

ODA Guidance on Face Coverings

IN CAMPUS BUILDINGS

Are students required to share their ODA accommodation information with the UNT employee upon request?

The ODA cannot require students to demonstrate their association with the office outside of the classroom for the receipt of academic accommodations. However, students who have been approved for a face covering exemption through the ODA will be emailed a COVID-19 Accommodation Letter as soon as they are approved so that the student can have it available if asked to present it. If a student is seen in a UNT building without a mask and states that they have an exemption due to disability, the student should be able to show the email from ODA approving the accommodation for the face mask exemption. In addition, please refer to the guidance at <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/return/non-compliance#> on how to navigate those situations.

DURING CLASS

For students experiencing issues with restricted breathing, are there possible alternatives to wearing disposable or cloth face masks?

Instructors may learn that some students in their courses may have issues wearing disposable or cloth face masks due to a variety of reasons, including those with certain respiratory, psychiatric, or medical disorders. Fortunately, there are reasonable alternatives to the disposable and cloth face masks that include wearing a scarf, bandana, loose face covering, or full face shield as reasonable alternatives to a face mask so that your breathing will not be as restricted. However, if these modifications still present barriers to breathing for the student due to disability, please refer the student to ODA.

How will instructors know which students in their in-person classes have a face covering exemption?

Students who have been approved for a face covering exemption through the ODA will be emailed a COVID-19 Accommodation Letter as soon as they are approved so that the student will have access to present it upon request. ODA is also working on adding this accommodation under the heading "COVID-19 Pandemic Accommodations" to students' Fall 2020 ODA Accommodation Letters.

What is the best way for instructors to approach students not wearing face coverings in class?

Because this interaction would most likely occur in a classroom with other students, the ODA recommends that an instructor not ask a student about an accommodation letter during class. If the instructor sees a student without a mask in class, remind them that masks are required. Should the student respond that they are not able to wear one, guidance from <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/return/non-compliance> states: "if a student reports that their

refusal to wear, or not wear, a covering is due to a disability, refer them to the Office of Disability Access, but try to make an appropriate exception at the time. Do not ask questions related to a disability or medical condition.”

What should instructors do if they are uncertain about receiving an accommodation letter or whether the exemption was listed?

The easiest option would be for instructors to check the **AIM Instructor Portal** and view the student’s accommodation letter to see if there are any COVID-19 accommodations listed. If still unsure, instructors can always reach out to ODA at Apply.ODA@unt.edu to inquire about the student’s approval for the accommodation. Please note that the ODA will respond to those inquiries as quickly as possible; however, there may be a 24-48 hour delay depending on the volume of inquiries.