



STATEMENT

Use of masks and extension of preventative measures at the House of Commons

Ottawa, Ontario – January 29, 2021

The Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy, reports the following decision of the Board:

- It is now mandatory for any person, including Members and their staff, political research office employees, Administration employees, members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery, and parliamentary business visitors, to wear a mask / face covering in the House of Commons precinct, **including the Chamber and committee rooms (except when the Member is at their place during parliamentary proceedings), Members' offices, and House Administration work environments (excluding workstations/desks where two-metre physical distancing is possible).**
- This change is effective Monday, February 1, 2021, until Wednesday, June 23, 2021, and supersedes earlier measures regarding the mandatory use of masks / face coverings in the House of Commons precinct that were first announced by the Board on [September 18, 2020](#).

Masks are to be worn in the following House of Commons precinct areas:

- **The Chamber and committee rooms, except when the Member is at their place during parliamentary proceedings**
- **Members' offices and Administration offices, excluding workstations/desks where two-metre physical distancing is possible**
- Building entrances
- Elevator lobbies
- Hallways, including common hallways within House Administration work areas
- Washrooms
- Locker rooms
- Cafeterias and canteens
- Indoor parking lots

- Elevators and escalators
- Stairways
- Meeting rooms and multipurpose rooms
- Collaboration spaces
- Lunchrooms and kitchenettes

The requirement to wear a mask / face covering will not apply to:

- The Chamber and committee rooms **when Members are at their place during parliamentary proceedings**. However, it is strongly recommended that Members wear a mask / face covering when they are at their place during parliamentary proceedings.
- Members and other individuals participating in a press conference, including scrums, **where two-metre physical distancing measures have been implemented**.
- **Workstations/desks in Members' offices and Administration offices where two-metre physical distancing is possible**.

The following persons are exempted from wearing a mask / face covering:

- A person who has a medical condition that precludes the safe wearing of a mask / face covering or who is unable to put on or remove the mask / face covering without the assistance of another person
- A person who needs to temporarily remove the mask / face covering to consume food or drink

The following measures, previously approved by the Board, remain in effect until further notice:

- The House of Commons precinct is closed to public visitors, and public tours are suspended
- Committee travel is suspended
- Parliamentary activities in the precinct that are not essential to the functioning of Parliament are suspended

These decisions were made to meet ongoing recommendations from public health authorities to help limit the spread of COVID-19 within the work environment.

Through its Occupational Health and Safety team, which includes nurse counsellors, the House of Commons Administration works closely with Ottawa public health officials and also refers to Gatineau public health officials in the event of follow-up questions for those living in that region.

Additional preventative measures remain in place, including increased cleaning of high-traffic areas, a special COVID-19 cleaning and disinfecting service, additional hand-sanitizing stations, and the modification of physical spaces with plexiglass screens where required. Anyone who is experiencing cold, flu or COVID-like symptoms, or who has

been in close contact with someone who is experiencing these symptoms, as well as anyone who is awaiting a test result, is returning from international travel, has been in contact with someone who has COVID-19 or has received an alert from the COVID-19 Alert app is reminded not to access the House of Commons precinct.

For more information:

Heather Bradley
Director of Communications
Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons
613-995-7882
heather.bradley@parl.gc.ca

[Follow us](#)

