

UPDATE ON MANDATORY MASK WEARING

What you need to know

What's happening?

Today the NSW Government has announced they will be issuing a Public Health Order requiring all persons in Greater Sydney and the Blue Mountains to wear masks on public transport. This comes as efforts are being stepped up to prevent further spread of COVID-19 in the community following recent cases of community transmission.

Is this mask wearing enforceable?

Yes, from 4pm Thursday 18 June until 12:01am Thursday 24 June 2021. It is the role of NSW Police to enforce mask wearing and penalties will apply. Customers who are not wearing masks should not be refused service.

What does 'public transport', include?

Specifically, public transport includes a waiting area - a bus stop, ferry wharf and light rail, taxi rank, metro or train platforms - and travelling on public transport includes travelling by train, bus, light rail, ferry, in a taxi or rideshare service.

Which staff does this apply to?

The public health order applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers and workers who are working in the Greater Sydney area. Specifically, public transport includes working on or travelling by train, bus, light rail, taxi, rideshare or ferry and public transport waiting areas (a station, a bus stop, light rail stop, ferry wharf, taxi rank and rail platform). More information can be found [here](#).

What if the vehicle is in service but empty?

Workers need to have a mask on at all times while in service, even if a vehicle is empty or the worker is not close to any customers, as there is a possibility for the need to interact with customers unexpectedly, for example someone moving through a train, tram or ferry.

What if I am a station staff member working on an empty platform, light rail stop, interchange or empty station? Workers need to have a mask on at all times as customers can arrive at any time and unexpectedly.

What if I am working in a fully enclosed booth?

Workers don't need to wear a mask if they are working in a fully enclosed office or booth which customers cannot access.

Do workers need masks if they're working on a service that crosses into Greater Sydney?

Yes. Masks need to be worn as soon as the service enters Greater Sydney which includes the Blue Mountains. While masks are not required under the Public Health Order outside the Greater Sydney area, it is strongly recommended that all people wear masks whenever they are travelling on public transport across NSW.

What areas are covered in Greater Sydney?

Greater Sydney Area, which covers the following local government areas: Bayside, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Burwood, Camden, Campbelltown, Canada Bay, Canterbury-Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Georges River, Hawkesbury, Hornsby, Hunter's Hill, Inner West, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Liverpool, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Parramatta, Penrith, Randwick, Ryde, Strathfield, Sutherland Shire, Sydney, The Hills Shire, Waverley, Willoughby, Wollondilly and Woollahra



What if I am working or travelling from an area outside the Greater Sydney Local Government Area into Greater Sydney?

You need to ensure that you are wearing a mask once inside the Greater Sydney area. However it is strongly recommended that all people wear masks whenever they are travelling on public transport across NSW.

What constitutes a face mask?

The Order defines a fitted face covering as 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.

What if one can't wear a mask for medical reasons?

If one can't wear a mask for medical reasons they will need to carry a letter from their doctor, a registered health practitioner or a disability care provider that supports the reason for the medical exemption from mask wearing.

Who is not required to wear a mask?

Children aged 12 or under are not required to wear a mask although NSW Health recommends that children wear a mask if possible.

You are not required to wear a mask if you 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.

When can you remove your mask?

You may remove your mask if you are:

- eating or drinking,
- communicating with another person who is deaf or hard of hearing,
- at work and the nature of your 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 your mouth is essential.
- asked to remove your mask for identity purposes;
- in an emergency situation;
- The removal of the fitted face covering is necessary for the provision of the goods or services (for example having a beard trim).

If you remove your mask for any of these reasons, you must put it back on as soon as you complete the task.

How do you handle and wear a mask?

Masks must be handled and worn properly to be effective.

People using a mask must:

- Wash or sanitise their hands before putting their mask on or taking it off
- Cover their nose and mouth with the mask and fit it snugly under their chin, over the bridge of their nose and against the sides of their face
- Not touch the front of the mask while wearing or removing it
- Not allow the mask to hang around their neck or under their nose
- Not reuse single-use masks
- Make sure you put used masks straight in the bin, do not leave lying around
- Wash and dry reusable masks after use and store them in a clean dry place.

Why is it important to handle and wear a mask effectively?

People can potentially infect themselves if they use contaminated hands to adjust a mask, or repeatedly take it off and put in on, without cleaning hands in between. Please follow the advice on how to wear a mask.

