

Information on Covid-19

Tuesday, September 10th, 2020

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

— How can employers procure protective face masks and other personal protective equipment for employees present or returning to the workplace?

Public authorities recommend that companies plan a preventive stock of masks covering a period of 10 weeks.

In addition to the measures taken since the beginning of the sanitary crisis to increase the production of personal protective equipment at a national level, in particular protective face masks and hydroalcoholic gel, action is being taken by the Directorate General for Enterprise (Ministry for the Economy and Finance) to facilitate the supply for companies.

Where can companies buy protective face masks for their employees?

Protective face masks “for the general public”

The government also wanted to facilitate equipment for employees by creating, on March 29, 2020, under the supervision of the French National Agency for Medicines and Health Products Safety (ANSM), two new categories of face masks tailored for non-healthcare workers:

- Individual masks for use by professionals in contact with the public, filtering at least 90% of three-micron particles. Use intended for people who may come into contact with the public in the context of their professional activities (police, gendarmes, cashiers, etc.).
- Collective protective masks to protect an entire group, filtering at least 70% of three-micron particles. To be used by individuals who have occasional contact with other people during their professional activities, for example in a company where a particular role or working conditions should require this.

Following significant mobilization in the French textile industry, 85 prototypes created by 45 companies were validated by the French Ministry of Defense enabling a daily production estimated at 480,000 units.

These face masks can be purchased via the following online marketplaces:

- Marketplace “Stopcovid19”: <https://stopcovid19.fr/customer/account/Login/>

Supported by the French Ministry for the Economy and Finance, this platform enables manufacturers and distributors of essential products and equipment (personal protective equipment such as masks, hydroalcoholic gel, aprons, etc.), as well as their service providers and subcontractors, to market their offer to health professionals, food distributors and all companies involved in the fight against COVID-19 and needing to protect their staff.

- Marketplace «Savoir faire ensemble»: <https://savoirfaireensemble.fr>
- Platform for VSEs and SMEs with fewer than 50 employees, set up by the French Post Office (La Poste) in conjunction with the Ministry for the Economy and Finance and the CCI and CMA networks: <https://masques-pme.laposte.fr>

Sanitary masks

Stocks of sanitary masks (in particular FFP2 and surgical masks) are **primarily intended for healthcare professionals and health institutes.**

For the purchase of these sanitary masks, **international sourcing via foreign suppliers remains the solution that companies must prioritize.**

Companies can purchase directly from foreign producers in compliance with the regulatory standards for placing the products concerned on the European market (CE marking).

Imported masks are no longer subject to requisition.

The Directorate General for Enterprise (Ministry for the Economy and Finance) is working to facilitate contact between mask importers and French buyers, and to help companies find logistical solutions and remove any obstacle.

Should you have any questions, please send a message to the following address: masques.dge@finances.gouv.fr

Regarding the customs aspects, companies can consult the information file published by French customs authorities, along with European norms in force: <https://www.douane.gouv.fr/covid-19-vous-etes-une-entreprise-et-souhaitez-importer-des-masques>

Companies may also contact the regional economic action hubs of the French customs authorities for any assistance needed to prepare these imports. <https://www.douane.gouv.fr/covid-19-vous-etes-une-entreprise-et-souhaitez-importer-des-masques>

<https://www.douane.gouv.fr/les-cellules-conseil-aux-entreprises>

Where can companies buy hydroalcoholic gel?

The marketplace <https://stopcovid19.fr/customer/account/login/> also allows companies to purchase large quantities of hydroalcoholic gel and solutions.

In addition, the Directorate General for Enterprise (DGE), in conjunction with all the industry federations concerned, publishes daily an extended list of producers and their production capacity of industrial quantities in order to make supplies more fluid.

Contact: gelcoronavirus.dge@finances.gouv.fr

For more information, please visit the official French government website:

<https://www.entreprises.gouv.fr/covid-19/approvisionnement-en-masques-et-gel-hydroalcoolique>

<https://www.entreprises.gouv.fr/files/files/enjeux/covid-19/note-des-ministres-aux-employeurs-stocks-de-masques.pdf>