



# TSA Security Directive 1582/84-21-01 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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## 1. Why is TSA issuing this directive on a public health matter?

The recent Executive Orders, the national emergency determination by the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the CDC Order recognize TSA's authority to address the COVID-19 public health threat to the transportation system. These actions collectively mandate nationwide measures to ensure the security and safety of the nation's transportation system. These federal mandates represent a "whole of government" approach to addressing security and safety concerns presented by the continued transmission of COVID-19 through the transportation system.

## 2. What is TSA's response to concerns that the new federal requirement adds confusion to what many have already successfully implemented?

TSA recognizes the significant efforts of surface transportation owner/operators to require their employees, contractors, and passengers to wear face masks. The federal mask requirement seeks to reinforce those efforts with specific guidance from the CDC and provide national consistency to face mask requirements. If a surface owner/operator or the local government has in place measures that are more protective than the measures in the SD, the owner/operator should follow those more protective measures.

## 3. To whom does this directive apply in Surface Transportation?

This directive applies to the following entities:

- Each owner/operator identified in 49 CFR 1582.1(a):
  - Each passenger railroad carrier.
  - Each public transportation agency.
  - Each operator of a rail transit system that is not operating on track that is part of the general railroad system of transportation, including heavy rail transit, light rail transit, automated guideway, cable car, inclined plane, funicular, and monorail systems.
  - Each tourist, scenic, historic, and excursion rail owner/operator, whether operating on or off the general railroad system of transportation.
- Each owner/operator identified in 49 CFR 1584.1 that provides fixed-route service as defined in 49 CFR 1500.3 which includes:
  - Each owner/operator providing transportation by an over-the-road bus (OTRB).
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## 4. What is the process for requesting an Alternative Measure?

A request for an Alternative Measure is no longer necessary where the request is for outdoors. Consistent with CDC guidance, TSA will not be enforcing the mask mandate in outdoor areas of conveyances (if such outdoor areas exist on the conveyance) or while outdoors at transportation hubs. "Outdoors" refers to any open-air area. While people are no longer required to wear a



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mask outdoors on conveyances or outdoors at transportation hubs, CDC continues to recommend people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in these areas to protect themselves and others.

The owner/operator must immediately notify TSA via email at [TSA-Surface@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:TSA-Surface@tsa.dhs.gov) if unable to implement any of the measures in this SD. The owner/operator may submit proposed alternative measures along with supporting documentation to the email address above.

### **5. How is TSA enforcing a mask requirement on buses, trains, and in stations?**

As the federal agency responsible for securing the Nation's transportation system, TSA will be monitoring the implementation of the SD and will work with surface transportation owner/operators to ensure that all surface transportation employees and contractors wear face masks when in conveyances or in transportation hubs/facilities to prevent further spread of COVID-19. For the same reason, the SD requires passengers to wear face masks when in a conveyance or in public areas of transportation hubs/facilities controlled by the owner/operator.

### **6. Do I need to wear a mask if I am outside?**

Consistent with CDC guidance, TSA will not be enforcing the mask mandate in open-air conveyances (such as the top deck of a tour bus that is not enclosed) or while in outdoor areas at transportation hubs. "Outdoors" refers to any open-air area. While passengers are no longer required to wear a mask outdoors on conveyances or outdoors at transportation hubs, CDC continues to recommend people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in these areas to protect themselves and others.

Masks must still be worn on a plane, bus, train, or other form of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States.

### **7. Can I remove my mask during hot and humid weather?**

Consistent with CDC guidance, TSA will not be enforcing the mask mandate in open-air conveyances (such as the top deck of a tour bus that is not enclosed) or while in outdoor areas at transportation hubs. "Outdoors" refers to any open-air area. For stations that have walls and ceilings yet are open to the elements, this would be considered an enclosed space and passengers and employees would be required to wear masks.

While inside any building at a transportation hub, the SD applicable to face masks allows for exemptions regarding individuals for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty as determined by the relevant workplace safety guidelines or federal regulations. For more information please see [What Workers Need to Know about Heat Stress Prevention during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)



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### **8. Do I need to wear a mask while in my private office alone?**

No, if you are the only person in an individual office with the door closed, you are not required to wear a mask, provided the office is fully enclosed by four walls and a ceiling. If a second individual enters the individual office, even if the door is open, a mask must be worn until that individual exits the office.

### **9. Do I still need to wear a mask if I've been vaccinated or if all the individuals in a work area have been vaccinated?**

Masks must continue to be worn inside regardless of vaccination status unless the individual is the only person in an enclosed private office.

### **10. What would constitute a significant security concern that must be reported?**

An example of a reportable significant security concern would be if an individual's refusal to comply with the mask requirement resulted in an assault, interference with an employee, or a threat to a transportation worker. Additionally, if the incident disrupts service or requires the intervention of law enforcement, the owner/operator must report the incident to the Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC) at 1-866-615-5150 or 1-703-563-3240 in accordance with 49 CFR 1570.203.

### **11. How were regulated parties notified of this security directive?**

TSA distributed this security directive to regulated parties through email communication to security coordinators, surface transportation trade associations, and the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee.

### **12. How long will this directive be in effect?**

The duration of this directive was recently renewed and with an expiration date of September 13, 2021.

### **13. Will the facial coverings that FEMA distributed to the transportation industry last year meet the requirements of this directive?**

Yes, the masks distributed by FEMA for transportation industry workers meet the requirements of the security directive.

### **14. Will there be civil penalties for non-compliance?**

TSA can issue civil penalties against a passenger for non-compliance with the Security Directive, TSA will recommend a fine ranging from \$250 for the first offense up to \$1,500 for repeat



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offenders. Based on substantial aggravating or mitigating factors, TSA may seek a civil penalty amount that falls outside these ranges. TSA has provided transportation system operators specific guidance on how to report violations so that TSA may issue penalties to those who refuse to wear a face mask.

Inquiries about the TSA Security Directive can be addressed to [TSA-Surface@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:TSA-Surface@tsa.dhs.gov).

### **Helpful Links**

[Presidential Executive Order \(1/21/2021\) on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel](#)

[CDC Order: Requirement for Persons to Wear Masks While on Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs](#)

[TSA Security Directive 1582/84-21-01 - Surface Public Transportation Face Mask Requirements](#)

[CDC Face Mask Requirement on Public Transportation Information](#)

[TSA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information](#)

[USDOT FAQs - Federal Mask Requirement](#)