

Media Release

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States of Guernsey advises employees and visitors that face coverings guidance must be observed when in public buildings

The States of Guernsey will now be advising visitors to its public buildings that they must wear a face covering. This is to support the strong recommendation by the Civil Contingencies Authority (CCA) to help mitigate the spread of the virus.

Signage will be visible at entrances, while staff at receptions will be asked to monitor that all members of the public entering buildings wear a mask – unless they genuinely are not able to do so. Our customers should, wherever possible, bring a mask with them, but initially there will be a supply available for those who do not have one.

The States of Guernsey recognises that the use of face coverings is low, despite the strong recommendation that they should be worn in certain settings. By strengthening its policy for public buildings the States aims to reduce the risk of transmission among staff and customers and, importantly, work to encourage more use of face coverings elsewhere in the community.

Not all public buildings will apply the guidance in exactly the same way as different buildings provide different services. Some buildings like Beau Sejour, the Performing Arts Centre and Guernsey Museum provide a mix of services, some of which mean it is not possible to wear a face covering at all times. In these buildings, customers should wear a face covering wherever it is possible and reasonable to do so, and particularly where they will be in crowded spaces (including in theatres), where social distancing is not possible or where ventilation is poor.

The airport and harbour terminals will also be extending the mandatory use of face coverings - which currently apply in some indoor areas – to the whole of the building.

Revised guidance is also being issued today for public sector employees. Islanders will notice more customer-facing members of staff using face coverings. For those working in non-customer facing roles, face coverings should now be worn in work settings where social distancing is a challenge and ventilation is not possible. At the same time, and in line with the recommendation, staff will not be expected to wear face coverings at their desks where there is good ventilation and it is possible to physically distance.

Jason Moriarty, the States of Guernsey's Strategic Lead for Operational Delivery said

“Our work teams across the organisation need to be sure we are doing our utmost to follow best practice in order to reduce the spread of COVID and protect our staff, our customers and the Bailiwick as a whole. It is really important that the public sector leads by example in that regard.

We also need to be mindful that increasing cases of COVID-19 does mean more people across the community, including in the public sector, having to self-isolate for 10 days or more. Whilst an increase in the number of cases is not necessarily unexpected, we must monitor it carefully and work together to protect critical service provision across the Bailiwick. If we can avoid more cases, we put those services under less pressure.”