

Steve Horton

From: EFCC Trust Board <steve.horton@efcc.org.uk>
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To: Steve
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EFCC

exalting Christ in growing
healthy churches

The Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches is a group of over 100 evangelical churches in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.



CORONAVIRUS UPDATE 07 August 2020

This e-mail is primarily for those churches where EFCC acts as the all-purpose

trustee. However, we circulate it to all our churches for information and as a way of sharing best practice.



To mask or not to mask in English churches

Government guidance was updated on 7th August and includes the following, enforceable requirements:

"In England, you must wear a face covering in ... a place of worship ... You are expected to wear a face covering before entering ... and must keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it."

The updated guidance on re-opening places of worship makes the point that the guidance only covers the worship function:

"This guidance applies to places of worship when being used for a religious purpose or in preparation for a religious purpose. Where a place of worship's premises is used by other user groups, only those activities permitted by law should take place."

For links to law covering other user groups check the guidance

However, the above link does contain clarification that face coverings are not required by those leading services:

"There are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings. In particular, those who are leading services or

events in a place of worship, and those who assist them (for instance by reading, preaching, or leading prayer) do not always need to wear a face covering, although one should be worn especially if physical distancing cannot be maintained (i.e. distributing consumables) This exemption does not apply to worshippers, who should wear face coverings consistent with the requirements for any other public space."

Final point - face coverings should fit snugly to the face which means that visors alone do not meet the government's criteria. Full details on face coverings can be found at:

[Government guidance on wearing and making your own face covering](#)

John Stevens (FIEC) has been working almost non-stop helping churches to re-open in a Covid-safe way. His **[personal blog](#)** has many excellent explanations of government guidance.

We are here to help - if you are in any doubt about any aspect of re-opening, including risk assessment, contact **[Tom Brand](#)**, **[Matt Rees](#)**, or **[Steve Horton](#)** who will do their very best to help.



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