



## **COVID-19 FACE COVERING POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In order to help ensure the health and safety of the Hialeah Housing Authority (“HHA”) employees and the public, face coverings are required to be worn on site:

- Indoors when other people are present and in all public and common areas, such as lobbies, conference rooms, board rooms, hallways, stairways, restrooms, elevators, and in shared vehicles
- Outdoors when keeping a six-foot distance from others may not be possible

This requirement is in accordance with Miami Dade County public health orders for face coverings. This policy is in effect until otherwise communicated.

While keeping a physical distance of at least six feet from other people, practicing good hygiene measures (e.g., frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, covering coughs and sneezes), and staying home when ill are the best-known protections against COVID-19, wearing a face covering that covers the nose and mouth can help protect others.

For the purposes of this policy, a face covering must:

- Fit snugly against the sides of the face
- Completely cover the nose and mouth
- Be secured with ties, ear loops, elastic bands, or other equally effective method
- Include at least one layer of cloth, although multiple layers are strongly recommended
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be free of holes, tears or valves that have the potential to release respiratory droplets



## **2. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all HHA personnel, contractors, vendors, tenants, customers and visitors, on site at all locations, including public housing development, administration building, property management offices, Affordable Housing, and Palm Centre, unless specifically exempted below.

## **3. EXEMPTIONS**

Face coverings are *not* required when:

- Working or spending time alone in a personal office or workspace
- Working or spending time outdoors (e.g., walking, exercising) and at least a six-foot distance can be maintained
- Operating a single occupancy vehicle
- Eating or drinking; a six-foot physical distance between people is required when eating and drinking and during breaks.

## **4. MEDICAL OR HEALTH RISK ACCOMMODATIONS**

Individuals with the following medical conditions or health risks may request an accommodation to this policy:

- A medical professional has advised that wearing a face covering may pose a health risk to the person wearing the covering or impair their breathing.
- A person has a medical condition, mental health condition, developmental or cognitive condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering. This includes, but is not limited to, persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing, who are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance.
- Wearing a face covering would create a safety risk to the person as determined by local, state, or federal regulators, or workplace safety guidelines.
- The person is deaf or hard of hearing and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication.

For HHA personnel requesting a medical or health risk accommodation, determination of the accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis with the human resources department and the employee's direct supervisor. Employees may be required to provide documentation to substantiate their need for an accommodation. An accommodation may not include allowing someone to not wear a face covering where it is required absent a reasonable accommodation.



## **5. POLICY ENFORCEMENT**

### **In the Workplace:**

Personnel are expected to comply with the face covering requirement as a condition of employment, as well as for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, and the HHA community. Directors are required to ensure all of their personnel have a thorough understanding of the requirements outlined in this policy. Personnel who do not comply should be reminded of the policy by their supervisor and provided additional education and training as needed.

If, after additional education and training, personnel refuse to comply, contact your human resources department to initiate the appropriate corrective action or standard of conduct process.

If personnel state they are unable to wear a mask due to a health condition, the individual must make a reasonable accommodation request.

### **Members of the public, customers and visitors on HHA sites:**

The HHA is committed to maintaining a respectful, productive, inclusive, and equitable workplace, and discrimination and other conduct that is inconsistent with our values will not be tolerated. Consistent with Miami-Dade County's executive orders for face coverings, members of the public, customers and visitors to the HHA are required to wear face coverings when entering an HHA facility and receiving service. If a member of the public, customer or visitor is not wearing a face covering, the following steps are to be taken:

- **Begin with a polite verbal request for compliance to educate and persuade the individual to wear a face covering. HHA personnel should ask the individual to wear a mask or face covering, or have a supply of disposable facemasks to offer individuals who do not have one. Signs indicating the face covering requirement for all who enter should be clearly posted at all entrances and on websites when possible.**
- **If, following a polite verbal request, the individual continues to decline to wear a face covering or facemask, personnel should notify a supervisor to assist the customer with determining if other accommodations, such as dropping off items with a caseworker, can be made.**
- **If the individual refuses to wear a face covering and does not indicate a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering, they should be politely informed that they are not permitted to enter and be asked to leave. Personnel should not attempt to physically block an individual or physically remove them from the space and should avoid confrontation, but should not provide service. Law enforcement (e.g., Hialeah Police Department) may be called for help as a last resort.**



**6. ENFORCEMENT DISCRETION**

The Executive Director may exercise enforcement discretion for any or all provisions in this policy to allow time to consider changes or approaches and overall need for facial coverings as may be needed to address local circumstances.

**7. RESOURCES**

**Miami-Dade County Emergency Order 20-20 as amended.**