FAQs for Cloth Face Masks

Wearing a fabric mask where social distancing is not possible can help reduce the spread of COVID-19. However, not everyone has access to the materials needed to make a mask. Therefore, Middlesex Health is partnering with community organizations to distribute donated masks to those in need. Please be assured that we have enough masks for our staff thanks to the generosity of the community!

Please follow the guidelines below as closely as possible to ensure the masks provide proper protection!

Do I need to follow a specific pattern?
Yes! Please follow the instructions on the next page to ensure proper fit and function.

What type of fabric should I use?
Our pattern recommends two layers of double weave cotton fabric, such as denim, duck cloth, canvas or twill. Please ensure that the fabric is no-stretch or minimal-stretch, and please avoid polyester/less breathable fabrics. If using fabric that is being “recycled” please be sure it is clean and in good shape. Worn or dirty fabric will not be protective.

Do I need to pre-wash the fabric?
Yes, please pre-wash the fabric you are using in HOT water. This ensures that the mask will not shrink when rewashed later.

What should I use for straps if I don’t have elastic?
Ear loops can be created from extra fabric, ribbon and other materials you may have on hand—feel free to be creative! We are asking for masks with ear loops—not fabric ties—to ensure anyone with dexterity concerns can easily and safely take the mask on and off.

How should the masks be packaged for delivery?
Please place your completed masks in a sealable plastic bag (i.e., Ziploc). All masks can be together in one bag, but please make a note of the number of masks in each bag.

How do I arrange delivery?
Masks can be dropped off on the front porch of the Community Relations building, located at 55 Crescent St. in Middletown (across from the Middlesex Hospital Emergency Department).

If you have questions, please contact Community Relations at 860-358-6200 or email info@midhosp.org.
### Guidelines for Sewing Masks

#### Supplies Needed

- **Double weave cotton fabric, two layers** (see FAQs page for details)
  - Fabric must be laundered in HOT water prior to sewing to prevent future shrinkage.
- Fabric strips or 1/8” or 1/4” flat elastic for ear loops
  - Two pieces, cut to 7” long, tie a knot at each end

#### Sewing Instructions

1. Cut fabric to be 9 inches long and 7 inches wide.
2. Fabric design should be placed horizontally.
3. Position fabric to put the right (printed) sides together.
4. Starting at the midpoint of the 9” edge, sew to the first corner, stop.
5. Place elastic or fabric tie at diagonal angle and sew into both layers of fabric. Backstitch to ensure tie is locked into place.
6. Continue to sew along the outside of the rectangle. When you reach the next corner, pull elastic to corner or place next fabric tie and sew into both layers of fabric. Again, be sure to back stitch.
7. Repeat steps 5 & 6 until elastic or tie has been sewn into each corner.
8. Sew across the bottom (final 9” side) leaving 1.5” to 2” open. Stop, cut the thread, and turn inside out so fabric print is facing out. Turn fabric in at small gap and pin closed.
9. Pin 2 tucks on each 7” side of the mask. Make sure the tucks are in the same direction. Pin in place.
10. Sew around the outer edge of the mask twice.

**Please Note:** We are asking that all masks have ear loops and not long ties. This allows anyone with dexterity concerns or conditions that impact their hands to still easily take a mask on and off. If you are unable to purchase elastic, you can use fabric or other materials to make the ear loops. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at 860-358-6200 or info@midhosp.org

Photos for each step on next page.
Step-by-Step Photos

Steps 1 & 2 - Cut fabric rectangle.

Step 3 - Position fabric.

Step 4 - Sew to first corner.

Step 5 - Sew edges and place tie.

Step 6 - Continue sewing edges.

Step 7 - Sew final side & turn out.
Step 9 - Make tucks to form pleats.

Step 10 - Sew outer edges.

Finished Product!

Thank you for your generosity—we are overwhelmed with gratitude for the support from our community!