

General public masks: NF certification to support the market

AFNOR Certification created NF Barrier Masks to help public and private buyers identify the most comfortable and efficient general public masks.

This certification, intended for textile manufacturers, aims to support the sale of quality products and the revival of the sector.

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– At a time when companies and administrations are making masks part of everyday purchases, a new sign of quality will appear on the products of barrier mask manufacturers.



Known to 84% of French people and already affixed to numerous products for the general public and for professionals, NF certification is now available for fabric masks manufactured according to the recommendations of the AFNOR Spec S76-001 document and its European equivalent, the CWA 17553:2020 - Community face coverings.

AFNOR Certification is today the only organization accredited by Cofrac to certify masks for the general public.

NF certified characteristics

NF certification applied to barrier masks leads to tests proving the quality of the products. AFNOR Certification relies on APAVE's expertise to certify the quality of barrier masks. The tests carried out relate to the filtration capacity of particles with a diameter of 3 microns, likely to carry viruses, and fine particles, as well as the resistance of the self-adjusting flanges. Comfort and ease of use (breathability, selection of materials, 4-hour wear) are also scrutinized, as is capacity.

of the mask to maintain its level of quality over the number of washes recommended by the manufacturer.

Independent certification

Any manufacturer who offers masks can claim NF certification. Where applicable, it objectively values compliance with public specifications, verified by a third-party auditor from AFNOR Certification, on the production site. It is following this check and only if the result is compliant that the manufacturer can affix the NF logo. Otherwise, a mask cannot be said to be certified by AFNOR Certification.

Manufacturers with stocks of fabric masks can also have them certified if traceability is sufficient and testing evidence can be provided.

Four categories of NF certified masks

AFNOR Certification allows manufacturers to position their products on a scale of four models of barrier masks, according to their levels of performance and comfort:

- The level > 70% filtration of particles of 3 microns, which corresponds to the UNS2 general public mask;
- The level > 90% of particle filtration of 3 microns, corresponding the UNS1 general public mask;
- The comfort model: filtering more than 90% of 3 micron particles and providing increased breathability;
- The high-performance model: filtering more than 90% of 3 micron particles and more than 30% of fine particles (< 1 micron).

What is the use for a buyer?

Complementary to the official approval imposed on all industrial mask manufacturers, the NF Barrier Masks certification provides buyers with the guarantee that the manufacturer is audited every year on the production site. Masks are also tested on this occasion. This guarantee of trust is transparent for the end user, since the packaging of the certified mask includes a QR code linking to the active certificate which specifies the characteristics of the mask and the audited production location.

In know more on there certification NF Masks
barriers <https://certification.afnor.org/securite/nf-masques-barrieres>

Download the specifications for the NF Barrier Masks certification <http://cdn.afnor.org/download/reglements/FR/REGNF559.zip>

ABOUT AFNOR CERTIFICATION

AFNOR Certification is the leading activity of the AFNOR group in France thanks to its certification and evaluation services for systems, services, products and skills. AFNOR Certification is accredited in France by COFRAC and offers a local service through 39 agencies on five continents and 13 regional delegations in France. It mobilizes 1,800 qualified auditors to meet the needs of its clients on more than 60,000 sites around the world. AFNOR Certification runs the NF certification system and offers several signs of confidence such as AFAQ certification, the Engaged CSR, Diversity, Professional Equality labels and the European Ecolabel. certification.afnor.org

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