

WIGAN LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Dear Patient

Re: Guidance for patients requesting exemption letters

Some patients might be anxious about the Government's recent announcements around the use of face masks in various public settings. These have been required on public transport for some time, and from 24th July, they will be required when entering shops.

Some people do not have to wear a face mask owing to health, age or equality reasons.

A list of those who are exempt from wearing a face mask can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#exemptions-face-coverings>

The exemption criteria are the same for shops

GPs are **unable** to provide individual risk assessments or letters for patients who are or feel that they should be exempt from wearing a face mask.

The Wigan Local Medical Committee* has prepared this note for patients who believe they meet the exemption criteria and are not required to wear a face mask.

Government guidance on exemptions does not stipulate any requirement for evidence of exemption and it is sufficient for an individual to self-declare this.

Public transport providers have arranged to provide exemption cards for those who meet the criteria and who would find them helpful when making a declaration of their exemption.

Patients in the Greater Manchester area can obtain a card from:

[tfgm.com/contact-form](https://www.tfgm.com/contact-form)

Tel 0161 244 1000 (Monday to Friday 7am to 8pm, weekends 8am to 8pm).

Alternatively they can apply here-

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/travel-help-and-accessibility/how-to-obtain-assistance-cards/>

Exemption cards issued by public transport providers can also be used in shops but there are several disability charities which, on application, will issue an exemption card which can be shown to shop staff.

For example-

<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/hidden-disabilities-face-covering.html>

<https://disabilityhorizons.com/2020/06/face-mask-exemptions-how-to-ensure-you-dont-get-fined/>

We trust that the above information and sources will be helpful to you on this matter.

Yours faithfully

Joe Chattin
Hon, Secretary
Wigan LMC

*The Wigan Local medical Committee is the statutory body which advises and represents GPs in the Borough of Wigan