



GUIDANCE FOR FACE COVERING EXEMPTIONS

In settings where face coverings are mandated in England, there are some circumstances, for health, age or equality reasons, whereby people are not expected to wear face coverings in these settings. Please be mindful and respectful of such circumstances noting that some people are less able to wear face coverings.

You can find the official government guidance on face coverings and exemptions here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

We ask that you consider taking the following steps and use the following language if you see someone entering or inside a store not wearing a face covering. Please note charity organisations working with the government have been made aware of this too.

1: You may see an individual wearing a visual cue that indicates they are exempt from wearing a face covering. Some examples can be found at the end of this document. They may also have made their own. It is not mandatory for an individual to wear a visual cue to outline they are exempt.

2: If you cannot see a visual cue but need to ask an individual to put on a face covering, please keep your distance to help protect them. You may need to remove your own face covering so your full face and mouth can be seen to speak to them. This will aid lip reading and facial expression reading, important for those with hearing difficulties and those who are autistic.

3: Ask the individual “Please can you wear a face covering if you are able to?” This allows the individual to reply with “I am not able to/I am exempt”, rather than just “I don’t want to”.

4: Once an individual has said they are not able to/exempt, you must take their word and allow them to continue. A verbal confirmation alone is enough. You must not ask for proof



of their medical exemption and it is not essential they show any form of exemption card at any point.

Please note if someone is travelling with or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading to communicate, they too are exempt from wearing a face covering.

Examples of visual cues individuals may be wearing

Please note any form of visual cue that indicates an exemption should be respected, however these are the most common you may see.

1. This asset was created in collaboration with the government and charity organisations working with those who are exempt for medical reasons. You are likely to see this the most. These may be as a badge, a lanyard, or other.

**Please
remove
your face
covering
so I can
understand
you better.**

**Be kind.
Keep your distance.
Thank you for
understanding.**



**I am
exempt
from
wearing
a face
covering.**

**Be kind.
Keep your distance.
Thank you for
understanding.**





2. The Sunflower Lanyard scheme:

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/shop/sunflower-lanyards.html>

3. Additional charity organisation scheme:

Action for Hearing Loss:

<https://actiononhearingloss.org.uk/2020/06/face-coverings-for-the-general-public/>

Alzheimers UK:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/helpcards#:~:text=Helpcards-.Helpcards.and%20are%20free%20to%20order>

Asthma UK:

<https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/coronavirus-covid-19/what-should-people-with-asthma-do-now/#Facemask>

British Lung Foundation:

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/coronavirus/what-should-people-with-a-lung-condition-do-now/face-coverings>

Transport for London: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/face-covering-exemption-card.pdf>