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SALT LAKE COUNTY IMPLEMENTS PUBLIC FACE MASK WEARING PROCEDURES

On June 23, I sent a letter to Governor Herbert requesting that Salt Lake County be allowed to implement face mask wearing procedures when in public. The decision was not taken lightly, but the rationale is grounded in the alarming increase in the spread of COVID-19 in recent weeks, coupled with new, rigorous evidence on the effects of face coverings on mitigating virus spread. Recently, Salt Lake County has consistently seen more than 200 new cases each day. Before June 1, Salt Lake County had never seen more than 150 cases in a day. On most days, there were fewer than 100 confirmed cases reported. This increase in cases is not due to increased testing. The positivity rate (the number of positive cases identified through testing) has increased from a 5% average to nearly 8%, which indicates a significant increase in transmission.

Consistent, widespread use of correctly-worn face coverings is one of the most effective methods to help control transmission of the virus. At least two peer-reviewed studies have confirmed the effectiveness of face coverings and their ability to reduce COVID-19 transmission by 75%-80%. Wearing a face covering correctly is one of the easiest things we can do to help our local businesses and our communities successfully weather these challenges. This effort is supported by local health care, public health experts, businesses, community, and faith leaders.

Face coverings are the responsible, safe thing to wear when you leave your home, just like seat belts are the responsible, safe thing to wear you are driving. Utah's well-known culture of respect must now include wearing face coverings: this is something we need to do for one another.

As Salt Lake County implements public face mask wearing procedures, it is important to note that the Phased Guidelines of the State apply to Salt Lake County. In Salt Lake County, face coverings are required at public gatherings where consistent social distancing is not possible and while waiting outside or inside retail and other public locations, including bars and restaurants until seated. Face coverings are not required outdoors when social distancing is easily maintained. They are not required for individuals with health conditions exacerbated by a face covering, for children under two years of age, when wearing a face covering would prevent the performance of the essential functions of a person's work, or in circumstances not reasonably conducive to wearing a face covering, such as swimming or strenuous physical activity.

Face coverings made from cloth or a variety of items likely found around the home can prevent viral spread. Details on distributions are forthcoming, but Salt Lake County will be partnering with community organizations to distribute face coverings to people in need.

The goal of the requirement is not enforcement or penalties. Rather, the goal is to send a strong, clear message about the gravity of our current COVID circumstances and the importance of face coverings in effectively addressing this concerning increase. We should rely on education, partnerships, and care for our community rather than enforcement.

Individual cities and law enforcement agencies do not generally enforce health regulations, and this requirement should be no different. We ask cities and law enforcement to focus on providing a verbal reminder of the face-covering requirement. When first responders see people not complying, we want them to hand out face coverings not citations. The penalty for not having a face covering could be a complimentary face covering. Violations of the requirement should be handled like violations of other health regulations: primarily with education about the regulation and its purpose. Repeat and egregious violators could receive a formal Notice of Violation (NOV) and order to comply. Notices of Violation do not carry fines but repeatedly ignoring the request to comply could, eventually, result in penalties. We do not expect escalation to this level, and we have not yet issued any NOVs related to any of the other COVID public health orders since March.

For more than 30 years, the Salt Lake County Health Department has worked constructively with people regarding public health issues; from reporting a restaurant worker not washing hands, to alerting us to a swimming pool with inadequate disinfection. The implementation of the face-covering requirement is no different. These are all circumstances that need to be collectively addressed to help prevent the spread of an infectious disease and protect public health.

I truly appreciate you as community leaders and your efforts to combat this virus.

Sincerely,

Jenny Wilson, Mayor
Salt Lake County

REVIEWED AND APPROVED – 1058 – 06262020

Below are approved speaking points about the face covering requirement effective tonight at midnight. These are broken into topical areas and are intended for:

- health COVID call center team
- mayor's office reception
- health department reception
- communication team for adaptation into social media posts over coming weeks
- health ambassadors and inspectors for in-person education direct to businesses
- Ze/Marti, Lorena, and Gabe for translation and outreach to diverse communities

These are not intended for public posting or distribution as a whole. They are intended to inform your own answers to questions as you receive them.

