to wear face coverings. In these circumstances people may have a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering in a shop or shopping centre

It is therefore important that you respect these individuals and remember that the reasons for not wearing a face covering may not always be visible.

If you are unable to wear a face covering you will not be required to provide evidence that you have a reasonable excuse. However if you do have a reasonable excuse it is recommended that you co-operate and assist with any such requests e.g. from a constable, shop owners, transport operators etc. as much as possible.

Do wedding guests have to wear masks outside eating and drinks?

Places and premises where the Face Coverings Regulations explicitly do not require face coverings to be mandatory include:

- c) in restaurants including restaurants and dining rooms in hotels or members' clubs; cafes, including workplace canteens; bars, including bars in hotels or members' clubs; public houses;
- d) in any area within or adjacent to a shop where seating or tables are made available by that business for the consumption of food and drink on the premises by customers of that shop

Do customers in a restaurant (or bar which serves food) need to wear masks when away from the table, eg when going to the toilets?

Same as 2 above

7. Do those not wearing masks have to provide a certificate of exemption?

This is currently not a requirement and might be useful to for premises to have procedures to deal with this request and also to answer questions in relation to their policies and risk assessments in relation to the wearing of face coverings.

Northern Ireland Hotels Federation
The McCune Building, 1 Shore Road, Belfast BT15 3PG
T 028 9077 6635 E office@nihf.co.uk W nihf.co.uk