



**POLICY TITLE**  
***COVID-19 Face Covering/Mask Policy***

**POLICY NUMBER**  
***7-007***

<b>Responsible Unit:</b> <i>Office of Human Resources</i> <i>Office of Student Affairs</i>	<b>Effective Date:</b> <i>08/01/2020</i>
<b>Responsible Official:</b> <i>Associate Vice President for Human Resources</i> <i>Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs</i>	<b>Last Reviewed Date:</b>
<b>Policy Classification:</b> <i>Human Resources</i>	<b>Origination Date:</b> <i>07/01/2020</i>

**I. POLICY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE**

In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, the university is implementing the following policy in order to prevent and/or slow the spread of COVID-19 among university community members. The CDC recommends that everyone wear some form of face covering/mask in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, as a means of reducing the incidence of spread of COVID-19 from potentially infected but asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic individuals.

- CDC recommends all people 2 years of age and older wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected. That's why it's important for everyone to wear masks in public settings and practice social distancing (staying at least 6 feet away from other people).
- While masks are strongly encouraged to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the CDC recognizes there are specific instances when wearing a mask may not be feasible.

CDC further indicates that masks should not be worn by:

- Children younger than 2 years old.
- Anyone who has trouble breathing.
- Anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Furthermore, consistent with guidance by the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) face coverings/masks should be worn in indoor public spaces and anytime in public when you are near individuals who are not members of your immediate household. Wearing a face covering/mask is about protecting others and when others wear a face covering/mask they protect you. Wearing a face covering/mask is not a substitute for maintaining a social distance of six feet from anyone not in your household.

<https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3940>

In effect, 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 recognized protections against COVID-19, wearing a face covering/mask that covers the nose and mouth can help protect others. In order to help ensure the health and safety of the university community and the public, face coverings/masks are required to be worn on-site at the university:

- Indoors when other people are present; this includes common areas, such as classrooms, shared-office spaces, hallways, stairways, restrooms and elevators, etc.
- Outdoors when keeping a six-foot distance from others may not be possible.
- Inside university vehicles

For the purposes of this policy, a face covering/mask means a cloth/fabric or a disposable surgical-style mask that covers the nose and mouth. While indoors, employees may remove their masks only if they are in their own enclosed private workspaces with no one else present, or a student in his/her privately assigned dorm room. This policy is subject to change based on requirements and guidance from federal, state, and local authorities and with ultimate approval by the campus chancellor.

## **II. POLICY SCOPE AND AUDIENCE**

This policy applies to employees (administrators, faculty, and staff), students, and visitors (vendors, parents, etc.) and requires all such individuals to wear face coverings/masks that cover their mouths and noses as described in the policy statement/rationale section.

## **III. POLICY COMPLIANCE**

If an employee indicates compliance is not possible due to medical reasons, the individual should be referred to Human Resources to request an accommodation. If a student indicates compliance is not possible due to medical reasons, the student should be referred to the Dean of Students (or equivalent unit) and Disability Services in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs to request an accommodation.

## **IV. POLICY DEFINITIONS**

*COVID-19*: There is currently an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2,” and the disease it causes has been named “Coronavirus Disease 2019” (COVID-19). On January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services (US HHS) issued a declaration of a public health emergency related to COVID-19 and mobilized the Operating Divisions of HHS. In addition, on March 13, 2020, the President declared a national emergency in response to COVID-19.

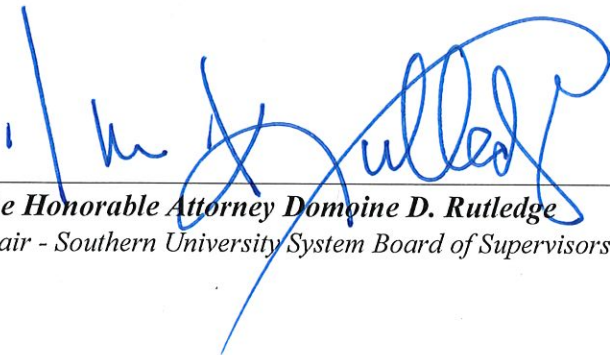
**IX. POLICY APPROVAL**



**Ray L. Belton, Ph.D.**

*President-Chancellor, Southern University and A&M College System*

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***Effective Date of Policy***



**The Honorable Attorney Domoin D. Rutledge**

*Chair - Southern University System Board of Supervisors*

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***Effective Date of Policy***