



Benco Mask Expectations 6.6.22

The COVID-19 Pandemic remains a high risk to the health of Benco employees and residents. For everyone's protection Benco expects employees to wear masks while at work.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, COVID-19 spreads when an infected person breathes out droplets and very small particles that contain the virus. These droplets and particles can be breathed in by other people or land on their eyes, noses, or mouth. In some circumstances, they may contaminate surfaces they touch. People who are closer than 6 feet from the infected person are most likely to get infected.

COVID-19 is spread in three main ways:

- Breathing in air when close to an infected person who is exhaling small droplets and particles that contain the virus.
- Having these small droplets and particles that contain the virus land on the eyes, nose, or mouth, especially through splashes and sprays like a cough or sneeze.
- Touching eyes, nose, or mouth with hands that have the virus on them.

Benco employees are required to be fully vaccinated, wear masks, sanitize/clean surfaces frequently, and maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and others to the greatest extent possible. Employees may need to be closer than 6 feet in order to perform proper care to the people they provide supports to.

Benco employees should ensure that the mask that they use while at work fits securely over their nose and mouth. Each employee will be expected to wear their mask at all times when indoors at work and outdoors any time that 6 feet of physical distance can't be maintained.

Benco recommends the use of KN95 masks or an equivalent. Each program will be provided with masks that meet the CDC recommendations for the workplace. All employees are encouraged to use the masks that Benco provides.

What is a KN95?

A KN95 is a type of filtering facepiece respirator that is manufactured outside of the United States. A KN95 that meets international standards and fits the wearer properly may filter up to 95% of airborne particles.

Why use a KN95 instead of a cloth or surgical mask?

A KN95 mask that fits the wearer properly (fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin without gaps) may filter up to 95% of airborne particles. This is a higher level of effectiveness than has been shown in studies for cloth masks and surgical masks.

Will a KN95 protect me during an exposure to COVID-19?

A KN95 mask provides better protection for you when worn properly and reduces the spread of the virus from other individuals who are wearing one. You are less likely to develop COVID-19 after close contact with someone who tests positive when you are wearing a KN95 mask properly.



How do I properly use my KN95?

Wash or sanitize your hands immediately before and after putting your KN95 on and immediately before and after taking it off when planning to reuse it.

Place the mask over your face, with the bottom below your chin and the nosepiece up.

Place the straps of the mask over each of your ears.

Adjust the metal nose clip using fingers from both hands to mold the clip to the shape of your nose

Adjust fit as necessary to reduce air flow around the mask.

Significant facial hair (more than 3-days growth) adversely affects the ability of the KN95 to form a tight seal around your face and thus reduces the KN95's effectiveness at protecting you from COVID-19. Therefore, parts of your face that come in contact with the KN95 should be free of significant facial hair.

If you wear glasses and find fogging to be a nuisance, wash the lenses with soapy water and shake off the excess before putting on your mask (wipe off nose piece to minimize skin irritation).

FITTING INSTRUCTION



1 Perform hand hygiene before putting on a mask. Hold ear loop mask and nosepiece up.



2 Position the mask under your chin with the nosepiece up.



3 Pull the ear loop to each ear, hang it on until comfortable, position the mask low on your nose.



4 Using both hands, mold the nosepiece to the shape of your nose by pushing downward and outward, while moving your fingertips down both sides of the nosepiece.



5 Perform a fit check by pacing both hands completely over the mask. Be careful not to disturb the position, and exhale sharply. If air leaks, adjust the nosepiece as described in step 3 and 4.

How should I care for and store my KN95?

DO NOT attempt to wash your KN95. With proper care, your KN95 should be reusable for an extended period of time.

To keep your KN95 clean between uses, store your mask in a safe location that other people cannot access and where it will not get wet or be subject to direct sunlight or excessive heat. A dry paper bag works well for storing your KN95.

Face Mask Rotation and Storage:

- If you work 5 days a week, you can take 5 new face masks and a paper bag for each.
- Label each bag with consecutive numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- Label the mask(s) with your name written on the straps.
- The bag(s) should be labeled with your name.
- Store the mask(s) in a paper bag, in a dry location.
- Masks should be rotated daily, for example using mask 1 on Monday, 2 on Tuesday and so on, returning to mask #1 on day 6. This can be done for one month (4 rotations) and then discard masks and bags.



When should I discard my KN95?

You should replace your KN95 when it:

- Becomes soiled
- No longer covers the nose and mouth
- Has stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- Cannot stay on the face
- Has holes or tears in the fabric

A KN95 may be disposed of in the normal trash.

KN95 Alternatives:

Benco employees may choose to wear a different mask than what Benco is providing for everyday use at work. The employee should ensure the following if wearing an alternative:

Do NOT wear masks with

- Gaps around the sides of the face or nose
- Two-way exhalation valves, vents, or other openings
- Single-layer fabric or those made of thin fabric that don't block light

DO wear masks with

- A proper fit over your nose and mouth to prevent leaks
- Multiple layers of non-woven material
- Nose wire



Ensuring that masks fit well on the face is very important to help prevent getting and spreading COVID-19. A common problem with some masks is that there can sometimes be gaps between the mask and the mask wearer's face. When there are gaps, air with respiratory droplets containing the virus can leak in and out around the edges of the mask (on the top or the sides). To help prevent air leakage, masks should fit snugly against the sides of the face and not have gaps.

Another important step to increase the protection offered by your mask is to improve filtration. Masks capture respiratory droplets containing the virus when the wearer breathes out, blocking them from reaching the outside air and protecting others. They also serve as a barrier to protect the wearer by capturing respiratory droplets containing the virus breathed out by others, so that the wearer does not breathe them in. A mask with improved filtration will stop more respiratory droplets containing the virus from getting inside your mask if others are sick or escaping from your mask if you are sick.



Exceptions to wearing a mask are:

- The employee is outdoors on break and is over 6 feet away from others.
- The employee is alone in a closed office space. The employee will be expected to sanitize all areas that they accessed while they had their mask off and wash their hands prior to accessing other areas of the program or interacting with co-workers and people supported.
- While eating or drinking. It is expected that the employee is in an isolated space at least 6 feet away from others and that they sanitize the space used and wash their hands prior to accessing other areas of the program or interacting with co-workers and people supported.

Other resources:

Benco employees may choose to purchase other masks on their own. Below are a few CDC recommended workplace performance masks:

- <https://unicornbreathingmask.com/collections/astm-f3502-masks>



Popular

Unicorn Natural Linen (Brown Band) - ASTM F3502 Mask

Reusable 3-ply

Includes 2 Filter Sets!

\$27.95

- <https://www.armbrustusa.com/products/the-better-mask>



The Better Mask High Filtration System



\$29.95

- <https://www.aries-usa.com/>

