

# Butler Area School District Face Coverings, Masks & Shields

In Accordance with the PA Department of Health  
Universal Face Coverings Order

On July 1, 2020, the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health announced an Order Requiring Universal Face Coverings. The order, signed under Secretary Levine's authority under the Disease Prevention and Control Act, outlines the situations when a mask must be worn and includes limited exceptions to the face covering requirement.

## **Does the Order of the Secretary of the PA Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings apply to children and adults while in schools?**

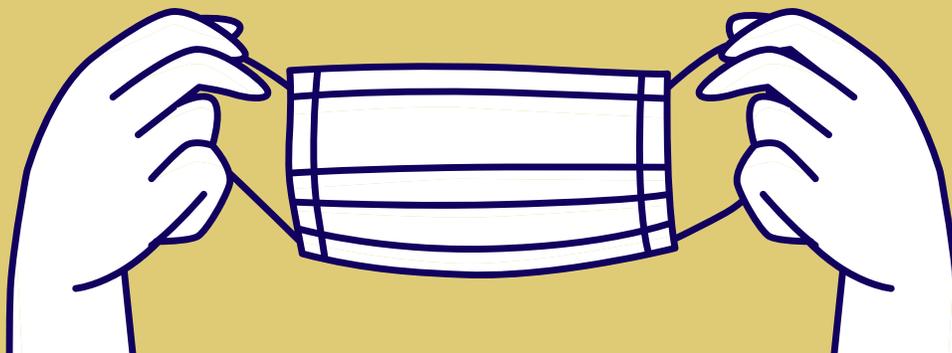
**[Response from PDE]** Yes, this order applies to all students, staff and visitors age two and older while in school entities, including public K-12 schools, brick and mortar and cyber charter schools, private and parochial schools, career and technical centers (CTCs), intermediate units (IUs); educational programming for students in non-educational placements such as residential settings (boarding schools), residential facilities, detention centers, and hospital settings; PA Pre-K Counts, Head Start Programs and Preschool Early Intervention programs; and Private Academic Nursery Schools and locally funded prekindergarten activities.

The Order was effective July 1, 2020 and will remain in effect until the Secretary of Health determines the public health risk is sufficiently reduced so that face coverings are no longer necessary as a widely utilized public health tool. For the safety of students, staff and families and to avoid community spread of COVID-19, students and staff are considered to be members of the public who are congregating in indoor locations. As such, they are required to adhere to this Order.

The order is effective immediately and applies to all children aged two and older.

## **When and where does the Order apply?**

**[Response from BASD]** In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Universal Face Covering Order, face coverings will be required at all Butler Area School District facilities. This includes our schools, fields and school buses. It also applies any time our students and staff may be off campus for school district related activities or events.



# Butler Area School District

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## Under what circumstances are students permitted to remove their face coverings (e.g. masks and face shields)?

**[Response from PDE -- UPDATED 8/17/20]** Schools may allow students to remove face coverings when students are:

- Eating or drinking when spaced at least 6 feet apart; or
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task; or
- At least 6 feet apart during “face-covering breaks” to last no longer than 10 minutes.

## Do students with disabilities need to wear face coverings?

**[Response from PDE]** Children two years and older are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental health condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students should be made in partnership with the student’s health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team.

## Must a student provide evidence that they qualify for an exception to the Order?

**[Response from BASD]** Documentation from a medical professional that an exemption applies is required. If your student has a medical condition, mental health condition or disability that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school and on the bus, please contact your child’s doctor to obtain proper documentation. You may then drop it off or mail it to: Butler Area School District, Attn: Mask Exemption, 110 Campus Lane, Butler, PA 16001. Once the documentation is received, it will be incorporated into your child’s (new or revised) IEP/504 Plan, per the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s requirement. Please note: The medical exemption must be received and incorporated into your child’s IEP/504 Plan prior to your child being exempt from wearing a mask at school.

## Does the Order apply to athletes and sports activities?

**[Response from PDE]** Yes. Everyone must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Order. Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings, unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet. Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but must wear face coverings when on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.

## Is this Order temporary?

**[Response from BASD]** This Order remains in effect until further notice from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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## What type of mask complies with this Order?

**[Response from PDE]** The Order requires individuals to wear a "face covering." "Face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and, for the purposes of the order, can include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth. "Face coverings" may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. While procedural and surgical masks intended for health care providers and first responders, such as N95 respirators, would meet these requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care settings.

## Examples of face coverings, masks and shields



## What if a student does not have a face covering or forgets his/her face covering?

**[Response from PA]** Face coverings, including masks do not need to be purchased. They may be made with readily available items. There are types of "face coverings" other than a mask that may be worn to comply with the Order. Face coverings may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

**[Response from BASD]** The Butler Area School District will provide a face mask to any student or staff member who does not have one. In addition, if a student or staff member forgets their mask or if their face masks breaks during the day, a new one will be provided to them by the school district.