



**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS REGULATION  
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Bldg. 68-1  
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920**

**GUIDANCE FOR THE WEARING OF CLOTH FACE COVERINGS AT WORK**

Governor Raimondo's Executive Order 20-14 prohibited all gatherings of more than 5 people and all non-critical, retail businesses from conducting in-person operations. However, critical businesses remain open and some of their employees must be physically present at the work site, requiring further measures to keep those employees, and their customers/clients safe.

Therefore, per Governor Raimondo's Executive Order 20-24, beginning on April 18<sup>th</sup>, **all employees of the following business types are required to wear cloth face coverings:**

- Customer-facing (including retail stores, pharmacies, grocery stores, liquor stores, banks, etc.)
- Office-based
- Non-profit organizations
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Food Service Industry
- All other businesses continuing in-person operations where DBR has not granted an exemption

**FOR CUSTOMER/CLIENT-FACING BUSINESSES, OFFICE BASED BUSINESSES, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

- Cloth face coverings are not a replacement for adhering to social distancing protocols.
- To ensure all employees have a cloth face covering, businesses must, at their expense, provide their employees with:
  - A cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth, or
  - The materials to create a face covering
- For information on purchasing or creating face masks, see
  - [www.commerceri.com/masks](http://www.commerceri.com/masks)
  - [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)
  - [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html)
- Employees may, if they choose, fashion their own cloth face covering, or wear other more protective face covering if they are already in possession of such. If the employer is required

to provide its employees with more protective face covering equipment due to the nature of the work involved, employees will continue wearing the more protective face covering.

- Employees who can easily, continuously, and measurably maintain 6-foot distance from all other persons do not need to wear a cloth-face covering. Even in those cases, masks must be worn in circulation and common areas of every workplace including entrances and exits, check-in, registration, reception, waiting areas, hallways and corridors, bathrooms, break rooms, time clock areas, elevators, stairways, etc.
- Employees whose own health or safety would be compromised by wearing said coverings, are exempt from the requirement of wearing a cloth face covering
- All clients/customers who are over two years of age & health-permitting, will also be reminded to wear cloth face coverings.
- Businesses shall take steps to remind customers to wear face coverings by:
  - Posting the requirement at the entrance of the business.
  - Posting clearly visible signs inside the business to remind customers of the requirement to wear the face covering at all times when in the business.
- At this time, businesses should refrain from prohibiting entry for the sole reason of a customer lacking a face covering.

#### FOR THE MANUFACTURING & CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES

- The Manufacturing and Construction Industries shall comply with all requirements as listed above.
- However, recognizing the potential that the wearing of a face covering may create a safety hazard to certain workers; therefore, the requirement to wear a face covering may be exempted when doing so would negatively impact the safety of the worker or lead to an increased risk of harm to the worker or others.
  - Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Working from ladders or at height;
    - When other respiratory protection is required;
    - When operating heavy machinery and the mask impairs hearing or communication.
- Face coverings are not required when workers can easily, continuously, and measurably maintain at least a six-foot distance between themselves and other workers. Even in those cases, masks must be worn in circulation and common areas of every workplace including entrances and exits, check-in, registration, reception, waiting areas, hallways and corridors, bathrooms, break rooms, time clock areas, elevators, stairways, etc.

#### FOR THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

- The Food Service Industry shall comply with all requirements as listed above.
- This specifically includes cooks, food preparers/handlers, and servers.

- For more information please see <https://us2.campaign-archive.com/?u=ece9b1661b3bf3b864a6894d1&id=4084782656>

If you have any questions, please feel free to submit your questions online to the Department of Business Regulation using the web form available at [www.dbr.ri.gov/critical](http://www.dbr.ri.gov/critical) or by calling the Department at 401-889-5550.