



Lord Agnew Kt DL
Minister of State
HM Treasury and Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road London SW1A 2HQ

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Dear Sir/Madam,

Face Coverings

I am writing to share with you some recent developments on face coverings and people returning to work.

Government has reminded businesses that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a last resort and should only be worn if a risk assessment has highlighted that all other controls have been implemented and there is still an explicit need for it. This means that certain high-grade masks, such as the types I, II and IIR surgical face masks or FFP2 and FFP3 masks, should not generally be used as a response to COVID-19 outside of a clinical setting.

The Health and Safety Executive has also clarified that face coverings are not PPE and, in the context of workplace COVID19 control, should not be seen as an alternative to the required measures of social distancing, installation of screens, routine hand washing, the use of hand sanitiser, and more frequent site cleaning. While there is no requirement for employers to provide them for workers, they have advised that workers should be supported by their employers if they choose to wear a face covering on their return to work on site.

Further to this, and to ensure consumer confidence in the performance of face coverings, BSI have issued a Kitemark scheme in line with European specifications. This scheme reassures businesses and the public of a product's ability to provide an effective level of protection to those around them. Further information can be found on the BSI website, and any products which have been issued a Kitemark will clearly display the Kitemark logo on their packaging.

You may have seen the recent press releases on the Cabinet Office's involvement in the development of the UK's capability to manufacture face coverings. The production lines are now live and our partners have worked closely with the BSI to ensure that their products are Kitemark-approved.

The first production lines have been established at The British Rototherm Group (Port Talbot, Wales), Cookson & Clegg (Blackburn), Transcal, (Livingston, Scotland), Pennine (Derby), and Rocialle (Mountain Ash, Wales). If you wish, the Cabinet Office would be happy to make introductions to those manufacturers.

I wish you every success in the coming weeks and months as, for many of you, more employees return to the workplace.

Yours Sincerely,

Lord Agnew Kt DL