

# Q&A Casebook Related to the Administrative Order for Mandatory Mask-Wearing

※ The contents of this casebook are subject to change as the clinical and epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19 have not been sufficiently discovered. This casebook follows the Detailed Guidelines for Administrative Order for Mandatory Mask-Wearing, as well as the executive guidelines of the central government as of August 2020 and results of research performed by related academies.

## I. About Mask-wearing

Q1. Do I have to wear a mask at home?

- Wearing a mask at home (at a private place) is not mandatory.
- However, wearing a mask is recommended if a family member has a fever or respiratory symptoms.

Q2. Do infants have to wear a mask?

- Wearing a mask is not mandatory for infants younger than 24 months old as their respiratory organs are still growing and they may not be able to take off their masks if it becomes difficult to breathe.
- A caregiver should carefully observe an infant that is wearing a mask to prevent infection.

Q3. Do hospitalized patients have to wear a mask?

- Exemptions are applied for critical patients whose health can deteriorate if they wear a mask and patients with underlying diseases who could find it difficult to breathe when wearing a mask.
- If there are other cases in which patients find it very inconvenient to wear a mask, exemptions can be applied based on a doctor's advice.

Q4. How do I wear a mask when I get dental treatment?

- Masks may be removed if treatment is only possible without a mask at a dental or ear-nose-and-throat clinic.
- However, a mask must be worn before and after treatment.

Q5. How do I wear a mask when I brush my teeth at work?

- It is okay not to wear a mask for personal sanitation activities, such as taking a bath, showering, washing one's face, and brushing one's teeth.
- However, a mask must be worn before and after such activities.

Q6. Why don't the casts of TV programs wear masks?

- Exceptions are applied for professional singers, actors/actresses, dubbing artists, broadcasters, models, or artists who perform or become part of the cast for audiovisual material and need to take off their masks for their job or to make money.
- However, they must wear a mask before and after the TV program or performance. Individuals that are not part of the cast, including staff of the broadcasting station, must always wear a mask.

Q7. Why don't civil servants, including the government officials, wear masks during briefings?

- Exceptions are applied when it is clearly difficult to achieve an objective while wearing a mask during public business of the central or local government or public institution, such as foreign affairs, national defense, investigation, rescue, relief, press releases, etc.
- It is okay not to wear a mask if prompt and precise delivery of information to the public is required. However, one must wear a mask before and after the briefing, as well as the surrounding people concerned.

Q8. Do I have to wear a mask while taking pictures?

- Masks must be worn when taking pictures for private purposes. However, masks may be removed for taking pictures of oneself (ID picture, passport photo, etc.) to submit to the central or local government or a public institution.
- Masks may be removed for taking pictures if there are no other people (other than family members) within 2 meters.

#### Q9. Why don't athletes wear masks?

- As a case in which one must take off their mask for their job or to make money, exceptions are applied for professional athletes participate in a sports game or competition.
- However, players are checked for fever and respiratory symptoms before starting the game or competition and must wear a mask before and after the game. Other concerned individuals must always wear a mask.

#### Q10. Do YouTubers have to wear a mask?

- YouTubers should wear masks. However, they can create videos without a mask if they are filmed at home (private living place) or in a separate place alone without any other people or family members.
- YouTubers can also film videos outdoors without a mask if there are no other people (other than family members) within 2 meters.

#### Q11. Do I have to wear a mask when I play in the water at a water park, stream, or river?

- It is recommended to refrain from going to water parks, streams, or rivers where there is a high risk of coming into contact with other people while the measures for social distancing higher than level 2 are in effect.
- It is okay to remove a mask if it is inevitable to do activities in the water, such as swimming. However, masks must be worn before and after water activities.

#### Q12. Can I take off my mask for smoking?

- Exemptions from mandatory mask-wearing are applied when eating food. As cigarettes are classified as a “favorite food,” smoking is considered to be food consumption and, therefore, masks may be removed when smoking.

- However, quitting smoking is strongly recommended as there is the possibility of transmitting infectious diseases while smoking without a mask and smokers are classified as a high-risk group in relation to COVID-19.
- If it is inevitable to smoke, one must comply with prevention regulations, such as distancing from other people and refraining from conversing.

Q13. Do I have to wear a mask when I go hiking, walking, or exercising outdoors?

- If it is difficult to keep a distance of 2 meters from other people (other than family members), a mask must be worn while hiking, walking, or exercising outdoors.

Q14. Do I have to wear a mask while working in the office?

- Masks must be worn unless alone in a separate space, eating food, or doing personal medical or sanitary activities.

Q. Do I have to wear a mask if I work by myself in the office?

- It is okay not to wear a mask if alone or with family members in the office.
- However, a mask must be worn if someone visits the office from outside.

Q15. Is it complying with the mandatory mask-wearing when I cover my mouth without totally covering my nose?

- It is not possible to protect one's respiratory organs from the virus when covering only the chin or mouth without covering the nose.
- It is not considered wearing a mask if both the nose and mouth are not covered.

Q16. Do I have to wear a mask in a restaurant or a cafe?

