

You're Still Exempt. Just Say "I Am Unable to Wear a Face Mask Safely." Nothing More.

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by [Alan Stevo](#), [LewRockwell.com](#)

August 12, 2020

Many millions cannot safely wear a face mask. With the one-size-fits-all face mask approaches, this presents a problem.

Those who can't safely wear a face mask are pressured into wearing one, to their own detriment, or they are alternately, discouraged from using vital services due to the heavy-handed enforcement measures that place personal safety secondary at best.

The reasons for not being able to safely wear a face mask are many: from obvious issues such as chronic lung ailments and terminal heart conditions, to less obvious issues like panic attacks, dyspnea (shortness of breath), angina (chest pains), cephalalgia (headaches), migraines, internal physical deformations from injuries, or genetic abnormalities.

[Since my previous writing](#) on the topic, in addition to my own experience, I have received many correspondences from people crossing face mask compliance checkpoints and sharing what works and doesn't work for them. There are some behaviors that work repeatedly across the board and there are some behaviors that don't work. Using some of these principles, I have yet to wear a face mask even one time.

One sentence is supremely helpful. You almost never need anything else, even in the most locked down environments: "I am unable to wear a face mask safely."

I'm going to elaborate more on why that is such an effective sentence, and the only sentence you need at a compliance checkpoint.

The Risk Of Putting A Person In A Situation Where They Practically Have To Say "No" Is That They Say "No"

While those millions who cannot safely wear a face mask also have legitimate sovereignty concerns, constitutional concerns, natural rights concerns, legal concerns, and perhaps many other concerns, there are very few Americans policing face mask policy who will effectively quit their job for the benefit of another by saying "I totally agree with you, no one should have to wear a face mask, I'm going to look the other way knowing that I may be one of the unemployed 30% of Americans ten minutes from now by honoring your personal sovereignty."

That would be purely irresponsible of that person checking for compliance, and you would be expecting far too much of them. You'd probably be expecting more from them than you might expect from yourself, which isn't fair. That's hypocrisy, in fact. You can, perhaps, imagine how ineffective it therefore is, to make such an argument at a compliance checkpoint. It's simply not the right venue.

The compliance checker may even have been trained to involve a supervisor anytime anyone makes such a natural rights claim and to have you added to a blacklist. To violate that instruction could again come at the cost of them losing their job. Great effort, after all, is made by management consultants and behavioral psychologists to [create policies that remove the humanity from a human and to make him more like a machine while on the job.](#)

Going the natural rights route is particularly dangerous because it is an axiomatic battle. It requires the compliance checker to believe the same hard-won axioms as you. If they believe in anything, they are far more likely to accept the commonplace “for the greater good,” combined with the [anti-sciencey rhetoric of mask enforcement and fear](#) that floods the airwaves.

The places where you are most likely to find strict face mask enforcement are the places where you are least likely to happen upon someone who share those axioms: coastal locations, big cities, airports, and a host of other hubs. You might end up with a memorable conversation, but in those places you aren't likely to get yourself through the door unmasked with that kind of approach.

While I have no cross-sectional data, I would also presume that those who self-select for jobs at compliance checkpoints are less likely to be sympathetic to natural rights.

The odds are against you with this argument in this venue.

Honor Your Own Privacy By Not Talking Specifics About Your Own Health & Well-Being With Strangers

Other people who cannot safely wear a face mask, may have a face mask exemption for a medical reason that they are exceedingly comfortable talking with strangers about. A problem in that situation is that a stranger may not agree with you about the severity of your medical problem and its impact on you wearing a face mask. This is not a discussion to have with a stranger.

You open the door to questions like “Well, how bad is it really?” or statements like “It would mean a lot to the other customers if you would wear a face mask for the first ten minutes you are in the store, until you start to feel discomfort.” Do not open a door to this line of conversation.

At a compliance checkpoint, some people who desire to pass by unmasked, will talk brashly about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protecting them from having to disclose personal details. Others will talk about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). I just choose to rely on standards of common decency and personal privacy. Although aspects of those laws are based on exactly that sense of decency, there is no need to invoke federal law. Medical advantages and disadvantages over others are a personal affair. Psychological advantages and disadvantages over others are a personal affair. Abilities and disabilities are a personal affair.

I recognize this sounds quaint in a place and time when people fly flags from their homes, tattoo their bodies, and wear handkerchiefs to publicly proclaim private matters such as their sexual proclivities or other exceedingly private topics.

Momentary, aberrative behavior does not change good sense. The wise man doesn't talk about his personal affairs with everyone he meets.

The personal is personal, and the public is public. No stranger is entitled an entry into your personal affairs. No matter how much this era wants to make everything public (except for the mischief of government, which must always be as secret as possible for the well-being of all), it is the wise who maintain a solid division between personal and public.

The specifics of why you can't wear a face mask are nobody's business. Choosing to violate that basic concept of decency, puts you at a disadvantage at a compliance checkpoint.

