

Five Tips for Face Mask Safety



For People who are Blind and Visually Impaired

Due to the challenges presented by COVID-19 and the current order for Commonwealth residents to wear a required mask or face-covering in public places where social distancing is not possible, MCB has heard reports from many people who are blind and visually impaired regarding face masks having a negative impact on orientation and mobility with loss of facial vision.

Our Orientation & Mobility experts offered these 5 tips to assist the people we serve in face mask safety and best practices to maintain mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Get a Face Mask. At some point now or in the future, you will need a face mask or face covering to ensure the safety of yourself and those around you when you go out in public and to comply with current government orders. Many cities and towns are offering free face masks to residents, so contact your local officials to find out how you can pick up a face mask or have one delivered. There are many online tutorials for how to make your own face masks as well. If you would like to purchase a face mask or face covering, many are available in local pharmacies and hardware stores. Face masks are also available for purchase online from major retailers and local artisan sites. Beware of delayed delivery dates and possible scams when ordering online.

2. Practice Wearing a Face Mask. Wear a face mask indoors in a familiar environment to get acclimated to your face mask and to learn how to put the face mask on and off safely. Test a variety of masks prior to determining which face mask style works best for your orientation and mobility. Some of the discomfort and disorientation will likely subside over time and with practice.

3. Wear a Face Mask. A face mask provides an extra layer of protection for you and the people around you, especially when social distancing is not possible or when you cannot comply with social distancing guidance due to blindness or visual impairment.

4. Rely on Mobility Aids. You may need to rely upon your guide dog or mobility device like a white cane more often when wearing a face mask due to interference with your facial vision and lack of orientation.

5. Contact MCB. Our team is here for you. Please call MCB mobility experts at 617-626-7581 or email MCBinfo@mass.gov if you are experiencing challenges wearing or accessing a face mask. We will assist you as best as possible. We wish you and your families health and safety. Please share the face mask tips and techniques that help you maintain mobility. Which face mask style works best for you to maintain mobility?