

# *Face masks now mandatory in Rio de Janeiro*

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Rio de Janeiro, May 15 (RHC)-- Brazil's Legislative Assembly in Rio de Janeiro (Alerj) decreed on Thursday that mask-use is mandatory and a preventive measure against COVID-19. The 92 Rio de Janeiro municipalities will enforce this norm.

According to the legislation, mask-use is legally required. If police and authorities catch a citizen with an uncovered face, the offender will receive a warning. In case of a recurrence, violators will face fine. Payment quotes will increase according to the number of infractions.

According to Alerj, all fines will be directed to the State Health Fund to fund actions to combat the coronavirus. As deputies Thiago Pampolha and Renan Ferreirinha stated, the use of masks will be a priority for health professionals.

Only people suffering from respiratory pathologies and those with severe disabilities in the upper extremities are exempt from wearing the mask. They must carry a document proving their health condition.

The preventive measure applies to both private and public spaces, as long as social contact and physical proximity are a possibility. The law establishes companies and small businesses must provide workers with the protection supply along with disposable gloves and 70% alcohol gel free of charge.

Furthermore, business holders and employees have to demand customers wear masks inside their installations. WHO warned repeatedly masks do not prevent infection but offer protection in contact with asymptomatic patients. Authorities explained masks could be disposable or reusable and other material that covers mouth and nose could replace it.

So far, Brazil registered 190,137 positive cases, 13,240 deaths, and 78,424 recoveries.

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