Why now:

- Salt Lake County, like much of Utah, has seen an alarming increase in the spread of COVID in recent weeks.
 - We're now consistently seeing 200 or more new cases reported each day; before June, we had never had more than 150 in a day, and on most days we saw fewer than 100.
 - This is not due to increased testing; our test positivity rate has increased from a 5% average to nearly 8%, which indicates a significant increase in transmission.

Why face coverings:

- Consistent, widespread use of correctly worn face coverings is be one of the most effective ways to help control transmission of the illness.
 - At least two recent peer-reviewed studies have confirmed the effectiveness of face coverings reducing COVID-19 transmission risk by 75%-80%.
- Wearing a face covering correctly is one of the easiest things we can do to help our local businesses, and or community as whole, successfully weather this challenging time.
- Wearing a face covering correctly is simple, safe, and effective.
 - Health care professionals wear face coverings daily for many hours with no known significant adverse effects.
- Our local health care leaders and public health experts—including those at the Utah Department of Health—agree that face coverings are essential to controlling this pandemic.
- Business, community, and faith leaders—including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—support the use of face coverings.

About face coverings:

- Face coverings are the responsible, safe thing to wear when you leave home—just like seat belts are the responsible, safe thing to wear when you are driving.
- Going out in public without a face covering is like driving drunk; even if you don't hurt yourself, you're putting other people's lives at risk.
- Headed out the door? Check: keys, wallet/purse, phone, and face covering.
- Even if you're not at high risk, someone you love or are near could be.
- Your face covering protects them; their face covering protects you.

- Wear it correctly: comfortably snug over your nose AND mouth, with no rips or tears. #CoverYourFaceHoles
- Consistently and correctly wearing face coverings in public situations is one of the easiest, most effective things we can do to keep businesses open and safely enjoy our beautiful Utah summer.

Specifics about the requirement:

- The Phased Guidelines of the State apply for Salt Lake County.
- In Salt Lake County, face coverings ARE required:
 - At public gatherings, indoor or out, where consistent social distancing is not possible.
 - While waiting outside or inside retail and other public locations, including bars and restaurants until seated.
- Face coverings are NOT required:
 - Outdoors when social distancing is easily maintained.
 - On a person with a health condition exacerbated by a face covering.
 - On children under 2 years old.
 - When wearing a face covering would prevent the performance of the essential functions of person's job or work.
 - In circumstances not reasonably conducive to wearing a face covering, such as while swimming or engaging in strenuous physical activity.
- It is impossible to account for each and every potential exception, so we ask Salt Lake County residents and visitors to use common sense and practice common decency when interpreting and applying the requirement to their public activities.
- Businesses should handle the face covering requirement just like they handle other health requirements and public-decency expectations in their establishments, such as "No shirt, no shoes, no service."
- Posting signage is an easy, effective way for business owners and operators to remind customers of the requirement. The attached signage (plus more that's applicable) is already available on [the health department's COVID-19 "Print Materials" page](#).

Getting a face covering:

- The CDC recommends the use of any face covering that prevents the spread of respiratory secretions, so an N-95 or professionally made mask is not essential; you can make an effective cloth face covering from a variety of items likely around your home. The CDC has some [ideas](#) for both sewn and non-sewn face coverings from common items.
- Both the state and county have face coverings available, particularly to vulnerable populations and people without economic means to purchase them.
- Details are forthcoming, but we are partnering with community organizations to distribute face coverings to people in need.
- We hope to have 20 locations around the county, primarily in lower-income neighborhoods, to distribute face coverings at no cost to the recipients.
- Salt Lake County facilities, such as libraries, may be among the distribution sites.
- We plan to begin distribution by Monday.

Enforcement:

- The goal of the requirement is not enforcement or to penalize anyone; the goal is to send a strong, clear message about the gravity of our current COVID circumstances and the importance of face coverings in effectively addressing this concerning data.

