



## CNESST<sup>1</sup> new directive on face masks for personnel in current context of COVID-19 Variants as of December 20, 2021

In an attempt to slow down the transmission of OMICRON in schools and workplaces, Public Health authorities and CNESST are putting in place temporary heightened measures. These additional measures aim to limit the transmission of OMICRON in our schools and offices.

Thus, effective immediately, it is **MANDATORY FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS TO WEAR A MEDICAL/ PROCEDURAL MASK AT ALL TIMES** while on school/centre/head office grounds, indoors and outdoors, REGARDLESS OF THE 2M DISTANCE OR PHYSICAL BARRIERS (including personnel *working in shared office spaces or reception areas*).

*Notes:*

*\*Only masks provided by the Board are accepted (unless prior authorization)*

*\*A distance of 2m must be maintained at all times between individuals both indoors and outdoors*

*Exceptions:*

*-An employee working alone in a closed room/office. A mask must be worn to leave the room/office or when someone enters the room/office*

*-An employee with a medical condition justifying a mask exemption*

*-When seated and eating or drinking\* while maintaining a 2m distance*

*-When communication/comprehension/learning is hindered, a teacher/professional/support staff may remove the mask for a very short period of time while maintaining a 2m distance if all students are wearing masks or behind a physical barrier or wear a clear mask and a visor if the student cannot wear a mask or maintain a 2m distance.*

\*Although we realize that lunch/break periods are times to socialize with our colleagues, the next few weeks will be critical. Thus, in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 variants, the recommendations for eating/break periods are as follows:

Ideally, staff members should eat individually before joining colleagues. If not possible, staff members are:

- encouraged to reconfigure seating in the staff/lunch room to ensure at least 2m is respected
- encouraged to choose alternative eating areas to reduce the number of occupants in the staff/lunch room.
- encouraged to establish rotations to reduce the number of occupants in the staff/lunch room
- reminded to remove their masks just before eating and put back on immediately after
- encouraged not to remove their masks for a period longer than 15min (and only to eat or drink)
- encouraged to maintain minimal contact/exchange with others while eating. Mask should be put back on when speaking with colleagues
- encouraged, weather permitting, to take their lunch/break period outdoors in which case a distance of 2m must be maintained
- reminded that gatherings are not permitted during these periods
- reminded that the physical distancing and wearing of mask measures above apply to smoking breaks

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/en/prevention-and-safety/covid-19/covid-19-toolkit>