Waving Laws Around Can Backfire Easily

Since pervasive laws can be detrimentally stumbled upon, a summary of applicable laws are part of the on-boarding for any well-trained employee these days. It's useful to know the

federal laws and how they are likely to impact an employee's training. As one example, an employee isn't going to want to ask about your specific concerns that cause you to be exempt from wearing a face mask, because it opens them and their employer up to additional liability in the conversation.

Knowing that basic detail of training, makes it easier for you to simply say "I am unable to wear a face mask safely," and to know that in many situations your privacy is going to be honored by the properly trained person checking for compliance. The path of least resistance is the path many employees will take.

Some employees shut down when they hear laws. Some employees call their supervisor. Some employees are trained to turn you away and report you directly to their legal department. Many employees will totally disregard whatever was said at a mandatory training session at 8:30 a.m., four months ago, before they had their second coffee that morning. The more you press them with heady matters like laws or philosophy, the more your effort is likely to backfire. Waving laws around can backfire, especially when it adds tension to a conversation.

That would be another way that people with legitimate exemptions put themselves at a disadvantage at a compliance checkpoint.

Escalation Can Backfire

Unless you've sized a person up and know what you're in for, don't try to go toe-to-toe with anyone manning a compliance checkpoint that you need to get to the other side of. The odds are against you. You won't have been the first to have gone toe-to-toe with them and lost.

People enforcing face mask rules, face resistance all day in adversarial settings and win. They've done it so much these past months, that some of them have become expert at it. Others don't like going toe-to-toe with a customer and back

down. There's little way to know who will be who.

Additionally, by this point in the process, there are many redundancies built in and at almost every checkpoint. You will eventually lose if you go toe-to-toe and escalate tension.

Insurance Companies Have Understandably Played A Role

Insurance companies have skilled actuaries that know how to use statistics in the favor of the insurer. Insurance companies are consequently excellent at identifying cost-saving loopholes quickly after they appear.

Insured businesses have heard clearly that they will not be protected from Covid lawsuits by their insurers if they are lax in their enforcement of what is widely considered established science.

Perhaps after three years of costly legal battles with an insurance company, a business owner may be able to finally establish that there is little science behind a face mask mandate, but how many businesses owners and managers want to make that legal battle the next three years of their lives, especially against an insurance company with seemingly unlimited resources?

Push the employee to do something that will invalidate their insurance coverage, and you are putting yourself at a disadvantage at a compliance checkpoint.

Business Owners Have Bigger Battles To Fight, Like Staying Open

As private enterprise contracts, many business owners are concerning themselves with merely keeping the doors open. To do otherwise is to disregard their shareholders. Unless the shareholders themselves are pushing against the face mask orders, it's unlikely the business will take a firm stand against mandatory face masks, whether it be mom and pop or a

mega entity.

In that environment, it's quite hard to win toe-to-toe. So many people are just thinking about preserving their jobs and preserving their businesses, that even those who might have agreed in more prosperous times and would have stuck their necks out, are unlikely to do so.

By all means, if you have outsized influence with such businesses, or special relationships that could sway the discussion, voice your concerns. These concerns are best voiced in calm settings, which is not likely to be at a checkpoint, but on the phone or by email ahead of time, as I covered in [my last piece on this topic](#).

What All People Manning A Checkpoint Have In Common...

What they all have in common is their humanity. If you keep things nice and calm and you behave in a friendly way, virtually all people are going to respond favorably to you. If you keep the issue of your exemption nice and focussed, by saying "I am unable to wear a face mask safely," almost all people will make exception for you. They won't ask questions. They won't give you a hard time. They won't ask much else.

There's a little bit of humanity left in many face mask policies. The humanity is in the exemptions around someone making the statement "I am unable to wear a face mask safely."

Some working a checkpoint might say "So what?" or the equivalent, especially if you look healthy.

Stick with it and add a small clause, if you want: "I am exempt from your face mask policy, because I am unable to wear a face mask safely." If they push further, you should feel comfortable saying "I am not comfortable talking about this private matter with others. I am unable to wear a face mask safely."

If that doesn't work, simply say "May I speak to someone else?"

I strongly recommend no other conversation at a compliance checkpoint. Almost all other conversations are losing conversations. If you are yelling, you are probably doing it wrong. If a bystander is recording you in hopes that your outburst will go viral, you are probably doing it wrong.

Some compliance checkers might want to debate your condition. Some compliance checkers might want to see your doctor's note: the answer to that could be "Yes, of course I have a doctor's note." 75% of those who ask will stop there. If they press to see your doctor's note, you can say you don't want to show the note because it mentions a personal condition of yours that you wish not to share with strangers.

Very seldom (perhaps 1 in 10,000) will the conversation go there if you treat the other person as kindly as possible and stick with "I am unable to wear a face mask safely."

Please Raise Cain, But Preferably Offsite

If you are treated unfairly, you can pretty easily make an employee's life a nightmare in this era. Make a few phone calls to supervisors. If that doesn't work, then work your way to the top of the company. This is so incredibly important. Call their superiors and then annoyingly follow up, preferably daily. That's the way to get things done. Seldom is follow-up necessary. So often, a single three-minute phone call is enough.

