

OFFICIAL

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Our Ref: 249.21



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

Alan Speirs
Assistant Chief Constable
Professionalism and Assurance
Police Scotland Headquarters
Tulliallan Castle
Kincardine
Fife
FK10 4BE

Dear Sandy Mearns,

Face Mask Police Stance

I refer to your email sent to the Chief Constable's office on 28 January 2021. As the Assistant Chief Constable with responsibility for overseeing the Police Scotland response to COVID-19, I note all that you say regarding the wearing of face masks and the associated equality and diversity implications re same.

I can confirm that all officers are briefed on the exemptions under The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions and Requirements) (Local Levels) (Scotland) Regulations 2020.

We have extensive guidance in place to support our policing of the pandemic and our officers are regularly briefed re same. This includes guidance surrounding the impact on disabled people and disabled communities; including the exemptions relating to the wearing of face coverings.

Whilst I am unaware of any similar issues having taken place in Scotland to those highlighted in your letter, I can confirm that in response to the letter we have enhanced information around the exemptions; specifically that **those who are exempt under the guidance and regulations do not have to prove their exemption.**

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Police Scotland's approach, throughout the pandemic has been to engage with the public in the first instance, explain the legislation to them, encourage them to comply and only to move to enforcement as a last resort, this is an approach which we will continue to adopt moving forward.

I trust this answers your question and confirms Police Scotland's approach.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Speirs
Assistant Chief Constable
Professionalism and Assurance