

Volunteer Information

Firstly, a warm welcome to our Sewing Team, thank you so much for volunteering your time and energy to this Project!

Our aim is simple: To provide high-quality, effective, protective masks to Essential Service businesses in Tauranga (i.e. supermarkets, food supply, care workers and couriers etc). Our supply of masks also frees up current mask supplies for critical medical services.

The masks we produce are more effective and longer-lasting than some of the lower grade masks currently being used, many of which are designed for single-use only.

Our masks use high-grade New Zealand wool Lanaco filters, and meet all necessary requirements for safe and effective filtration. You can find out about Lanaco and the tech-specs for our mask filters here: www.lanaco.co.nz . ‘Masks for Tauranga’ is the distributor and coordinator for Lanaco in this region.

Thanks to your valued contribution, and working together as a team of volunteers, the only costs involved in this project are for the raw materials needed. We do not charge any extra, and these costs are paid by the businesses who order our masks.

The procedure for making our masks is simple but as you can understand, quite strict, and does require your appropriate care and attention. If the process is not adhered to fully, it could mean a mask cannot be used straight away and may need to be safely isolated for at least 3 days.

Unfortunately, due to concerns of possible contamination, if you have an ‘Essential Worker’ in your household, you may not be approved to be part of our core Sewing Team. We want to make sure your worker is well protected, so please let us know. You are also very welcome to use any of our patterns and protocols, available free, for download on the website so you can make masks for your family. Our first point of call for the currently limited availability of filters, is for this initiative, however we hope to be able to open up supply to the general public once we have achieved our objectives.

For efficiency of pick up and distribution, we need volunteer sewers who are prepared to make at least 20 masks or more.

Here is the step-by-step hygiene/safety process you will need to follow:

Step 1. Isolation

Find an isolated place in your home to set up your sewing machine, away from other members of your household and pets (perfect if you have a sewing room or spare room that is a no-go area for children). Thoroughly clean your sewing machine and any sewing equipment that you’ll be using with disinfectant. Disinfect the door handle to the room regularly and ensure hands are washed every time you enter the room. Please wash, rinse, and thoroughly dry, any recycled materials first with washing powder or soap.

Step 2. Make a mask for yourself and for the nominated essential shopper in your household (if that isn’t you). As you already know, all other members of your household should be staying at home, except for the purpose of exercise, where they should be practising social distancing from all others outside of your household (your bubble).

Please ensure the person leaving your house to shop uses good hygiene practices, hand sanitizer, not touching the face, at least 2 metre distancing, not touching surfaces outside the home. When they return, they must leave their shoes at the door and wash their hands thoroughly. Given the importance of hygiene in producing our masks, unfortunately if you or anyone in your family is showing signs of illness of any kind, we need to ask that you stop your involvement in the program. As you will appreciate, very careful hygiene practices are required to ensure we don't contaminate the masks we supply.

Step 3. Wear your mask at all times when sewing, handling the materials, or packing up the masks for collection.

Long hair also needs to be tied back. This helps protect the masks you are making.

Step 4. Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water

Put on your mask, squeeze down the flexible wire to close air gaps then wash your hands again. Avoid touching your face or eyes. If you have glasses, wear them over the top of the mask edges.

Step 5. Follow the instructions provided for making/sewing the masks

See attached information.

Step 6. Place completed masks in a zip lock plastic bag before taking off your mask

Step 7 Put your completed package of masks in your mailbox and message me for pick up.

We will ensure your masks are delivered to essential service businesses and people that need them.

Materials & Costs

The success of 'Masks for Tauranga' relies on the valued time and enthusiasm of volunteers like yourself, working together as a team to achieve our goal! Again, we are volunteers as well, and do not charge anything more than the cost of materials.

If you do have specific costs you'd like to be reimbursed for, please itemise them and email me. Although we will consider these, we cannot guarantee any individual reimbursements, given our aim of keeping the costs of our masks as low as we can for essential workers who need them. Whilst it is possible that some businesses may be able to offer more than just the cost price of the filters, it is more important that they are first able to access the masks in order to protect the local community.

The fabric recommendation is linen or 50-100% cotton non stretch, or any breathable fabric – please ensure it is clean and hygienic. Interestingly the fabric from the supermarket supplied fabric bags is breathable. I will look into whether we can get these donated. Hold fabric up to the light to assess, if you can see through it, it is more breathable. For those working all day the more breathable the better. For those quick trips to the supermarket cotton sheeting fabric will suffice. We are hoping to get a supply of fabric sorted soon.

We can also supply the Lanaco Helix filters to other masks which have been donated for use within Tauranga. Depending on availability later, filter refills may be purchased at \$20 per pack of 7. This again is the cost price with no margin added, and we will be asking that any businesses who buy filter refills, do not on-sell them at a profit.

Thank you so very much for your support and efforts in this project.
We greatly appreciate your service in the fight again Covid-19.

he maha nga mihi
with love,
Vicky and the 'Masks for Tauranga' Team
"my mask protects you, your mask protects me"

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