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Information from the Hessian Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration on compulsory mask-wearing in Hesse

Citizens in Hesse must wear a mouth-nose covering since spring 2020, and it has been compulsory to wear a medical mask in some areas since 23 January 2021. The existing obligations to wear a mask were again standardized in the Corona Virus Protection Ordinance (CoSchuV) from 23.06.2021.

A surgical mask or protective mask at standards FFP2, KN95, N95 or comparable without exhalation valve (medical mask) must be worn:

- in local and long-distance public transport, e.g. buses, trains, taxis, ships, ferries and aircraft
- in railway stations and airports in addition to bus stops, underground stations and on station platforms
- at large events in crowded situations, especially at entrances and in queues
- in interior areas of work and production sites. This does not apply when seated in areas not accessible to the public, provided that a spacing of 1.5 meters from other persons can be safely maintained.
- in indoor public areas of wholesale and retail trade (wholesale and retail), filling stations, laundries, bank and post office branches, weekly markets, etc., and in addition to the areas in front of these stores, wherever customers have access
- in covered shopping centres and in covered streets and areas with shops and shopping streets
- during participation in gatherings of religious communities for the communal practice of religion as well as funeral services and funerals in closed rooms until seated
- in interior public areas of service establishments and comparable facilities. The mask requirement applies to both customers and service providers.
- in all healthcare facilities such as hospitals and doctors' surgeries
- in colleges, vocational and music academies, as well as at their face-to-face events outside their own buildings until seated
- in indoor public areas of overnight accommodation until a seat is taken, for example in bar or restaurant areas or in the lobby
- during participation in educational services which take place in closed rooms until seated
- during participation in offers of the state child and youth work including vacation care measures, short-term educational measures in addition to youth social work, which take place in closed rooms until seated
- in school buildings and buildings of other educational institutions as well as archives and libraries until seated

- by visitors to events, meetings, trade shows, and indoor cultural events until seated

in indoor public areas of catering establishments, casinos, gambling halls, betting agencies and similar establishments until seated in interior public areas of all buildings open to the public (especially public authorities and office buildings)

In addition, the wearing of a mouth-nose cover (a medical mask if possible) is strongly recommended if it is not possible to ensure that the minimum spacing of 1.5 metres between persons from other household members is maintained.

Exceptions

The obligatory wearing of a mouth and nose cover does not apply to

- children under 6 years old
- people who cannot wear a mouth and nose cover due to a health impairment or disability
- personnel in facilities and companies, provided there is no contact with other persons or other and at least equivalent protective measures are taken, especially separating devices
- teachers during courses at extracurricular educational institutions and those involved in examinations, insofar as the hygiene concept provides for exceptions from the obligation to wear a mouth/nose covering in addition to the distances to be observed and the regular exchange of air
- teachers and students during practical lessons with wind instruments
- insofar and as long as the removal of the medical mask is required for therapeutic, pedagogical, educational, legal, pastoral, ethical-social or other actual reasons for visits to homes and assisted living communities in private rooms belonging to the person being visited if all occupants of those rooms are vaccinated or recovered persons as defined in the COVID-19 Protective Measures Exemption Ordinance.

Fines

Failure to wear a mouth-nose covering (everyday mask or medical mask) is an administrative offence. If citizens do not wear a mask an infringement may be subject to a fine of € 50. In addition to everyday masks, which are often self-sewn, scarves or shawls are also accepted if there is no explicit requirement to wear a medical mask.

Current information can be found on the Hessian Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration website at the following link: www.hessenlink.de/2019ncov.

Only the wording of the ordinance officially published in German in the State of Hesse Law and Ordinance Gazette is legally authoritative.

The full legal text of the Ordinance for the Protection of the Population against Infections with the Coronavirus SARS-CoV 2 (Coronavirus Protection Ordinance CoSchuV) of June 22, 2021, as amended, as well as accompanying ordinances can be found at:

<https://www.hessen.de/fuer-buerger/corona-hessen/verordnungen-und-allgemeinverfuegungen>.