



## COVID-19 FAQ's for Building Trades Union Members

The safety of Building Trades members is our top priority. The Minnesota Building and Construction Trades continues to monitor the impacts of the coronavirus and the disease COVID-19 on the Minnesota Construction Industry. We have developed the following questions and answers to help union members better understand their rights during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### FACE COVERINGS

#### When must a construction worker wear a face covering at work?

- **Workers must wear a face covering:**
  - In an indoor business or public indoor space, including office spaces.
  - When working outdoors where social distancing cannot be maintained.
  - When entering another person's living unit for a business purpose.
- **Workers may remove the face covering:**
  - When alone, in an office, a room, a cubicle with walls that are higher than face level when social distancing is maintained, **a vehicle, or the cab of heavy equipment or machinery, or an enclosed work area**. In such situations, the individual should still carry a face covering to be prepared for person-to-person interactions.
  - Where wearing a face covering would create a job hazard.
- **If workers cannot wear face covering:**
  - If workers are unable to wear face-coverings due to a medical/physical limitation, or mental health condition, alternative protections must be provided.
- **The use of face-coverings is not a substitute for social distancing where social distancing can be achieved and/or maintained nor does it replace necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).**

#### What if I can't safely wear a face covering?

- Face shields may be an alternative for people who cannot wear masks due to medical or other conditions. Where cloth face coverings are not safe or appropriate in the work environment or during certain job tasks because they could become contaminated or exacerbate heat illness, employers can provide PPE, such as face shields and/or surgical masks, instead of encouraging workers to wear cloth face coverings.

**Does my employer have to provide me with a cloth face covering?**

- Employers must provide all necessary PPE. However, cloth face coverings are not considered PPE and are not intended to be used when workers need PPE for protection against exposure to occupational hazards. Therefore, employers are not required to provide cloth face coverings. However, employers may choose to provide face coverings to workers to ensure they have one to wear and many unions have provided them to members.

**Additional Resources:**

Guidelines on Face Coverings at Work [Building Trades Fact Sheet](#)