**FACIAL COVERINGS Q&A**

U.S. European Command, 7 Apr 2020

**Q: What type of mask am I supposed to wear?**

A: Military services will distribute guidance for their military personnel. Until that guidance is provided, military personnel, U.S. civilian employees and family members are encouraged to fashion face coverings from household items or common materials, such as clean T-shirts or other clean materials that can cover the nose and mouth area.

**Q: Where do I get a mask?**

A: Military personnel may receive guidance from their service, but also are encouraged to purchase or make their own cloth face coverings from household items or common materials, such as clean T-shirts or other clean clothes that can cover the nose and mouth area in the interim.

**Q: How do I make my own mask if I can't sew?**

A: For tips on various ways to create a cloth face covering, visit the Center for Disease Control link below:  

**Q: Will this face covering prevent me from getting the virus?**

A: Cloth face coverings are an extra measure to help prevent transmission of the virus. It decreases risk of your spreading the virus if you were infected but without symptoms, not knowing you have the virus. To protect yourself from getting infected with the virus, it is critical to continue social distancing measures and hygiene measures, like frequent hand-washing and not touching your face, and wiping down commonly touched surfaces.

**Q: Do I have to buy the mask or will it be issued to me?**

A: Military departments are publishing guidance to include how to obtain the coverings or fashion them yourself. You and your family may purchase cloth face coverings online. You may also create face coverings from household items or common materials, such as clean T-shirts or other clean materials that can cover the nose and mouth area.
Surgical masks and N95 respirators are in short supply and should be reserved for healthcare workers or other medical first responders, as recommended by CDC guidance.

**Q: When do I wear a mask?**
A: It is encouraged to wear a cloth face covering when you may not be able to maintain the six feet of physical distancing in public areas, and any other location where base command guidance is enforced. This does not include in a service member’s or service family member's personal residence on (or off) a military installation.

**Q: Who should not wear a mask?**
A: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children younger than 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.

**Q: How long do I have to wear the mask?**
A: Cloth face coverings are to be worn when you are unable to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing, and for the duration of the time spent in any other location where base command guidance is enforced.

**Q: When will this be implemented at my base?**
A: The DoD guidance was issued on April 5, 2020. Base commanders are implementing their processes locally, and sharing specific guidance through local installation channels.

**Q: Do I have to wear a new mask each day or can I wear the same one?**
A: The purpose of the cloth face covering is to prevent the spread of the virus. Individuals should use a new, clean cloth face covering each day and should be laundered between uses.
Q: Is the guidance for everyone or just military personnel?
A: The guidance is for all military personnel, DoD civilian employees, family members, DoD contractors, and other individuals on DoD property. For those living and working off-base, personnel will adhere to host nation guidelines.

Q: Whose guidance to I follow? (COCOM, Service, Base Commander?)
A: For the type of cloth face covering to wear, refer to the DoD guidance along with your service-specific guidelines. When to wear the covering may be specific to the installation commander’s guidance, so you should follow those requirements.

Q: Do I need to wear my mask when I enter the base?
A: While it is not mandatory that you wear a face covering when you enter the base, if you do have one on, you will be asked to lower the covering so that security personnel may verify your identity.

Q: What happens if I forget my mask when I come to work? Will I be sent home?
A: You will need to retrieve your cloth face covering if your work center has deemed the wear of facial covering necessary in your workspace.

Q: Do I need to wear a mask when I enter the Exchange? Commissary? Mini-mart? Gas Station?
A: This decision will be made by the installation commander. With narrow aisles and check-out lanes, it is strongly encouraged that personnel wear their cloth face covering in store locations.

Q: Do I need to wear one if I’m at home or in my yard?
A: When you are in your residence, whether on or off-base, you do not need to wear a cloth face covering.

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