

As of 15 September 2021

**Information by the Federal Office for Foreign Affairs and Asylum on the
protective measures taken related to Covid-19**

Dear Sirs,

To prevent the spreading of Covid-19 and to reduce the risk of infection, **until revoked**, the **following measures are ordered** in all official buildings of the BFA:

All persons external to the authority (e.g., parties, participating persons, witnesses, representatives, legal advisors, persons of trust, interpreters, experts, suppliers, etc.) have to wear a **respiratory mask without exhalation valve** or an equivalent, respectively higher standard mask in the official building / in the offices of the authority (closed rooms) that must be kept on in all public areas as well as in the lift facilities.

Exceptions (compare § 19 of the 2nd COVID 19-MV/ ordinance on measures) **to the obligation to wear a FFP2 respiratory mask are as follows:**

- Pregnant women: a regular protective face mask (covering mouth and nose) is sufficient
- Minors under 14 years: a regular protective face mask (covering mouth and nose) is sufficient
- Children under 6 years: no obligation for a FFP2 respiratory mask or a protective face mask (covering mouth and nose)
- In the event of serious communication problems due to hearing or speech impairments a regular protective face mask (covering mouth and nose) is sufficient
- Medical reasons; wherever possible a regular protective face mask (covering mouth and nose) is to be worn.

If unacceptable, other tight-fitting mechanical protection covering the mouth and nose area must be worn. If also this is not tolerable for health reasons, another not tight-fitting mechanical protection entirely covering the mouth and nose area must be worn.

Reasons for exemption must be substantiated by the party concerned; in case of medical reasons, this is done by a **medical confirmation**.

You are requested to bring your own FFP2 respiratory mask or an equivalent or higher standard respiratory mask.

- **Minimum distance**

A **minimum distance of 1 metre must be maintained** throughout the entire official building. **Persons living in the same household** are an **exception** to this rule.

- **Timely appearance**

To avoid increased crowding, you are requested to be at the security checkpoint in a **timely manner**.

- **Access to the official building, admission and security control**

Admission to the official building can only be granted if the intended **minimum distance of 1 metre** is observed and the **necessary free spaces in the waiting area** are available. Upon entering the official building, you will be asked immediately to **disinfect your hands** at the disinfectant dispensers provided. Each person is subjected to a security control (except existing exemptions) and, as a rule, the body temperature is also measured by means of a contactless clinical thermometer. Entry cannot be permitted in the event of fever.

Due to the current situation, restrictions of office hours for parties are possible.

In order to minimise the risk of infection, only **one accompanying person** is permitted. The minimum distance to this person must also be maintained. An exception is made for accompanying persons in connection with assistance and care services.

- **Waiting areas**

Summoned persons and persons without a summons have to **remain in the waiting area during office hours** until called in and they should not leave that area. The building is to **be left immediately** after completion of the respective matter **by observing the minimum distance**.

- **Health instructions**

If you have symptoms and fear that you are ill, then stay at home and call 1450. In addition, please inform the BFA immediately that you are unable to attend the summons hearing for health reasons.

The BFA provides regular information on current changes and office hours on the website:
www.bfa.gv.at

 Federal Office for
Immigration
and Asylum