

## Disability Exemptions of the Order\*\*\*

**Who is covered by the exemption for “a person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)”?**

Most people, including those with disabilities, can tolerate and safely wear a mask and are required to wear one as per CDC’s Order. However, certain people with disabilities who, because of their disability, cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, are exempted from CDC’s mask-wearing requirement.

The exemption is not meant to cover people with disabilities for whom wearing a mask might only be difficult or whose disability does not prevent them from wearing a mask or wearing a mask safely.

The following narrow subset of persons with disabilities are exempt from CDC’s requirement to wear a mask:

- A person with a disability who, for reasons related to the disability, would be physically unable to remove a mask without assistance if breathing becomes obstructed. Examples might include a person with impaired motor skills, quadriplegia, or limb restrictions.
- A person with an intellectual, developmental, cognitive, or psychiatric disability that affects the person’s ability to understand the need to remove a mask if breathing becomes obstructed.

The following persons with disabilities might be exempt from CDC’s requirement to wear a mask based on factors specific to the person:

- A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask because it would cause the person to be unable to breathe or have respiratory distress if a mask were worn over the mouth and nose. A person with a condition that causes intermittent respiratory distress, such as asthma, likely does not qualify for this exemption because people with asthma, or other similar conditions, can generally wear a mask safely.
- A person with a disability requiring the use of an assistive device, such as for mobility or communication, that prevents the person from wearing a mask and wearing or using the assistive device at the same time. If use of the device is intermittent and the person can remove the mask independently to use the device, then a mask must be worn during periods when the person is not using the device.
- A person with a severe sensory disability or a severe mental health disability who would pose an imminent threat of harm to themselves or others if required to wear a mask. Persons who experience discomfort or anxiety while wearing a mask without imminent threat of harm would not qualify for this exemption.

*\*\*\*a driver will seat the rider in the wheelchair seat area or other area of the bus where 6 feet of social distance can be maintained from others. If social distance of at least 6 feet cannot be maintained from others, the bus is then considered at capacity for riders that cannot wear a face mask and the rider who cannot wear a mask may have to wait for the next available bus.*



## CDC Face Mask Requirement

### On Public Transportation Conveyances & At Transportation Hubs

Federal law effective 2/01/2021 (TSA Security Directive 1582/84-21-01) requires passengers to wear proper face masks when using public transportation or at transportation hubs. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough public transit system is required to adhere to federal and state regulations.

This brochure highlights important information. To read the full face mask requirements visit the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website at: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html)

Ketchikan Gateway Borough Transit procedures and policies are noted with an asterisk (\*) at the bottom of the page.



4/28/21 CDCb

Ketchikan Gateway Borough  
Transit Department - The Bus

Phone: 907-225-8726 8am-5pm M-F  
Email: [transit@kgbak.us](mailto:transit@kgbak.us)

The CDC issued an Order that requires face masks to be worn by all travelers while on public transportation (which includes all passengers and all personnel operating conveyances).

People must wear masks that completely cover both the mouth and nose while awaiting, boarding, disembarking, or traveling on airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares as they are traveling into, within, or out of the United States and U.S. territories.

People must also wear masks while at transportation hubs (e.g., airports, bus or ferry terminals, train and subway stations, seaports, U.S. ports of entry, and other locations where people board public transportation in the United States and U.S. territories).

#### **The following categories of people are exempt from the requirement to wear a mask:**

- A child under the age of 2 years; a person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*); **See “Disability Exemptions of the Order” on back of brochure**
- A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations.

People are not required to wear a mask under the following circumstances:

- while eating, drinking, or taking medication for brief periods of time;\*
- while communicating for brief periods of time with a person who is hearing impaired when the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;

\* eating and drinking is not allowed aboard The Bus.

- if, on an aircraft, wearing oxygen masks is needed because of loss of cabin pressure or other event affecting aircraft ventilation;
- if unconscious (for reasons other than sleeping), incapacitated, unable to be awakened, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance;
- when necessary to temporarily remove the mask to verify one’s identity such as during Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screening or when asked to do so by the ticket or gate agent or any law enforcement official;
- when experiencing difficulty breathing or shortness of breath or feeling winded, until able to resume normal breathing with the mask;
- when vomiting until vomiting ceases; or if wearing a mask interferes with necessary medical care such as supplemental oxygen administered via an oxygen mask.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

##### **What kind of mask should I wear?**

People must wear masks that completely cover the mouth and nose. Masks should fit snugly against the sides of the face. See CDC’s guidance for attributes of masks needed to fulfill the requirements of the Order.

##### **Can I wear a face shield instead of a mask?**

Face shields do not fulfill the requirements of the Order. Face shields may be worn in addition to a mask that fulfills the requirements of the Order, but face shields may **not** be worn **instead of** a mask. A face shield is effective at protecting the person wearing it from splashes to the face, particularly the eyes, but face shields do **not** protect others from respiratory droplets exhaled by the wearer. A face shield worn without a mask also does not protect the person wearing it from inhaling respiratory droplets.

##### **What happens if I don’t wear a mask on a public transportation conveyance?**

Operators of public transportation conveyances must refuse to board anyone not wearing a mask that completely covers the mouth and nose and require that everyone on board wears a mask for the entire duration of travel. If a passenger refuses to comply, the operator must disembark the person at the earliest safe opportunity.

##### **Do I need to wear a mask if I have recovered from COVID-19?**

Yes, the order requires all travelers to wear a mask, including those who have recovered from COVID-19.

##### **Do I need to wear a mask if I have had a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes, the order requires all travelers to wear a mask, including those who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

##### **What if another person near me refuses to wear a mask?**

If you are on a conveyance and a passenger near you refuses to wear a mask, alert personnel working on the conveyance (e.g., crew member, driver, conductor) for assistance. If you are in a transportation hub, notify a staff member or security personnel.\*\*

\*\* tell the bus driver or if at a bus stop call the Transit Department at (907) 225-8726 open 8am-5pm M-F