

Face Coverings Required at Southeast Beginning July 13

Face coverings will be required at Southeast Missouri State University beginning July 13 as a significant measure to help mitigate transmission of COVID-19. These guidelines, which are subject to change, are available [online](#).

The announcement was made following input from the University's Emergency Response Team, which has been meeting regularly since March under the auspices of the Emergency Operations Center to evaluate all aspects of COVID-19 on the University community and to provide guidance on navigating the pandemic and its impacts across the institution.

University officials say face coverings are required, particularly due to widespread sustained community COVID-19 spread in Cape Girardeau County, especially among the 20-29-year-old age group. Face coverings are expected to help slow the spread of this virus both in the county and across southeast Missouri and to protect the safety of Southeast students, faculty and staff, as well as visitors and community members.

More specifically:

- Face coverings must be worn by faculty, staff, students and visitors while in buildings unless alone in an office or room without others present, in addition to maintaining 6 feet of social distancing, if possible.
- Students living in any residence hall or university owned housing must wear a face covering whenever they are not in their assigned room or suite. This includes walking in common hallways, in lounges, laundry room, or other common areas.
- Face coverings must also be worn inside University vehicles (including shuttles) if more than one individual is present in the vehicle.
- Face coverings must be worn outdoors on University property if the recommended 6 feet of social distancing cannot be maintained, except when outdoors in a family unit. "Family unit" is defined as roommates, suitemates or members of the same household.
- Individuals dining on campus must wear a face covering in service areas and dining rooms, except during eating.
- Cloth face coverings are recommended but additional types of face coverings such as the disposable variety will suffice if a cloth mask is not readily available.

Exceptions:

Exceptions to this guidance, other than those listed below, must be requested by a division executive and approved at the Executive Staff level.

- If a person is not able to wear face coverings due to health or ADA concerns, then alternatives must be made available to those individuals. Affected individuals should also consult with their physicians before wearing a face covering. Students with health or ADA concerns should contact the Dean of Students at (573) 651-2524 or deanofstudents@semo.edu for assistance. Faculty and staff with health or ADA concerns should contact Human Resources at (573) 651-2206 or humanresources@semo.edu for assistance.
- Individuals engaged in indoor or outdoor physical activity are not required to wear a face covering but are encouraged to maintain social distancing, if possible.
- Pursuant to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), children under the age of 2 should not wear face coverings.

Availability of Face Coverings:

- Face coverings will be made available to faculty and staff who need them. Faculty will also be provided clear face shields which can be worn in the classroom to allow for lip reading and for the easier projection of their voice. More information will be forthcoming on the distribution of face shields.
- Two cloth reusable face coverings will be provided to students at the start of the semester. Information will be provided to all students, faculty, and staff on proper use, removal and washing of cloth face coverings.
- Departments will make face coverings available to visitors if they do not have their own.

Those with questions on this guidance should email COVID19@semo.edu.

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