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Dear business owner/operator,

I am writing to remind you of masking requirements for staff and customers. The Timiskaming Health Unit has received several complaints about masking non-compliance and I wanted to clarify the procedures that businesses must follow.

When are masks required by law?

Masks are required by law in all indoor public spaces and in indoor workplaces. This regulation applies to both staff and customers. In spaces not accessible to the public, masks are legally required when it may be challenging to maintain a distance of 2 meters from others. The Timiskaming Health Unit recommends also wearing a mask outdoors when physical distancing may be a challenge.

Who is exempt from wearing a mask?

The following individuals do not need to wear a mask or face covering:

- Children who are younger than two years old
- People who are unable to put on or remove their mask without help
- People who have a medical condition that inhibits their ability to wear a mask
- People who are receiving accommodations according to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* or the *Human Rights Code*.

See the [province's website](#) for the full list of exemptions.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's statement on human rights codes exceptions to public health measures, including religious and cultural exemptions, is: "The OHRC's policy position is that any requirements related to health and safety and COVID-19, such as wearing a mask, using other protective equipment or following a procedure to perform work safely, or to protect people receiving services or living in housing, do not generally cause concern under the *Code*." For more information, click [here](#). The Timiskaming Health Unit interprets this statement to mean that religious and cultural beliefs are *not* a reason that people can claim a mask exemption.

Am I required to permit unmasked people to enter my business?

Businesses may decide to refuse entry to exempt individuals. Staff must be protected when interacting with unmasked people. They can be protected by the use of impermeable barriers, distancing, or eye protection. There are no exemptions when it comes to protecting staff.

How should businesses accommodate people who cannot wear a mask?

Accommodations for people who cannot wear masks should be provided, if possible. Businesses may decide which accommodations to put in place for people who cannot wear a mask. These accommodations may include curbside pickup, placing orders curbside, and/or delivery. A doctor's note is not required for people to claim an exemption. For more information, visit the [province's website](#).

Does my business or organization need to have a policy about mask wearing?

Organizations are required to have a policy in place that mandates staff and members of the public to wear a mask indoors. Businesses and organizations are expected to implement and enforce their mask policy in good faith.

What enforcement is in place?

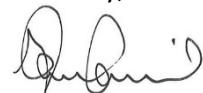
Most enforcement can be conducted directly by staff at a businesses, for example, asking customers to put on their masks or directing exempt customers to curbside pickup. Businesses should call the OPP if they encounter issues with uncooperative patrons that require additional enforcement support. Under the current provincewide shutdown, anyone who enters a business without a mask and is not exempt can receive a ticket. For more information about this regulation, click [here](#).

Resources

- Poster: [Mask or Face Covering Required](#)
- [Sample Mask Policy](#)

If you have any questions, please refer to the links above or contact the Timiskaming Health Unit at 1-866-747-4305.

Sincerely,



Dr. Glenn Corneil

Acting Medical Officer of Health/CEO