



**For Immediate Release
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JEFFERSON COUNTY UNIFIED COMMAND CENTER UPDATE FOR JUNE 26, 2020

Birmingham, AL – The Jefferson County Unified Command Center (JCUC) and its partner agencies continue to help provide information, goods and services to the people of Jefferson County throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response. Dr. Mark Wilson, Jefferson County Health Officer, and Jim Coker, Director of Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency serve as the co- leaders of the Unified Command Center.

Health Order- Face Coverings

On Friday June 26, 2020, Dr. Mark Wilson, the Jefferson County Health Officer, issued a Health Order requiring the usage of face coverings/masks in public spaces within Jefferson County. This order will go into effect on Monday June 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM.

The Details of the order are below:

What constitutes as a face covering/mask?

A Face covering/mask is a device to cover the nose and mouth of a person to impede the spread of saliva or other fluids during speaking, coughing, sneezing, or other intentional or involuntary action. Medical-grade masks are not required and are, in fact, discouraged for use under this Order, as they are in short supply and should generally be reserved for high-risk first responders and healthcare workers or those coming into direct contact with suspected COVID-19 patients. Coverings may be fashioned from scarves, bandanas, or other suitable fabrics. The face covering must cover the mouth and nose of the wearer.

Face Coverings Required in Public Places.

All persons shall be required to wear face coverings or masks in the following public places within Jefferson County:

- a. Indoor spaces of businesses or venues open to the general public, including but not limited to stores, bars and restaurants (see exception 3b), entertainment venues, public meeting spaces, government buildings, civic centers, entertainment venues, etc.
- b. Transportation services available to the general public, including mass transit, paratransit, taxi, or ride-sharing services.
- c. Outdoor areas open to the general public where ten or more persons are gathered and unable to maintain a distance of six (6) or more feet between persons not from the same household.

Exceptions

There are certain exceptions that may apply regarding the following:

- a. Children two (2) years of age and under.
- b. Eating or Drinking.
- c. Medical Examinations or Procedures.
- d. Hair Care Services.
- e. Personal Safety.
- f. Places of Worship.
- g. Effective Communication.
- h. Indoor Athletic Facilities.
- i. Private Clubs and Gatherings.
- j. Schools and Childcare Services

Details on each of these exceptions can be found within the order here:

<https://www.jcdh.org/SitePages/Misc/PdfViewer?AdminUploadId=796>

Businesses

Unless otherwise ordered by the State Health Officer to comply with a stricter face covering requirement, business owners, managers, and supervisors shall develop their own policies and procedures regarding face coverings for employees in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Alabama Department of Public Health guidance.

- a. **Public Places.** If a business contains a space or spaces open to the general public, policies regarding those spaces must comply with the restrictions in Section 2 of this Order.
- b. **Non-Public Places.** If a business contains a space or spaces not open to the general public, a “non-public place” not included in Section 2 of this Order, such as an office or backroom, policies regarding those spaces should take into account the health, safety, and comfort of employees.
- c. **Employee Safety.** Employers are encouraged to structure work to promote social distancing and limit close contact as much as possible within workplaces where face coverings or masks may pose risks to personal safety.

Notices

All businesses and venues open to the general public shall post a notice at all public entrances of their establishment, stating that face coverings are required inside the establishment. Notices have been designed by the Jefferson County Department of Health for your convenience. They can be found here:

<https://www.jcdh.org/SitePages/Misc/PdfViewer?AdminUploadId=792>

Information and Tools Readily Available for the Public

The Jefferson County Department of Health has developed a toolkit for the public, local businesses and governmental agencies to use to obtain useful information about the face covering order and to share with others. This toolkit includes:

- a. A signed copy of the Public Health Order
- b. Signage for establishments

- c. Frequently Asked Questions
- d. Infographics on how to wear face coverings, as well as make a face covering
- e. Social Media Graphics
- f. Informational videos regarding face coverings

This toolkit is available now for your use. It can be found here: <https://www.jcdh.org/facecoveringtoolkit>

IHME News Release on Potential Benefit of Face Masks

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation issued a news release on June 24 projecting the potential impact on transmission of COVID-19 and the projected number of deaths by state, if face mask use were to be adopted at a high rate. The link is here: <http://www.healthdata.org/news-release/new-ihme-covid-19-model-projects-nearly-180000-us-deaths>

COVID-19 Cases

The number of new cases of COVID-19 per day in Jefferson County is still quite high, with the highest numbers yet reported in each of the last two days. Some of this is due to more testing, but it also reflects a true increase in the amount of disease spreading in the community, since the percentage of positive tests has averaged over 10% for the last several days. As in many parts of the country, we are seeing a higher number of younger people testing positive, so these are less likely to lead to increased deaths unless they spread to older people.

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