



Mandatory Face Coverings Bylaw 1253.20

1. Why did Council pass a mandatory face covering bylaw?

- a. In recent months, the second wave of COVID-19 has hit the Province of Alberta, and the numbers are rising every day. Many municipalities have passed temporary mandatory face-covering bylaws to slow down the virus and flatten the curve.

2. Is there even proof that face-coverings make a difference?

- a. Masks, appropriately worn, reduce the emission of droplets, which is especially critical for those who are asymptomatic or unaware of their infectiousness.
- b. While a face covering is not a substitute for social distancing or proper hand sanitization, it is essential to prevent the spread.

3. Where do I have to wear a face-covering?

- a. Within the town limits, everyone must wear a face-covering in every public indoor space or public transportation. Specifically, this means any municipal building, business, taxis, BOLT, etc.

4. What if I choose not to wear a face-covering?

- a. If you do not wear a face covering, you may be subject to fines and penalties. Fines will be \$100 and, upon summary of conviction, a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or a period of imprisonment may be issued at the discretion of the court.
- b. A violation ticket will be issued by either a member of the Blackfalds RCMP or a municipal enforcement team member.

5. Will there be an education grace period?

- a. There will be an education grace period of *one week* starting November 30 to make sure the public is aware of the proper way to wear face coverings and the bylaw itself.

6. Can I wear anything on my face as a face-covering?

- a. As per the bylaw, 'face coverings' means a medical or non-medical cloth or other face-covering covering the nose, mouth, and chin. You don't have to wear a medical issued mask; you can also wear a plastic shield, ski masks, etc.

7. I am unable to wear a face-covering due to a medical reason; am I exempt?

- a. Under Section 3.3 of the Face Coverings Bylaw, we do state the instances where this mandatory bylaw will not extend – including children under the age of 8, persons unable to wear a face-covering due to a mental or physical condition, and more. Anyone curious about the full details is encouraged to look over the bylaw and this specific section

8. The bylaw says this is temporary. When will it end?

- a. In this climate, it is not easy to gauge at what point face coverings will not be needed. However, Council will be bringing this bylaw back to Council during the first meeting of January 2021 for discussion.

9. Are there any COVID-19 cases in Blackfalds currently?

- a. Currently, we are still under the blanket of Lacombe County, which has 30 cases. Due to this mapping system, we have not had any official confirmation from AHS regarding an active case in Blackfalds. However, it is unwise to believe that Blackfalds does not have any active cases within the town, having over half of the population of Lacombe County.

10. Why didn't the public have any say in this bylaw being passed?

- a. As per the Municipal Government Act, a municipality may pass bylaws respecting people's safety, health, and welfare and the protection of people and property. It was for the safety of our citizens that this bylaw was passed as quickly as it was.

11. I own a business in Blackfalds. Do my staff have to wear masks if there are shields in place at the counter?

- a. No, you do not. If there are already protective measures in place including plexiglass shields, staff do not need to wear masks behind the counter.

12. Where can I find all this information?

- a. Keep up to date with the latest changes by visiting the blackfalds.com/COVID-19 webpage and follow us on our social media channels, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.