

## Mask Exemption Accommodation

It is *critical* that the student with a Mask Exemption Accommodation understands:

### Acknowledgement of COVID-19 and the ADA

- Studies have shown that a significant portion of people with Coronavirus lack symptoms and that even those who eventually develop symptoms can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. Therefore, wearing a mask is an important safety step we can take to protect others. Because the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity—speaking, coughing or sneezing—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain and it is required under University policy, City of Akron Ordinance, and State policy.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination based on disability. The University may not discriminate against students who are qualified and are able to perform its essential functions, with or without accommodation. The ADA requires the University to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. The ADA creates an exception for not providing accommodations which may pose a direct threat. A direct threat is defined as a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of that student or others, which cannot be eliminated or reduced by a reasonable accommodation.
- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the exemption of wearing a face covering may be approved, in rare instances, once supporting documentation is reviewed. Each case will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine what accommodation is appropriate for the safety of the requester and students and faculty on campus. Students seeking an exemption under the mask requirement should enroll in the online section of the class designated as “www site.” It is important students consult with their advisor in this process. Students may have to take a different course that ensures progress in their program of study in an online format. If the student has a lab or needs to take tests in person, an appropriate accommodation will be determined for everyone’s safety

### Using the Accommodation

- The student must request this accommodation each semester they intend to use it and as they are on campus or participating in any campus related program. Students must have on themselves, the approved Mask Exemption Card provided by the Office of Accessibility in addition to their Zip Card with the Mask Exemption sticker adhered to the card. The student must be able to present these valid indicators upon request.
- Students are responsible for communication with their instructors and constituents including but not limited to individual University departments, programs, student activities, an organization, and supervisor’s affiliated to any experiential learning associated with the University or academic program to which the student is enrolled.
- This accommodation is subject to removal from the student’s accommodation plan pending changes and/or updates from the CDC, University policy, City of Akron Ordinance, and State policy.

## **Appropriate Uses**

- This accommodation may not be reasonable in most University programs, academic colleges, and University departments when social distancing cannot be maintained or the accommodation:
  1. Compromises the essential requirements of a course, program, job, activity, or facility.
  2. Causes an undue administrative or financial hardship.
  3. Compromises safety to you or others.
  4. Fundamentally alters a course or program.
- The mask exemption is not applicable when utilizing the Student Recreation and Wellness Center (SRWC) indoor facilities. The student will only be permitted to use the SRWC if they choose to wear a mask while doing so. Knowing that the transmission of COVID-19 occurs primarily through airborne transmission or direct human contact and it's 19 times more likely to contract indoors and we feel that a student exercising without a facial covering introduces significant risk to themselves and others.