- It is okay to remove a mask if it is inevitable to eat consumables at a cafe or a restaurant. However, a mask must be worn before and after eating and when conversing.
- ※ As of August 30, 2020, eating food in a cafe is prohibited according to the reinforced measure of level 2 social distancing.
- It is recommended to keep one's mask clean if it is taken off for a moment.

Q17. Do I have to wear a mask when I sing in karaoke rooms?

- It is strongly recommended to refrain from visiting karaoke rooms during the pandemic as it is classified as a high-risk facility for its characteristics (sealed and crowded).
- ※ As of August 19, 2020, gathering at karaoke rooms is prohibited according to the reinforced measure of level 2 social distancing.
- If it is inevitable, a mask must always be worn, including while singing.

Q18. Can I wear a cotton mask to comply with the mandatory mask-wearing regulations?

- It is strongly recommended to wear one of the “quasi-drug” masks, such as the medical, surgical, and droplet-proof masks, that are authorized by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety after confirming its safety and function to block the droplets.
- However, in consideration of the vulnerable classes who find it difficult to buy masks, recyclable cotton masks can be worn to follow the mandatory mask-wearing regulations.

Q19. Can I wear a mesh mask to comply with the mandatory mask-wearing regulations?

- Acknowledged types of masks are medical, surgical (dental), droplet-proof, and cotton masks.
- Mesh masks are not acknowledged as their effect of blocking droplets has not been proven so far.

Q20. How do I wear a mask at a wedding?

- Everyone who attends a wedding should wear a mask in principle.
- However, following the social distancing guidelines in a wedding hall of the government (Family Culture Division of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family-2544), the bride and the groom may be exempt from wearing masks in the wedding hall.
- ※ Everyone must wear a mask when taking a group picture. However, the bride and the groom and their parents can remove their masks

temporarily when taking photos.

## II. About Administrative Measures

### Q1. Isn't the guidance period too long?

- Article 83 (4) of the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act, the law that imposes fines on those violate the order, was revised on August 12 and will be enforced starting on October 13.
- As such, before the implementation of the supporting law, fines cannot be imposed but only guidance can be offered.
- ※ When it comes to public transportation, a preemptive mandatory mask-wearing regulation is in operation (as of May 13). If someone does not wear a mask in the subway, they can face fines starting from KRW 250,000 and going up to KRW 1 million. As for medium-risk facilities, a mandatory mask-wearing regulation is in operation following the limitation of gatherings (as of August 19), and those who violate the measure can face fines of up to KRW 3 million.
- However, even during the guidance period, any disinfection/disease prevention costs, such as testing, investigation, and treatment expenses related to the diagnosis, generated due to the violation of the mandatory mask-wearing regulations will be the responsibility of the perpetrator.

### Q2. Until when do I have to wear a mask?

- Social distancing is currently set at level 2. If the situation is adjusted to level 1, the administrative order for mandatory mask-wearing will be removed.
- It is strongly recommended to wear a mask following the disease prevention regulations of the “social distancing in daily life,” even after the mandatory mask-wearing regulation is lifted.

### Q3. If a person living in a district outside of Seoul is caught violating the mandatory mask-wearing order in Seoul, is the Seoul Metropolitan Government the principle agent of administrative action?

- As visitors of Seoul are included in the range of targets of the administrative order by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, it is the

SMG that is the principle agent of administrative action.

Q4. If someone is caught violating the mandatory mask-wearing order, what administrative action will be taken?

- The perpetrator can face fines of up to KRW 100,000 pursuant to Article 83 (4) of the Infectious Disease Control and Prevention Act as it is a violation of Article (1) 2-4 of the same Act. Any disinfection/disease prevention costs, such as testing, investigation, and treatment expenses related to the diagnosis, generated due to the violation of the mandatory mask-wearing regulations will be the responsibility of the perpetrator.
- However, the imposition of fines will be postponed until October 12, 2020. Until then, the regulation is still in the guidance period when crackdown and disposition are suspended. Detailed range and methods of crackdown after the guidance period end will be announced during the guidance period.
- ※ When it comes to public transportation, a preemptive mandatory mask-wearing regulation is in operation (as of May 13). If someone does not wear a mask in the subway, they can face fines starting from KRW 250,000 and going up to KRW 1 million. As for medium-risk facilities, a mandatory mask-wearing regulation is in operation following the limitation of gatherings (as of August 19), and those who violate the measure can face fines of up to KRW 3 million.

Q5. From when will site inspections be conducted?

- Currently, the SMG is concentrating its administrative power towards site inspections of facilities with a risk of collective infections, such as high-risk and medium-risk facilities.
- The range of targets of the site inspections will be expanded gradually. Targets and methods of inspection will be announced separately.

Q6. How and through what channel can I report a person who violates the mandatory mask-wearing order?

- The SMG does not operate a separate channel for reports during the guidance period but will concentrate on promotion and instruction.
- The channels and methods for reporting persons who violate the mandatory

mask-wearing regulations will be announced before the end of the guidance period.

Q7. Does a company get punished if its employee doesn't wear a mask or wears a mask improperly while at work?

- The fines will be imposed on the individual who violates the order.
- However, the company should do its best as the manager of disinfection/prevention to make efforts to prevent the spread of infectious diseases and comply with the disinfection/prevention regulations.