




U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Deputy Attorney General

The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

April 14, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE EMPLOYEES

FROM: THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL 

SUBJECT: Use of Face Coverings in Department of Justice Workplaces

My gratitude goes out to all employees for continuing to serve the Department and the Nation with such dedication and perseverance during these challenging times.

As the Attorney General has previously stated, the health and safety of our personnel are of paramount importance. To that end, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission of COVID-19 (but not to use facemasks meant for healthcare workers). The use of face coverings may help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Consistent with this recommendation, effective as promptly as possible, all individuals are to wear cloth facemasks or coverings to the extent practicable within common area Department facilities and workspaces—particularly in traditional office-like settings. The Department is currently prioritizing the acquisition and issuance of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the Bureau of Prisons' medical needs, for law enforcement functions, and for employees whose duties involve face-to-face contact with the public or other DOJ employees. Employees who have not been issued or do not have their own PPE should fashion face coverings from common materials, such as clean t-shirts or bandanas, that can cover the nose and mouth area. Individuals may remove a face covering when working in a private office, cubicle or workspace where *at least* six feet of social distance can be maintained. Individuals also may need to lower their face covering in order to pass through security checkpoints. As a reminder, the Department's maximum telework posture remains in effect for those whose responsibilities enable them to do so.

This memorandum is not intended to alter or supersede any component-specific guidance applicable to workplaces that are not a traditional office setting, such as courts, prisons, detention facilities, and law enforcement operations. Components with such facilities have already directed their workforce to follow guidance that is appropriately tailored to relevant locations and circumstances, consistent with applicable workplace safety requirements and recommendations, and that component guidance should be followed.

I thank you for your compliance with this memorandum and again offer my deep appreciation of your continued commitment to the important work of the Department. Let's continue to work to keep each other, and the public, safe.