Facial Covering Policy

Purpose: To prevent the spread of COVID-19, Nipissing University expects that staff, faculty, students, contractors and other visitors will wear a face covering in accordance with this policy.

In accordance with the North Bay and Parry Sound District Health Unit directive that took effect on July 24, 2020, and in order to promote safety on campus, the University will follow the requirements for face coverings in enclosed public spaces.

1. A *face covering* is a non-medical disposable mask with a minimum of three layers that covers the mouth, nose and chin, thus ensuring a barrier that limits community transmission of respiratory droplets. The University will be providing non-medical 3-ply disposable masks to each employee as they return to work on campus. Until further notice, cloth masks will no longer be permitted on campus. This policy does not apply to:
    a) Children under two years of age or children under the age of five years, either chronologically or developmentally who refuse to wear a face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregivers;
    b) Individuals with medical conditions rendering them unable to safely wear a face covering. Such conditions include but are not limited to respirator diseases, cognitive difficulties or difficulties in hearing or processing information;
    c) Individuals who are unable to remove their face covering without assistance under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or whom have protections under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O 1990, c.H.19, as amended;
    d) Individuals whose breathing would be inhibited by wearing a face covering
    e) Employees of Nipissing University who:
        a. Are working alone in their own private office and/or,
        b. Are working within or behind a physical barrier i.e. plexiglass)

2. Implementation of this policy will be enacted and enforced in 'good faith' and should be primarily used as a means to educate people on mask use in public spaces.

3. No person shall be required to provide proof of any of the exemptions set out in section 1.

4. At every public entrance to an enclosed public space on campus, Nipissing University shall post, prominent and clearly visible signage indicating the requirements for face coverings while on the premises.

5. This policy permits the temporary removal of a face covering where necessary for the purpose of:
        a. Engaging in an athletic or fitness activity within the R.J. Surtees Athletics Centre;
        b. Consuming food or drink; or
        c. For any emergency or medical purpose

6. When employees are working off campus, they must abide by the respective face covering policy that is in effect at that place of business.

Additionally, this policy requires that Nipissing University will:

a) To the fullest extent possible, ensure effective measures are in place to maintain physical distancing amongst all persons who enter the premises;
b) Promote hand hygiene and make available alcohol-based hand sanitizer at all entrances and exits for the use of all persons entering or exiting the premises;
c) Ensure all employees are informed of the requirements of this policy within the return to work information sessions;
d) Provide a verbal reminder to any person entering the premises without a face covering that they should be wearing a face covering if able; and
e) Provide, for persons removing their face covering for extended periods of time, a verbal reminder of the requirement to wear a face covering under this policy.

Enclosed public spaces are indoor public spaces of businesses and organizations accessed by the public. On campus these include the following, but are not limited to:

a) Hallways
b) Washrooms
c) Classrooms (including labs)
d) Elevators/Stairwells
e) Food service areas
f) Meeting rooms
g) Campus Book Shop
h) Campus Health Centre
i) Campus Security
j) Harris Learning Library
k) R.J. Surtees Athletics Centre
l) Monastery

This policy will be updated as necessary, as public health guidelines and provincial regulations change.