

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Face Coverings Requirements for Air Travellers

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#### Interim Orders

**Q When do the new requirements for travellers come into effect?**

A The new requirements are effective at 12:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, April 20, 2020.

**Q What *Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs)* sub parts are included in the new measures?**

A The scope of the *Interim Orders* remain the same. CARs subparts 701, 703, 704, 705 and 604 are required to implement the new measures.

#### Traveller Requirements

**Q Do all travellers require a non-medical mask or face covering?**

A All travelers, except those under the age of two years old and some individuals with disabilities, are required to be in possession of a non-medical mask or face covering.

More information on how to make non-medical masks and face coverings can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/instructions-sew-no-sew-cloth-face-covering.html#a5>

**Q Why is the requirement for non-medical masks or face coverings being imposed now?**

A The requirement for face coverings are an additional measure being used to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The Public Health Agency of Canada has recently updated its guidance and recommends the wearing of non-medical masks or face coverings for situations where a person cannot physically distance. In the air mode, it is useful for passengers, air personnel, and security screeners who cannot always keep a two-metre distance during flight and at security screening checkpoints.

**Q I don't have a removable face covering for my trip, but I don't have any COVID-19 symptoms. Will I be allowed to fly?**

A No. Transport Canada now requires that air operators, and the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA), where applicable, check that all travellers have a non-medical mask or face covering for use during their trip, even if the travellers are not showing any symptoms. Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is an important additional measure you can take to protect others around you, even if you have no symptoms.

## Notification / Confirmation / Verification

**Q Is there a requirement for air carriers to notify a traveller of the need for a non-medical mask or face covering?**

A Air operators are required to notify travellers of the requirement to have in their possession a non-medical mask or face covering prior to boarding a flight.

**Q When should confirmation be obtained from the passenger that they have a face covering?**

A Air operators are encouraged to notify each passenger, and obtain confirmation, as early as possible during their travel journey to prevent situations where passengers arrive at the airport without a non-medical mask or face covering. This can be done at the online booking or online check-in, or physically at registration or, less ideally, at the check-in counter.

If travellers are only notified at the check-in counter for the first time, air operators should be prepared to offer non-medical masks or face coverings to their passengers. While travellers should come prepared with non-medical masks or face coverings prior to arrival at the airport, they can only do so with proper notification. Many airport concession stores may be closed given provincial or territorial restrictions on the closure of non-essential businesses, or supplies may be limited.

**Q When will the verification that a traveller has an appropriate face covering be done?**

A During the boarding process, air operators must verify that passengers have an acceptable non-medical mask or face covering in their possession. If the passenger does not have an acceptable face covering, and does not fall under one of the exceptions, they will be denied boarding.

## Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings

**Q What is considered an acceptable non-medical mask or face covering?**

A All travellers must have a non-medical mask or face covering in their possession. The face covering should:

- completely cover the mouth and nose area;
- not have any gaps;
- be secured to the head of the person so it will reasonably stay on; and
- be made of a multiple layers of breathable material (i.e., not a plastic bag).

It should be noted that depending on the flight and proximity to others, passengers may need to wear their non-medical mask or face covering for the duration of the flight. Ideally,

passengers should be prepared and have more than one non-medical mask or face covering so it can be changed if it becomes wet or dirty.

**Q I thought Transport Canada already required health checks before flying? Why would I need to wear a cloth face covering?**

A Transport Canada requires all air operators to conduct a mandatory health check to verify and observe whether or not a person shows signs of COVID-19. While this is an important safety layer, the Public Health Agency of Canada now believes that asymptomatic people can transmit COVID-19 ahead of showing any symptoms. For this reason, wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is an important additional measure travellers can take to protect others around them, even if they have no symptoms.

**Q Is Canada the first country to require face coverings for air travellers? Are there others?**

A Some state-owned airlines have a mandated practice around face coverings or masks for air travellers. Other states or regions have imposed the wearing of masks or face coverings in public spaces, including airports and on aircrafts. As far as we are aware, Canada may be the first state to adopt this requirement for civil aviation in general, in circumstances where physical distancing are not possible.

