

Uber to require face masks for drivers, riders

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Uber's new policy in response to the global virus pandemic will require both riders and drivers to wear face masks

Uber said Wednesday it was making face masks mandatory for drivers and passengers, as part of new health and safety protocols aiming to instill confidence in the ride-hailing service as people emerge from coronavirus lockdowns.

The [new policy](#) to be effective Monday will require drivers in many markets to use selfie pictures to certify they are wearing masks before going online, and will allow riders and drivers an option to cancel a booking if the other party is not using a face covering.

"As cities begin to reopen and people start moving again, Uber is proceeding with caution and safety top of mind," chief executive Dara Khosrowshahi said.

"We will all have a role to play to help each other stay healthy when traveling."

The news comes with Uber seeking to emerge from a massive slump in ridership as a result of the global virus outbreak and subsequent shelter-in-place orders.

Uber said it was committing an additional \$50 million to buy masks and sanitizing supplies and would update its app with a safety checklist and other tools for both riders and drivers.

Uber said it was no longer allowing passengers to ride in front seats and would reduce the maximum number of riders in a vehicle to three. It had previously suspended its pooled rides service.

"Every step of the way safety is an important part of the journey," Uber product manager Sachin Kansal told an online news conference.

Kansal said similar safety measures were being implemented for Uber Eats including efforts to ensure [safety measures](#) by Uber's restaurant partners.

Uber drivers in the United States, Canada, India and most of Europe and Latin America will not be allowed online if they are not wearing a face

cover, the company said.

The policy will be in place through the end of June and reviewed based on local public health needs.

The app will be updated to allow for ratings for both drivers and passengers if they are not wearing [face masks](#).

"Accountability is key—and it goes both ways," Khosrowshahi said.

"That's why we are encouraging [drivers](#) to cancel trips without penalty if they don't feel safe, including if the rider isn't wearing a face cover."

A rider may also cancel a trip without penalty if the driver is not wearing mask.

"Drivers and riders who repeatedly violate mask policies risk losing access to Uber," the CEO said.

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