- We should rely on education rather than enforcement.
- Strict enforcement is not essential to success; we can succeed by changing our cultural expectation of what is polite and expected in public.
- Utah's well-known culture of respect must now include wearing face coverings; this is something we need to do for on another.
- We hope most enforcement will happen interpersonally, like when your grandma won't let you visit her without a face covering, or when your neighbor won't come within two carts of you at the grocery store if you don't have a face covering.
- Individual cities and law enforcement agencies do not generally enforce health regulations, and this requirement should be no different.
 - We ask cities and law enforcement to focus on providing a verbal reminder of the face covering requirement.
 - When first responders see people not complying, we want them to hand out face coverings not citations.
 - The penalty for not having a face covering should be a free face covering.
- Violations of the requirement should be handled like violations of other health regulations: primarily with education about the regulation and its purpose.
- Repeat and egregious violators could receive a formal Notice of Violation (NOV) and order to comply. Notices of Violation do not carry fines but repeatedly ignoring an NOV and the request to comply could, eventually, result in criminal and civil penalties.
- We do not expect to reach the level of issuing an NOV; we have not yet issued any NOVs related to any of the other COVID public health orders from March to now.

Reporting businesses not complying:

- For more than 30 years, we have asked people to let us know of public health problems they see in the community. This includes everything from reporting a restaurant worker not washing hands after using the restroom, to alerting us to a swimming pool with inadequate disinfection, to letting us know a business needs a reminder about the face covering requirement. These are all circumstances we need to address to help prevent the spread of infectious disease and protect public health.
- If you find a public business not enforcing the face covering requirement, the first thing you should do is politely ask them to begin doing so.
- If that is ineffective, you may report a noncompliant public business in Salt Lake County by calling 385-468-INFO (4636) Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm, or online anytime by clicking "Report a Problem" at [SaltLakeHealth.org](https://www.saltlakehealth.org).

IN AND FOR SALT LAKE COUNTY, STATE OF UTAH

[illegible]

Date: June 26, 2020

COVID-19 is a contagion that spreads from person to person. Salt Lake County's Executive Health Director recognizes the need for Salt Lake County and the public to continue to work cooperatively and proactively to slow the spread of COVID-19 and to address the myriad challenges that may arise due to COVID-19.

This is a critical moment in Salt Lake County and the State of Utah, and all County residents, businesses, community organizations, and government must do their respective parts to slow the transmission of COVID-19, enhance and improve the ability of our healthcare system to meet this mounting challenge, restore consumer confidence, and reduce the economic impact of this global healthcare crisis.

Section 1. The intent of this Public Health Order is to ensure a coordinated implementation of practices which slow the transmission of COVID-19 by providing Salt Lake County residents, businesses, community organizations, and government with access to the information needed to implement those practices.

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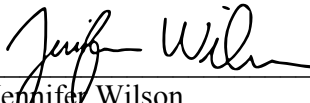
in Section 3, shall comply with the “Low Risk” or Yellow Guidelines set forth in version 4.6 of the “Phased Guidelines for the General Public and Businesses to Maximize Public Health and Economic Reactivation” (“Guidelines”) and any subsequent modification to the Guidelines released by the Utah Department of Health during the effective period of this Public Health Order. The Guidelines can be found at: <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/>.

Section 3. Residents, businesses, and community organizations located in Salt Lake City, shall comply with the “Moderate Risk” or Orange Guidelines.

Section 4. Any individual within Salt Lake County who is age two and over and able to medically or psychologically tolerate a face covering shall be required to wear a face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth in public areas where consistent social distancing of at least six feet is not possible, reasonable, or prudent. Additional guidance can be found at <https://slco.org/health/COVID-19/business/>.

Section 5. This Public Health Order takes immediate effect and rescinds all prior Public Health Orders related to COVID-19. Consistent with Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert’s Executive Order 2020-32, it will expire at 11:59 p.m. on July 3, 2020, unless extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing, and shall be re-evaluated as warranted.

BY ORDER OF THE SALT LAKE COUNTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SALT LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

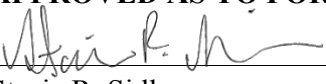


Jennifer Wilson
Salt Lake County Mayor



Gary Edwards
Executive Director Salt Lake County Health Department

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Stacia R. Sidlow
Deputy District Attorney
Date: June 26, 2020