

General Policy – COVID-19: Use of Face Coverings

Purpose:

Bismarck State College (BSC) strives to offer a safe and accessible campus experience to students, employees and visitors while minimizing risk to all. The Governor of North Dakota issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 13, 2020. This policy is in effect until the state of emergency executive order has been rescinded.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the required use of face coverings by students, faculty, staff, and visitors to BSC during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidance recommending the use of face coverings while in public. The use of face coverings reduces the risk of transmission of droplets that could contain the virus. In addition, the ND State Board of Higher Education passed a resolution on July 23, 2020 strongly encouraging the use of face coverings.

Policy:

All BSC students, faculty, staff, and visitors shall wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose while on BSC owned and leased property and while working in shared facilities with Bismarck Public Schools.

This requirement includes:

1. When in a classroom or other instructional space, or when attending an event held indoors;
2. When in an indoor common space (i.e. lounges, hallways, elevators, study areas, bathrooms, etc.) used by other individuals, regardless of whether others are present at the time;
3. When interacting in person with others;
4. In dining centers, except when eating or drinking;
5. When riding in a campus bus or van with one or more additional persons;
6. By employees when representing the College in an official capacity at events held both on- and off-campus; or
7. When participating in a campus tour.

Face coverings need not be worn:

1. While outdoors, if an appropriate distance from others is maintained, typically six feet;
2. When students are alone or with a roommate in private residence hall room or apartment
3. When employees are alone in an office or with a co-worker in a shared workspace where protective barriers and social distancing are in place;
4. While exercising, practicing, or competing in sports;
5. While playing a woodwind or brass musical instrument, singing and performing in a theatre production where social distancing is possible, or engaging in other academic approved exceptions;

6. Students or employees in internships, shops, labs, clinical or other settings may be required to take additional precautions based on the specific setting, practice and host-site expectations.
7. While participating in programs, events, and experiences granted exceptions by BSC's President or designee.

Procedure:

General Use and Requirements of Face Coverings:

1. Face coverings shall be worn by students, faculty, staff, and visitors inside of all BSC buildings, unless otherwise specified in this policy.
2. Face coverings shall be snug fitting around the nose, mouth, and face.
3. Face coverings shall be worn in such a manner that does not fully cover the face and eyes (i.e. Halloween style or character masks).
4. Students, faculty, staff, and visitors may use a mask of their choosing or making, provided it is constructed in accordance with CDC recommendations and in accordance with all other BSC policies and Codes of Conduct.
5. Individuals working alone in an office or performing a solo-related job task in a workspace are not required to wear a face covering, but it must be kept nearby so you are able to put it back on if someone enters the room/workspace or when you exit the area.

Expectations of BSC Visitors to Campus:

1. Visitors are expected to follow all guidelines as described in this policy.
2. BSC shall take reasonable steps to make disposable masks available for visitors not possessing their own face coverings.

Implementation:

1. BSC will disseminate information about this policy on the BSC website.
2. Faculty, in collaboration with Department Chairs and Deans, shall communicate expectations included in this policy through their course syllabus and other mediums (e.g. Blackboard, conversation).
3. Faculty shall use the following statement on the course syllabus:

BSC requires students and employees to wear face coverings in classrooms, except where exempted by BSC's COVID-19: Use of Face Coverings policy. Wearing face coverings helps minimize the risk and spread of COVID-19. Students who need accommodation or who have accessibility considerations should contact Accessibility Services at 701-224-5671.

Enforcement:

1. When a face covering is required in accordance with this policy, enforcing non-compliance without a bona fide exception shall be as follows:
 - a) Students: When in a classroom setting, the faculty member in charge of the space shall address the non-compliance as a classroom management issue and request the face covering be used. Faculty and staff shall address student non-compliance outside of the classroom and request the face covering be used. Continued refusal by the student shall result in referral to the student conduct process.
 - b) Employees: Supervisors shall address non-compliance directly with the employee. Employees shall refrain from addressing non-compliance or perceived non-compliance with other employees and should instead report issues to their direct supervisor.

- c) Visitors: Members of the public shall first be offered a disposable mask, when possible. If the individual refuses, they will be asked to leave and given options of how they can be served virtually or by phone.

Accommodation:

1. BSC recognizes that medical or other reasons may prevent someone from wearing a face covering. The use of face coverings throughout campus may also create communication concerns for some individuals. Please be sensitive to the fact that medical issues are private matters. No one is required to disclose the reason(s) that they are unable to wear a face covering.
2. Students who need accommodation or who have accessibility considerations should contact BSC's Accessibility Services at 701-224-5671.
3. Employees who need accommodation or who have accessibility considerations should contact their supervisor and work with BSC's Chief Human Resources Officer. Visitors who need accommodation or who have accessibility considerations should contact BSC's Chief Human Resources Officer.

Addressing Compliance Concerns:

1. It will not be publicly evident if an individual not wearing a face covering has been granted accommodation under this policy. Instead, individuals with concerns may contact the following:
 - a) Student Concerns: Dean of Students
 - b) Employee Concerns: Chief Human Resources Officer
 - c) Visitor Concerns: Chief Human Resources Officer

References:

SBHE Resolution 2020-04

<https://ndusbpos.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/NDUSSBHE/EVkXvBULvX9KohtaMN4G3MMBsAWCfVNU64JE3pgGqS-lw?e=6lzxq8>

State of North Dakota Executive Order 2020-03

<https://www.governor.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/EO%202020-03.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

North Dakota Department of Health

<https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus>

History of This Policy:

First policy draft reviewed by the Operations Council and approved by the Executive Council on August 6, 2020.