

# MPs must wear masks to protect Parliamentary staff, unions tell Speaker



**This is a stark example of how rules in Parliament apply only to some and not to others**

MPs must be made to wear masks to protect Parliamentary staff, unions have told Commons speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP.

New guidelines, set to come into force on July 19, make mask wearing compulsory for staff but only 'encouraged' for MPs.



A joint letter from GMB, the House Trade Union Side, Unite sent today urges the speaker to reconsider.

**“** *This is a stark example of how rules in Parliament apply only to some and not to others. After more than a year of collective efforts, staff will not feel protected in their workplace if MPs are simply permitted to choose whether or not to take this one simple step to help protect staff from possible infection.*

## Joint union letter

Workers have been told the absence of an ‘employment relationship’ between Parliament and MPs means there is no ability to mandate MPs to wear a mask.

The unions point out Parliament enforces a dress code that allows the Speaker to prevent access to the Chamber to an MP dressed inappropriately which could be extended, as a temporary public health measure, to MPs who seek to enter the Chamber without a mask.

## The letter reads:

*“It would be fair to say that the reaction of staff across Parliament has been one of incredulity, anger and concern.*

*“This is a stark example of how rules in Parliament apply only to some and not to others.*

*“It also hints at a failure by the employer to exercise its duty of care to its own employees.*

*“After more than a year of collective efforts, staff will not feel protected in their workplace if MPs are simply permitted to choose whether or not to take this one simple step to help protect staff from possible infection.*

*“We would therefore ask you to urgently reconsider the guidance provided to Members so that all staff and members are content that the appropriate measures have been taken to protect their health.”*

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