## Passengers in Transit

**Q What should travellers who are transiting through Canadian airports do if they do not have a non-medical mask or face covering?**

A All travellers boarding a flight to Canada regardless if they will be staying in the country or transiting through a Canadian airport are required to have a non-medical mask or face covering that covers their mouth and nose and is tightly secured around their head.

**Q Can travellers purchase non-medical masks or face coverings at the airport?**

A Travellers should come prepared with non-medical masks or face coverings prior to arrival at the airport. Many airport concession stores may be closed given provincial or territorial restrictions on the closure of non-essential businesses, or supplies limited. Travellers are encouraged to have more than one non-medical mask or face covering.

## Role of the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA)

**Q Will CATSA refuse to screen travellers at the security checkpoint if they do not have a non-medical mask or face covering or refuse to wear it when asked?**

A CATSA will not allow travellers to proceed into the restricted area of the airport if they do not have a non-medical mask of face covering, or if they refuse to wear one.

**Q How will security screening proceed?**

A CATSA may direct a traveller to lower or remove their non-medical mask or face covering, or conversely to ensure it is securely in position, to proceed with the security screening. In either case, the traveller must follow the direction of the CATSA officer.

**Q What happens if CATSA turns someone away for not having a mask or refusing to wear it?**

A It is the responsibility of the air operator to notify travellers that they must have a non-medical mask or face covering and to obtain confirmation that they do. CATSA security screening should not be the first time a passenger is notified of the requirement to have a non-medical mask or face covering.

**Q What if I am departing from an airport that does not require screening or a fixed-based operation where there is no CATSA screening?**

A Effective April 20, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. EDT, Transport Canada now requires that air operators of all sizes including private operators and charters (*Canadian Aviation Regulations* subpart 604, 701, 703, 704, and 705) notify and check that all their passengers have a non-medical mask or face covering for use during their trip, even for flights where CATSA screening doesn't apply. The requirement for travellers to have a non-medical mask or face covering is done in conjunction with a health check to ensure that the traveller is not showing any symptoms of COVI-19. Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering is an important additional measure you can take to protect others around you, even if you have no symptoms.

## Non-passenger Screening

**Q Who are considered non-passengers?**

A Non-passengers include flight and cabin crews, airline customer service personnel, caterers, maintenance personnel, baggage handlers, and other airport staff.

**Q Will non-passengers be required to wear a non-medical mask or face covering?**

A Yes, all non-passengers entering into the restricted area of the airport through a non-passenger screening checkpoint or non-passenger vehicle screening checkpoint will be required to have and also to wear a non-medical mask or face covering during screening.

The *Interim Orders* do **not** require air crew or airport workers to wear a non-medical mask or face covering other than at screening points. Employers are responsible for determining the threats and hazard of each workplace for their workers.

**Q When will non-passenger requirements come into place?**

A The new requirements come into effect at 12:00 p.m. EDT, April 20, 2020; the same time as the requirement for passengers.

## Unruly Passengers

**Q What if the traveller is unwilling to wear a non-medical mask or face covering while at the airport or in-flight, and becomes unruly?**

A Should a traveller refuse to wear a non-medical mask or face covering they should be treated as an unruly passenger that fails to comply with screening direction or the direction of the air carrier; regular unruly procedures should be applied. Depending on the severity of the situation, local law enforcement may need to be requested to intervene.

Transport Canada requires that air operators report such incidents under the *Interim Order*. Passengers could be subject to a fine of up to \$5,000 and criminal charges are also possible, depending on the severity of the incident.

## Customs Hall

**Q What about where biometric screening is being done by the airport?**

A Travellers will need to lower their face covering to have their photo taken at the Primary Inspection Kiosk or when asked to do so by a Canada Border Services Agency officer or a Public Health Agency of Canada and/or provincial or territorial official.