



Public Health
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Butler County General Health District

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Butler County General Health District

Butler County Residents and Visitors Now Mandated By Governor to Wear Masks/ Face Coverings

BUTLER COUNTY, OH – This afternoon Governor Mike DeWine announced that face coverings will be mandated in all counties ranked at Level 3/Red in the Ohio Public Health Advisory Alerting System, effective 6pm on July 8th, 2020. The color coded system is based on seven data indicators ranging from new cases per capita to sustained increases in emergency room visits. According to this system, Butler County, along with six other counties, rank at Level 3/Red which is the second highest of the four possible levels.

“We are very, very concerned about the increase in the number of cases among our county residents, as well as the trends we are seeing in our hospitals that reveal increases in admissions. We have seen spread among family groups, in long term care settings, and in factories. In addition, we are seeing generalized, large scale community-wide spread,” says Jennifer Bailer, Health Commissioner. “In light of this, we support the Governor’s mask order, released today.”

Bailer continues, “When we look at the timing of this increase, it seems to be tied to holidays and the gatherings that traditionally go along with them. Large gatherings are not permitted but they seem to be happening everywhere—and without masks.”

The use of face coverings can limit the release of infected droplets when talking, coughing, and/or sneezing, as well as reinforce physical distancing.

“In the last two weeks, we have seen a 32% increase in the number of cases reported to us”, said Jordan Luttrell-Freeman, Epidemiologist.

Health Commissioner Bailer reinforces, “Butler County, like other places is seeing a decrease in the ages of persons contracting COVID-19. Those under age 30 with COVID-19 are increasing.” Part of the aim of this new Health Order is to address this rising trend seen across the State of Ohio.

The new Health Order from Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health will provide more detail regarding the face covering mandate once released. In short, face coverings must be worn:

- In any indoor location that is not a residence
- Outdoors if an individual cannot consistently maintain 6ft distance from non-members of their household
- While utilizing public/private transportation resources such as buses or ride sharing

BCGHD is working with our partners in County Government, Emergency Management, Fire and Law Enforcement to develop a plan to aid the Butler County community in gaining access to face coverings, especially individuals in our community that may have issues attaining face coverings.

Masks are available free at Fire Stations across the county, as well select food pantries and meal centers while supplies last.

Face coverings can be purchased at most major retailers or can be made at home. For a how-to guide on creating low-cost, homemade masks and face coverings please use the following CDC guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Health Commissioner Bailer emphasizes, “I have heard people say, “I’m done with this (COVID),” and I understand. I am tired of it too. But we simply cannot be done with COVID at this point. We need to redouble our efforts to do all the things that science tells us are effective: wear a mask, keep hands clean, and physically distance. We need to do this every time we are around others to protect each other, and bring down our numbers.

We certainly do NOT want to go back to being shut down. HEALTHY PEOPLE ARE GOOD FOR BUSINESS IN BUTLER COUNTY!! Public health supports businesses, we want people to have jobs and be able to pay their bills and buy food for their children—that is all a part of health and being healthy. It is so important that we practice physical distancing (don’t be in crowded places), wear a mask (keep your droplets to yourself), and keep our hands clean so that we do not have to go back to being restricted.”

Background

What is a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

How well do cloth face coverings work to prevent spread of COVID-19?

There is scientific evidence to suggest that use of cloth face coverings by the public during a pandemic could help reduce disease transmission. Their primary role is to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill, but they may be helpful when combined with these primary interventions.

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