If that doesn't work, go to the media, or use social media. Media and social media are not effective places to begin. Unwilling to do the effective work of picking up the phone, so many people start with social media and end with social media. Social media and media are easy-to-ignore, ineffective, insulated ways to be easily muted.

Speaking To A Supervisor Is The Opposite Of Cancel Culture

Don't feel bad about going to a superior. This is the opposite of cancel culture. This is meritocracy. Cancel culture's adherents take your personal behavior, not committed in the commission of your job, and instead of walking away from you or engaging you on intellectual repartee, seek to report you to higher authority by getting you cancelled from your job, cancelled from your banking, or cancelled from some other area of life, such as a communication platform. Cancel culture is an ethical and moral violation and harmful to free individuals in a free society.

In clear contrast, the world is benefitted when an employee who does wrong to you in the commission of his job is reported for doing wrong. It helps improve his training, or perhaps moves him out of that job and into another job to which he is better suited. It may help an entire company improve policy or may help to improve policy for the person who walks through that door tomorrow without a face mask. Complaining about "first world problems" is unlikely to benefit you as much as it is likely to shift policy to the benefit of others. It is a charitable and honorable thing to do, and many companies recognize that such feedback is hard to solicit and valuable to receive.

You are right for reporting an employee who made your day a little worse with a face mask crackdown. Please do the world a favor and send that mini-tyrant home with an earful from his boss to mull over.

Figure Out What You Want Out Of This Exchange

The main problem that causes people to unsuccessfully cross face mask compliance checkpoints is that they have not decided on a clear outcome that they are working toward.

If you want to yell at someone at the top of your lungs in a public place about John Locke, and to be the ridiculed subject

of a Young Turks video that makes the rounds on Twitter, with clips that perhaps the local Fox affiliate also picks up, then these suggestions probably aren't for you. There's a lot of stress in the world right now. Vast portions of the globe are effectively living in a state of communism, without it being called such. I completely understand the need to blow off steam.

If you have a standard of well-being for yourself that specifically excludes the use of a face mask, and insists for yourself that you be allowed to go through your daily life without a face mask, then you are the audience for this piece. "I am unable to wear a face mask safely," is the easiest and most effective tool you can have at your disposal.

Many honorable people have made an unsuccessful ruckus at a checkpoint, but it seems that some of them really just wanted to go through the day without wearing a mask. That is sad. This article is for them.

The act of making a ruckus and the act of successfully crossing a checkpoint unmasked are not always mutually exclusive, but are almost always mutually exclusive.

Seeing if you fit into one of the checkboxes, on a flowchart, that a corporate functionary needs to check off, will make it easier for you to pass. You make it easier for them to show you compassion. You may be one of the many millions who can simply say "I am unable to wear a face mask safely," and will be left alone to cross the compliance checkpoint unmasked.

This lets you pass, and it lets them keep their job. It may not be perfect, but it provides for the primary want of each party to the interaction.

Do You

People have pulled guns over face masks, people have fought over face masks, and I know of at least one shopper who has

died over a face mask, leaving a great absence in the world around the life of the deceased. It also leaves a great absence in the family and community of the father who pulled the trigger. Many lives will forever be altered for the worse by the horrible way that conflict was resolved.

I imagine a world where this can be handled far differently. The maskholes demanding everyone mask up are insisting a personal medical issue be handled by fiat, which never goes well.

The level of force, intimidation, and ultimatum around this topic is very bad for society. Widespread inability to use words to settle a dispute is evidence of a devolution of culture. The face mask issue is the proving ground for greater areas of compliance to come. Unless good people cause the slippery slope to end here, masking up, deplatforming, and cancelling is not where this ends.

Less than 80 years ago, the United States government put Japanese Americans convicted of no crime into prison en masse. Today, mainstream politicians and media in the United States are advocating for a political system that killed more than 100 million civilians over the last century. Since *Roe v. Wade*, a number of babies equivalent to more than half of the current black population have been aborted by the eugenicists who run and fund abortion clinics. A black baby in New York City is more likely to be aborted than to make it out of the womb alive. The United States has almost constantly been at war since its founding. All this barely begins to tell the story.

The United States government is awful. So many with their hands on the levers of power are awful. There is no moral backstop within the government. It doesn't come to an end with them. No one in DC is the *deus ex machina*.

You are deceiving yourself if you don't think this can get so

much worse.

If you are one of the many millions affected by a mask, rather than wearing a harmful mask, now is the time to take a stand.

It doesn't stop everywhere until a mass of people insists it stops, but *it can stop in your own life when you make it stop*. You still have control over that in your own life.

I personally don't intend to make this my last stand, but for my own well-being I have not once complied with a face mask order, and I have no intention of ever complying with a face mask order.

I hope you will join me.

Are you with me?

Send me your stories from the checkpoint and help me put an end to this tyranny.

[Read full article at LewRockwell.com and connect with Alan Stevo](#)