

## Question From A CWU ASR

I would like to bring to your attention some concerns in regards to the deployment of mandatory face covering/face masks.

I very much welcomed this news and it was music to my ears.

There are obviously a number of people have underlying medical conditions and are exempt, and we fully respect their reasons for choosing not to wear a mask and we support that.

However some staff have found a loophole and have simply gone online to print themselves off an “exempt card” to avoid wearing a mask altogether, knowing full well they have never raised any health or other issues with their manager in the past about any underlying health issues or concerns.

These people are causing loads of resentment, bad feeling and tension in some delivery offices which in turn has resulted in many staff just going off work with stress.

Can you please clear up what defines an exempt worker and also what criteria they need to meet, clearly there is a grey area here, I believed you should need to have a valid reason and meet certain criteria to be exempt from wearing a mandatory face mask/covering.

Staff simply being able to print off ‘exemption cards’ and wear them at work without meeting any criteria and then presenting them to their managers without any kind of challenge as to where the card came from and no discussion about what underlying health or other issues are which prevent wearing a mask makes a complete mockery of what has been previously communicated from CWU and Royal mail.

I understand this is not required by law but If you go on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) under face covering when to wear and exemptions will state if you have an age, health or disability reason would make you exempt for wearing a face mask.

I must stress this is not about wearing a mask it’s about dealing with these people with no good reason for not wearing a mask Simply printing off and wearing an ‘Exemption Card’ when they do not have a genuine exemption – are you going to stop this? Otherwise what’s the point in saying mandatory if all you have to do is download and print off an exemption card and wear it And at the same time it sticks two fingers up to the members who have been taking the precautionary measure by adhering to the mandatory mask standard? What are you going to do to stop this?

CWU ASR

Dear Colleague, as we know some employees are unable to wear a face covering and this should be discussed with their line manager. The mandating of face coverings in indoor settings is an *additional* control to the UK Government guidance which is social distancing, hand hygiene and not touching your face until you have washed or sanitised your hands. We provide hand sanitiser, sanitiser wipes and optional disposable gloves. We cannot know why another colleague is not wearing a face covering and should leave those discussions with line managers. If managers have any specific queries on exemptions they can contact the Coronavirus Helpdesk via e-mail [coronavirus.support@royalmail.com](mailto:coronavirus.support@royalmail.com) or Advice and Support.