The following safety protocol is based on current guidance from CDC, CDPH, Cal/OSHA, and local public health orders, effective 4/3/2023.

The latest guidance from California Department of Public Health (CDPH) states that effective April 3, 2022, mask recommendations are based on CDC Community Levels of COVID-19 transmission and impact on the healthcare system, as summarized here:

CDC Community Level	CDPH Mask Recommendation for individuals in all settings	CDPH recommendations in indoor High-Risk Settings**
Low - There is lower community spread and impact on healthcare	Everyone: People can wear a mask based on personal preference, informed by their own personal level of risk. Vulnerable people: Consider wearing a mask in crowded indoor public places.	For all staff and residents/ patients: Wearing a mask should be considered.
Medium - There is medium community spread and impact on healthcare	Everyone: Consider wearing a mask in indoor public places. Vulnerable people: Wearing a mask is recommended in crowded indoor public places.	For all staff and residents/ patients: Wearing a mask is recommended.
High - There is high community spread and impact on healthcare	Everyone: Wearing a mask is recommended in indoor public places. Vulnerable people: Wearing a mask is strongly recommended in indoor public places.	For all staff and residents/ patients: Wearing a mask is strongly recommended.

CDPH has revised its guidance for masks in certain high-risk settings such as in medical facilities or long-term care facilities, as summarized in the table above. Masks are no longer required in these settings, but are recommended as the level of COVID-19 in infection in the community increases. This Mask Protocol interprets the various guidance and policies in the context of UC ANR employees, volunteers, and program participants in UC ANR locations or program activities as described below:

> ## Mask Requirements While at Work or Engaged in UC ANR Activities
>
> 1. **Persons who have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, but are not required to quarantine or isolate, must wear a mask for a least 10 days after exposure. See Quarantine, Isolation and Return to Work guidance.**
> 2. **Persons who have tested positive for COVID-19, but are allowed to reduce their isolation period and return to work before 10 days must wear a mask through day 10 of their COVID-19 case, unless they have two consecutive negative tests.**
> 3. **All persons must comply with state or local Public Health Orders and facility rules that require wearing of masks.**
> 4. **If a location experiences more than three COVID-19 cases in a 14-day period, masks must be worn by all employees while indoors and outdoors when six feet of distance cannot be maintained. See the Outbreak Protocol for more information.**
>
> **All persons may choose to wear a mask at any time or setting, unless it would create a safety hazard.**
>
> **Effective and acceptable masks include:** *cloth masks, surgical/procedure masks, KF94/KN95 masks, and N95 respirators.* UC ANR will provide masks for employees, volunteers, and program participants to use, or persons may use their own mask, for comfort and convenience, as long as it meets these conditions:
> - is made of a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material,
> - has at least two layers (CDPH recommends at least 3 layers),
> - must completely cover the nose, mouth, and chin, and
> - is a solid piece of material with no visible holes or openings.
>
> For more information, see CDPH Get the Most out of Masking:
> https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Get-the-Most-out-of-Masking.aspx

When masks are required, there are a few exceptions to the mask/face coverings requirement in the workplace, including:

1. When an employee is <u>alone in a room</u> or vehicle (*note: **in open areas, cubicles, or shared offices, unvaccinated persons must wear a mask at all times, unless they are the only person in the building or room)***.
2. While eating and drinking at the workplace, provided employees are at least six feet apart.
3. Employees wearing respirators required by other safety orders.
4. Employees who cannot wear face coverings due to a medical or mental health condition or disability, or who are hearing-impaired or communicating with a hearing-impaired person.

Employees who are exempted from wearing a mask due to a medical condition or disability must wear an effective alternative, such as a face shield with a drape at the bottom.

CDPH's [Face Coverings Q&A](#) has additional information.

<u>N95 Respirators for Voluntary Use</u>
UC ANR workplaces and supervisors will provide N95 respirators upon request for voluntary use by employees.

Employees who voluntarily use N95 respirators must complete the following training and documentation:
- Online UC ANR [Voluntary N95 Respirator Training.](#)
- Notify ANR Risk & Safety via the [Voluntary N95 Respirator Registration](#) survey
- Notify the local safety coordinator or superintendent of their N95 use (specify the model of N95 respirator and instances where the respirator will be used)
- Receive a copy of the Cal/OSHA-mandated voluntary use document ([8CCR5144 App D (voluntary N95 use)](#) - "Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard")

The use of N95 respirators by employees for COVID-19 protection is voluntary; other cloth and paper masks, as described in the Mask Requirements While at Work section above, are effective at helping prevent people from getting and spreading COVID-19. N95 respirators are not intended to be provided for use by youth in UC ANR programs.

<u>Other UC ANR Activities</u>
As noted above, masks are generally not required for UC ANR volunteers, program participants, or visitors who are visiting UC ANR locations or are participating in or representing UC ANR programs in public settings. This includes Master Gardener volunteers working in demonstration gardens or at Farmers Markets, and 4-H youth and adult volunteers who are attending 4-H meetings or representing 4-H at fairs, shows, or other events, etc. Volunteers or youth representing UC ANR are expected to follow any state or local public health orders or facility rules that may require wearing a mask. Masks should be available upon request and no one should be discouraged from choosing to wear a mask during UC ANR activities.

<u>Summary</u>
CDPH mask recommendations are dependent on CDC Community Levels, which measure COVID-19 transmission and impact on healthcare. Anyone may choose to wear a mask for personal choice or to protect themselves or others from potential infection. At times, some people may be required to wear a mask if they are recovering from COVID-19 infection or had a close contact exposure to someone with COVID-19.

For more information about use of masks, see these resources: [CDC Guide to Masks](#), [CDC Types of Masks](#), and the [CDPH Get the Most Out of Masking](#).

Masks must be made available at work for employees, but employees may also bring their own reusable face coverings to work and launder them at home as necessary. If supervisors need help with arranging for a supply of masks, reusable face coverings, or N95 respirators for their employees or for supplies for extension programs, please contact the ANR COVID-19 supply team via the [Ask EH&S survey](#).

References:
CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html
CDPH: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx
Cal/OSHA: https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/