



Kenya Bureau of
Standards
Standards for Quality Life

Tel: 0206948000 | Toll Free Line 1545 | E-Mail: info@kebs.org | www.kebs.org

KENYA BUREAU OF STANDARDS (KEBS) – MINISTRY OF HEALTH JOINT STATEMENT ON USE OF FACE MASKS

On Monday 6 April 2020, H. E the President addressed the Nation concerning COVID-19 pandemic. In his address the President reiterated that wearing a face mask and washing hands will save lives. In addition, he also enumerated the following measures:

- Wearing a mask when outside the home, cleaning your hands with soap for atleast 20 seconds several times a day;
- Avoiding all areas with people who will be closer to you than 1.5 meters; and
- Heeding and complying with all Government directives.

Further, the Government has received advice from our medical professionals and experts, Kenyans should wear face masks whilst in public places. There are thousands of tailors all over the Country who make masks. The Government encourages all in this line of business to produce more masks.

It is in the above regard that H.E. the President directed the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development to ensure that these tailors are provided the right information through the National Government Administrative Officers on the materials required and the proper method of piecing the fabrics together to make the face masks.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health is currently in the forefront in the fight against COVID-19 and its in charge of policy, Health regulation, National referral Health facilities, Capacity building and Technical assistance to Counties.

Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development

The Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development is responsible for promotion of Industry and Trade Policy, Promotion of Industrial Property Rights, Private Sector Development Policy and Strategy; Quality Control including Industrial Standards development; Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Buy Kenya Policy.

Kenya Bureau of Standards

The Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) is a State Corporation under the Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development and has remained the premier government agency for the provision of Standards, Metrology and Conformity Assessment (SMCA) services. KEBS operates the National Enquiry Point in support of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). The role of KEBS includes provision of the country's quality infrastructure for facilitation of trade, support of Kenya industries and sustainability of production systems.

Kenya Bureau of Standards and the Ministry of health wish to provide the following information as guidance to the public on the use of surgical masks and other facial coverings. The following masks are currently available for use:

- Surgical masks:** Covered by KS 2636: 2016 - Surgical masks
Health care givers and patients in medical facilities are advised to use masks that have been certified by KEBS.
Kindly note that there is limited supply of PPEs for health workers including surgical masks and N-95 respirators. The general public is encouraged to leave these masks to the healthcare workers and the patients.
- Particle masks:** Covered by KS 2409-6:2018 - Filtering face masks that protect against dust. These types of masks are designed to meet the requirements as respiratory protective devices to protect against particles.
- Re-usable cloth coverings**
Cloth coverings made of woven fabrics may offer limited protection against droplets.

Note that currently, there is no Kenya Standard for these types of covering, certification for re-usable cloth coverings is currently not a mandatory requirement prior to sale. Cloth material masks should be made of double layer of fabric with a filter layer in the middle for greater protection. **However, the general public must take caution that such cloth coverings do not guarantee protection against COVID-19.**

KEBS will be able to assist all tailors to attain the required standards to be able to supply to all Kenyans during this period of **COVID-19**.

Members of Public are advised to wash the re-usable Face Masks with soap and water before use. Visit KEBS website at

https://www.kebs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=658:kenya-standards-for-personal-protective-equipment-ppes&catid=23&Itemid=180
for free download of the available PPE Standards.

It is also important to alert members of the public that the standards for the production of the face masks are available on the KEBS website indicated above for FREE. KEBS conducts **FREE** testing of the masks

Lt. Col. (Rtd) Bernard N. Njiraini
Managing Director
Kenya Bureau of Standards

Dr. Patrick Amoth
Director General
Ministry of Health

#WajibikaNaKEBS – We are all Accountable

Verify the authenticity of KEBS quality marks by use of the KEBS Official Mobile App or sending a text to 20023; SM#Permit Number / ISM#UCR Number / DM#Permit Number