



New South Wales – Wearing of Face Masks

With effect from 12 February 2021 the requirement to wear fitted face coverings has been amended. Within **Greater Sydney, Wollongong, the Blue Mountains and the Central Coast** face coverings will now only be required on public transport and in public transport waiting areas.

Face coverings continue to be required in airports and on aircraft in New South Wales. People are still encouraged to always carry a clean face mask and to wear it where a distance of 1.5m cannot be maintained. This Advice has been updated to reflect these changes.

INTRODUCTION

This Advice provides information on the current requirements for the wearing of fitted face coverings in Greater Sydney, Wollongong, Blue Mountains and Central Coast and in airports and aircraft across New South Wales.

The full requirements, as amended up to 12 February 2021, are listed below.

Wearing of masks

The [Public Health \(COVID-19 Mandatory Face Coverings\) Order 2021](#) has applied since 2 January 2021; amendments made on 3 January, 9 January and 28 January are incorporated into this order.

The most recent amendments are included in [Amendment No 4](#) which reduces the requirement for wearing face masks. These amendments do not yet appear in the primary document.

In Greater Sydney, Wollongong, Blue Mountains and Central Coast masks are now only required to be worn on public transport and in public transport waiting areas.

Face coverings continue to be required in airports and on aircraft across New South Wales.

Exemptions are in place for flight crew and airport workers such as an engineer or other technical staff, and a range of other activities in connection with an aircraft, where they are not interacting directly with passengers.

The Order defines "fitted face covering" to mean a mask or other covering that (a) fits securely around the face, and (b) is designed or made to be worn over the nose and mouth to provide the wearer with protection against infection.

The Order includes a number of exemptions:

- children aged 12 or under; or
- persons who have a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, that makes wearing a mask unsuitable including, for example, a skin condition, an intellectual disability, autism or trauma.

A person may remove a mask if they are:

- eating or drinking;
- communicating with another person who is deaf or hard of hearing;
- at work and the nature of the work makes the wearing of fitted face covering a risk to the person's, or another persons' health and safety, or means clear enunciation or visibility of their mouth is essential;
- asked to remove their mask for identity purposes;
- in an emergency; or
- the removal is necessary for the proper provision of the goods or service, e.g. a person having a facial or beard trim.

A person who removes the fitted face covering must resume wearing the fitted face covering as soon as practicable after the permitted circumstances end.

Employers in other workplaces should consider, in consultation with workers, whether the wearing of masks is an appropriate control measure in situations where 1.5m distancing cannot be achieved.

Information about implementing the wearing of masks can be found in Ai Group's Mask Fact Sheet at this [link](#).

NSW GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ON RESTRICTIONS

Information about the restrictions can be found on the websites below:

[Public Health Orders](#)

[NSW Health](#)

DO YOU REQUIRE FURTHER ASSISTANCE?

Ai Group has set up a special [section on our website](#) to provide access to Ai Group advice and assistance relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. For further information or assistance, please contact Ai Group's **Workplace Advice Line on 1300 55 66 77**, access Ai Group's [COVID-19 webpage](#) or the [Health and Safety Resource Centre](#).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Browne'.

Tracey Browne

Manager – National Safety & Workers' Compensation Policy and Membership Services

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or assistance, please contact the Ai Group Workplace Advice Line on 1300 55 66 77.