



ADDRESSING FACIAL COVERINGS CONCERNS

Due to the highly infectious nature of COVID-19, OSU students and employees should do a daily health self-assessment before arriving on campus for class or work. This self-assessment should not take the place of talking with your health care provider to diagnose or treat conditions.

Guidelines for Facial Coverings

- You may wear your own clean, well-maintained and professional facial covering from home instead of the OSU-provided covering if you choose.
- You must wear a facial covering at all times in hallways, classrooms, public spaces, restrooms and other common areas across campus where social distancing is hard to maintain.
- Facial coverings are also required outdoors if safe social distancing is not possible.
- The facial covering is not only a protection for you. More importantly, it is primarily a protection for others near you to prevent you from unknowingly spreading the COVID-19 virus to others. Studies have shown that if everyone is wearing a mask and following other safety measures, the spread of viruses is reduced 80-85%.

How to Approach Conversations

When approaching individuals out of compliance with university expectations regarding facial coverings, remember to *ask*, *listen* and *instruct*.

- **ASK** if the individual is familiar with university expectations regarding facial coverings.
- **LISTEN** to their response as it will guide you in your ability to instruct them on next steps.
- **INSTRUCT** them politely to put on a facial covering.
 - *If they are not aware of university expectations, politely inform them.
 - *If they are aware of university expectations, politely ask them to wear their facial covering.

Important Tips for Successful Conversations

Stay Calm: When discussing polarizing topics, remain calm. Otherwise, we may put others on the defensive and our message becomes less effective.

Safety: Your safety is of utmost importance. Maintain social distancing throughout conversations. Wear your facial covering during conversations to set the example. If an individual becomes hostile, walk away.

Resources: If you have access to a disposable facial covering, supply them with a facial covering.

Focus on the Problem: Focus on the concerning behavior, not on the person.

I vs. You: Your word choice can help determine the intended result. “I would like to ask you to wear a mask” is better than “You are not complying; you need to wear a mask.” The approach of sharing your request instead of finger-pointing can aid in preventing escalation.

Respond vs. Reply: Take time to hear the other person, recognize their thoughts and feelings, and respond to what they have communicated. Do not reply only to have your thoughts heard.

Community: While there are not mask monitors around campus, encourage fellow Cowboys to help do their part to take care of the Cowboy family.

Gratitude: Thank Cowboys who are wearing masks to reinforce positive behavior.

Guidance for Conversations

1. Clearly state the behavior causing the disruption.

“Hello. Are you aware the university’s expectation that everyone wear facial coverings in any campus building or when near or encountering others?”

2. Allow the individual to respond.

“Can you please share why you were not wearing a facial mask?”

3. Reiterate university expectations.

“It is OSU’s expectation that we all wear facial covering when we enter the building and classroom or are near others.”

4. Explain what will happen in the future if expectations are not met.

“This expectation is in place for the safety of our OSU community. Therefore, continued failure to comply with this expectation will lead me to refer this concern to the university.”

5. Discuss resources to promote success.

“Do you have access to a facial covering?” *If you have access to disposable facial coverings, you can offer one for a temporary solution.*

Continual Failure to Comply with Expectations

THIS IS NOT A POLICE MATTER – IT IS A POLICY MATTER.

When students, staff or faculty do not meet university expectations, fellow Cowboys should address these concerns. However, if you address the concern once and the behavior continues, refer the situation to the appropriate office.

Student: Reports of students intentionally failing to comply with the expectation of wearing facial coverings could violate the Student Code of Conduct *Failure to Comply* policy.

Section II, 32, Failure to Comply: Failing to comply with the lawful directions of any university employee acting within the scope of their official duties or failing to identify oneself to such a person when requested to do so.

File online complaints at tulsa.okstate.edu/studentconduct/report.

Employee: If you have concerns about an employee not adhering to the facial covering guidelines, we encourage you to bring concerns to your supervisor or use the following:

- Staff Violations: Tulsa Human Resources; 918-594-8221
or tulsa.hr@okstate.edu
- Vendor Violations: Tulsa Budget and Finance;
918-594-8342 or
- Faculty Violations: Office of the Provost; 405-744-5627
or provost@okstate.edu

Visitors: If you have concerns about a visitor not adhering to the facial covering guidelines, we encourage you to bring concerns to your supervisor or a building authority.

Please note that individuals may have a medical condition preventing them from wearing facial coverings.