



STATEMENT

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

Ottawa, Ontario – September 18, 2020

The Honourable Anthony Rota, Speaker of the House of Commons and Chair of the Board of Internal Economy, confirms that the Board has determined that 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 common areas in the House of Commons precinct. This change is effective Monday, September 21.

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

- Building entrances
- Elevator lobbies
- Hallways, including those within work areas
- Washrooms
- Locker rooms
- Cafeterias and canteens
- Indoor parking lots
- Elevators and escalators
- Stairways
- Meeting rooms and multipurpose rooms (*masks / face coverings can be removed once all participants are in place and can maintain physical distancing)
- Collaboration spaces
- Lunchrooms and kitchenettes

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

- Sittings in the Chamber (including the lobbies) and committee meetings
- Members participating in a press conference, including scrums
- Members' offices and House Administration work environments (notably when an employee is at their workstation or in their office)

However, masks are recommended in these areas if physical distancing is not 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 Board has also determined that the following measures remain in effect until further notice:

- The House of Commons precinct is closed to public visitors and public tours are 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 the COVID-19 virus 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. A [telephone medical advisory service](#) is in place for Members, their families and their staff if they are experiencing health problems that may be linked to COVID-19. As the COVID-19 situation evolves, the House Administration has added services to cover the specific needs of Members.

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, is reminded not to access the House of Commons precinct.

Hon. Anthony Rota, M.P.

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](#)

