

HOW TO TALK TO CUSTOMERS ABOUT

WEARING A FACE MASK

If a customer enters your business without a mask, you can **request that they cover their nose and mouth with a mask** while inside. Everyone is required by law to wear a mask (unless exempted), **EVEN if they are vaccinated.**

If a customer still refuses, **you could:**

- **Make a second request**, or ask the owner/manager to speak to the customer.
- **Make a general announcement** to all customers as a reminder of the masking requirement.
- **Offer curbside pickup of their items**, and ask that they wait outside until their order is ready.

Under some circumstances, **you might still have to interact with an unmasked customer.**



If a customer is unmasked:

- **Protect Yourself**
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a mask
 - Maintain at least 6 feet of distance, or as much distance as possible
 - In case of emergency, call 911

BUSINESS FACE MASK REQUIREMENTS FAQ

Are businesses required to enforce mask usage with customers?

Businesses in Philadelphia are required to ensure that their customers wear face masks. Face mask use reduces the spread of COVID-19 and saves lives.

Can businesses deny or refuse service to customers not wearing a face mask?

Businesses may deny entry or refuse service to a customer not wearing a face mask, except they may be required to provide service or a reasonable accommodation in some circumstances (e.g., if a customer has a disability that prevents mask wearing).

How can an employee make a request for a customer to wear a face mask?

If a customer enters your business without a mask, you are allowed to approach the customer to make a reasonable request that they cover their nose and mouth with a mask, scarf, bandana, or other covering while they are inside.

A second request can be made, or the owner or manager can approach the customer to make a request.

If you do not feel comfortable approaching a customer alone, you should be assisted by an additional employee, or a general announcement can be made over the intercom to all customers as a reminder of the masking requirement.

Give yourself enough space to move away if the customer's reaction becomes aggressive. You should never approach a customer in an aggressive or forceful manner. Avoid approaching the customer in tight spaces, such as between aisles or against a wall. You should never be required to risk your own personal safety or the safety of others.

If a customer reacts in a way that threatens physical harm or otherwise creates an emergency situation, call 911.

What alternatives can be offered to a customer who refuses to put on a face mask correctly?

An offer to assist the customer with home delivery or curbside pickup of their items can be made. Request that the customer exit to await their delivery.

What are some de-escalation techniques for talking to a customer refusing a face mask?

Keep your facial expression neutral – try not to frown or squint your eyes.

Speak in a clear voice at a normal volume and speed.

Make eye contact and reduce the use of hand gestures.

Use open body language, such as keeping a relaxed posture and your arms loose at your sides.

What happens if a customer refuses to put on a face mask after a reasonable request has been made?

Employees that are required to complete the sale should make sure to follow normal safety protocols carefully: wear a properly fitted mask covering the nose and mouth, maintain at least 6 feet of distance from the customer, and thoroughly wash hands or use hand sanitizer to minimize risk.

For more information on steps businesses can take to keep customers and employees safe visit WWW.PHILA.GOV/COVID-19.