



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF
OCCUPATIONAL AND
ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE

ACOEM POSITION STATEMENT

ACOEM Calls for National Mandate Requiring Use of Masks to Contain the Spread of COVID-19

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) expresses its great concern about the apparent inability in most areas of the United States (U.S.) to contain the current COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly five months into this health crisis, we see daily evidence that the number of new infections and number of deaths are increasing at alarming rates. Similarly, we see daily evidence that hospitals and other medical facilities in areas of infection “hot spots” are running out of beds and equipment. It is also impactful and worrisome that control of the virus in the U.S. has been so much less successful than that in most other developed and underdeveloped countries.

Accordingly, ACOEM calls for the immediate adoption of a national mandate to require the wearing of a mask or other face covering in public. This mandate should require mask wearing by all people when it is not possible to maintain adequate physical distancing.

We believe that covering the nose and mouth is necessary to limit further spread of COVID-19, and thereby to relieve the mounting demands on limited health care services, to support restarting the U.S. economy, and to facilitate the reopening of schools, colleges, and universities in the fall. We anticipate that compliance with that mandate will provide a remarkably high rate of benefits for a dramatically small financial cost.

ABOUT ACOEM

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) is an international society of 4,000 occupational and environmental physicians and other health care professionals. The College provides leadership to promote optimal health and safety of workers, workplaces, and environments. ACOEM maintains a database of physicians available to consult with businesses regarding COVID-19.

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