Face coverings are required on all Idaho State campuses.

All students, faculty, staff and campus visitors are required to properly wear cloth or disposable face coverings while on our campuses. Face coverings do not eliminate the need for physical distancing. Always remain at least 6 feet from other people. The general public should NOT use medical/surgical face masks outside of the health care setting.

Cloth Face Coverings

Recent research has shown that some cloth face coverings are more effective than others at stopping the spread of droplets. One should select face coverings that meet the following criteria:
- Constructed of two or more layers of breathable fabric
- Completely covers your mouth and nose
- Fits snugly against the side of your face and under the chin so that you do not have gaps

Idaho State branded masks issued to all employees and students meet this criteria. Recent studies have indicated that neck gaiters and bandanas may not be as effective as face coverings meeting the criteria above due to their material and thinness. If you are in a situation where you only have access to a neck gaiter or bandana you should fold or double up the fabric to add more layers for better protection. Face coverings with exhalation valves are not permitted.

Medical/Surgical Face Masks

The WHO, CDC, and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare agree that medical/surgical masks are not recommended outside of health care settings.

A surgical mask is meant to help block large droplets, splashes, sprays or splatter that may contain germs. They are meant to protect both the person wearing the mask and those around them in a health care setting.

Some health care facilities require that all staff and patients use medical/surgical face masks when on the premises. Doing so helps ensure that people who do not realize they are infected do not spread the infection to others when in a facility.

Respirator Masks

Respirator masks, such as N95 masks, are reserved for situations that pose a risk for high concentration of infected respiratory droplets. This pertains to some types of medical examinations or procedures that might result in aerosolization of respiratory droplets.

N95 masks and other respirators are in extremely short supply and must be reserved for the people who need them most: health care workers who are fighting this pandemic on the front lines.

The use of an N95 and all respirators by an employee requires participation in the ISU Respiratory Protection Program.