

COVID-19 Pandemic: School Mask Program Distribution of Cloth Face Masks

Objective

The Administration is working to support safe school reopening for students, teachers, and staff. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be providing up to 125 million cloth masks to states for distribution to schools. The Administration intends for these masks to support students, teachers, and staff in public and private schools reopening, with an emphasis on students who are low-income or otherwise with high needs and schools providing in-person instruction.

Background

Schools are an essential part of the infrastructure of communities, as they empower children with the knowledge and skills needed for a fulfilling future, provide safe supportive learning environments for students, employ teachers and other staff, and enable parents, guardians, and caregivers to go to work. Schools also provide critical services that help to mitigate health disparities, such as school meal programs, social and behavioral development opportunities, physical activity, and mental health services. Communities should make every effort to support the reopening of schools safely for in person learning in the fall.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published guidance on July 23, 2020 that suggest students should wear face masks during in-person schooling as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when students wearing masks cough, sneeze, talk or raise their voices. By providing these face masks for students, teachers, and staff, the U.S. government can help make sure that obtaining a face mask is not a barrier to receiving an education.

Distribution

The Administration will send packages of adult-sized and youth-sized cloth masks to state departments of health for distribution to schools throughout their states. Each package contains 5 reusable and washable [cloth face masks](#). HHS anticipates that these face masks will be distributed throughout the month of September.



State Allocations

States and Territories

Allocated by estimated share of students in poverty

	Masks (count)						
Alabama	2,408,815	Kansas	921,385	New York	6,910,420	West Virginia	766,630
Alaska	227,490	Kentucky	2,035,195	North Carolina	4,249,415	Wisconsin	1,603,360
Arizona	3,076,820	Louisiana	2,654,505	North Dakota	159,840	Wyoming	151,850
Arkansas	1,491,635	Maine	328,235	Ohio	4,458,205	Puerto Rico	2,642,500
California	14,690,405	Maryland	1,500,665	Oklahoma	1,826,105	Palau	41,260
Colorado	1,421,875	Massachusetts	1,551,090	Oregon	1,200,235	American Samoa	149,580
Connecticut	958,660	Michigan	3,763,420	Pennsylvania	4,084,570	CNMI	129,935
Delaware	325,695	Minnesota	1,353,360	Rhode Island	331,155	Guam	156,650
District of Columbia	271,225	Mississippi	1,874,665	South Carolina	2,305,635	Northern Marianas	87,390
Florida	7,696,180	Missouri	2,253,990	South Dakota	300,805	Virgin Islands	75,425
Georgia	4,873,915	Montana	323,585	Tennessee	2,919,605	Federated States	351,705
Hawaii	308,500	Nebraska	520,335	Texas	14,477,920	of Micronesia	
Idaho	560,610	Nevada	1,137,590	Utah	810,095	Bureau of Indian	635,410
Illinois	4,251,400	New Hampshire	229,925	Vermont	26,530	Education	
Indiana	2,438,895	New Jersey	2,430,990	Virginia	2,297,470		
Iowa	876,745	New Mexico	1,127,665	Washington	1,864,835		
						Total	125,000,000

Other actions school staff can take to protect themselves and others from getting sick with COVID-19:

School staff can take everyday preventive actions to protect themselves and others from getting sick with COVID-19:

- [Washing hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol; cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside of elbow, throwing the tissue away, and then washing hands.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and cloth face mask unnecessarily.
- Maintaining distance of at least 6 feet from other people, especially indoors.
- Wearing a cloth face mask especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain.
- Cleaning and disinfecting [frequently touched surfaces](#), including tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Staying home when sick or after being in [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19.
- Limiting use of shared objects (for example, gym or physical education equipment, art supplies, games) when possible, and cleaning and disinfecting these objects frequently.

Other resources

President Trump's School Opening Policy

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/School-Opening-Policy.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance for K-12 School Administrators on the Use of Cloth Face Coverings in Schools.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html>

Fact sheet for high school students:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/Young-Mitigation-recommendations-resources-toolkit.pdf>

How-To Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mn6axdkbGd4>