



# **HSE Guidance**

## **Face Coverings and Face Masks in the Workplace**

# Introduction

This guidance from the HSE covers face coverings and face masks in the context of the workplaces.

Face coverings are mainly intended to protect others and not the wearer. When used correctly, they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main sources of transmitting Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The risk of COVID infection at work must be managed by following the right controls, including:

- Social distancing or, where that is not possible, reducing the number of people in the work area.
- High standards of hand hygiene.
- Increasing surface washing.
- Assigning and keeping people to shift teams.
- Using screens and barriers to separate people from each other.
- 

Face coverings are not classed as personal protective equipment (PPE) because:

- There is currently no need to conform to a manufacturing standard.
- They do not provide protection for work risks such as dust and spray.

Surgical face masks are designed to be worn in medical settings to limit the spread of infection. They are not considered to be PPE when worn outside of healthcare activities.

Unlike face coverings, they:

- Are manufactured to a recognised standard.
- Are resistant to droplets of fluids and splashes.

HSE

May 2021



British Frozen Food Federation

Registered Office: Warwick House, Unit 7, Long Bennington Business Park, Main Road, Long Bennington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5JR

Tel: 01400 283090

Fax: 01400 283098

Websites: [www.bfff.co.uk](http://www.bfff.co.uk)

[www.freshfromthefreezer.co.uk](http://www.freshfromthefreezer.co.uk)

A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 7687541

VAT Reg. No. GB 115 5466 23

