To faculty and staff,

As the coronavirus pandemic spreads across the country and around the world, scientists’ understanding of the virus and its transmission is constantly evolving. New recommendations announced by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) encourage everyone to use a face covering in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. The cloth face covering, according to the CDC, can help slow the spread of the virus by reducing the transmission of coronavirus from asymptomatic (showing no symptoms) people who may not be aware that they can spread the virus.

Those required to work on campus during this period are instructed to continue to follow the CDC guidance, including guidance regarding wearing masks.

According to the CDC recommendations, the cloth face masks are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for health care workers and other medical first responders.

The CDC emphasizes that cloth face coverings can be easily fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost. See this 45-second CDC video demonstrating one way to make a face covering.

As the university has encouraged in the past, we strongly urge our entire campus community to follow the CDC recommendations and the orders of state and local officials. The spread of coronavirus across Massachusetts and the world has varied by community and geographic region, and the extent to which it will grow is difficult to predict. But we all can play a part in lessening the impact, even though at times it will be difficult.

For more resources about the coronavirus, support services, and the university’s response visit our coronavirus website.

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