

Dear Faculty and Professional Staff,

Below is information that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires UNE to provide to its employees when, in order to comply with a requirement to mask to protect against the transmission of COVID-19, the employee voluntarily chooses an N95 mask, any other mask approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), or any mask authorized under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Please note that this information does not apply to those UNE personnel required to use an N95 or comparable mask in their specific work. If you are performing a UNE work assignment that requires an N95 or comparable mask, you must use the one that UNE has supplied for the specific purpose of performing that work assignment.

At this time, the U.S. CDC and the Maine CDC are encouraging people to use surgical masks in place of cloth masks (or in conjunction) as a better method of controlling the spread of COVID-19. As you know, for the first week of returning to campus, everybody is required to be double-masked while indoors, which means wearing two surgical masks, one surgical mask with a cloth mask over it, one KN95, one KF94, or one N95 mask. KN95, KF94 and N95 masks are also referred to as respirators, but KN95 and KF94 masks are not NIOSH approved and may not be authorized under an EUA.

For those choosing to acquire and use either an N95 mask or any other mask approved by NIOSH or authorized under an EUA, please take note of the following:

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators' limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.

3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

Thank you for your attention to this important information, and for your ongoing compliance with our efforts to provide a safe and healthy working environment.

Sincerely,

Annmarie M. Allen
*Associate Vice President of Human
Resources/Chief Human Resources Officer*