

## MASKS: Fergus Falls residents weigh in on state mandated masks

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interesting to see if mandated masks will increase consumer confidence in dining out.”

### Brian Olson, Fergus Falls

“It should have been done long ago.”

### Gen Austin, Fergus Falls

“I think it’s time. We have to do what we can to stop the spread of this. The pandemic is no joke.”

Here is the state’s list of what defines the new mask mandate:

#### Types of face coverings

Types of face coverings can include a paper or disposable mask, a cloth mask, a neck gaiter, a scarf, a bandanna, or a religious face covering.

A face covering must cover the nose and mouth completely. The covering should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear.

Any mask that incorporates a valve that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh masks, or masks with openings, holes, visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow droplets to be released from the mask.

A face covering is not a substitute for social distancing, but is especially important in situations when maintaining at least a 6-foot distance from other individuals not who are not members of the same household is not possible.

It is not known whether face shields (a clear plastic barrier that covers the face) provide the same source control for droplets as face masks, but they may be an option in situations where wearing a face mask is problematic. For optimal protection, the shield should extend below the chin and to the ears, and there should be no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield’s headpiece.

Although medical-grade masks (e.g., surgical face masks, N95 respirators) are sufficient face coverings, members of the public who do not work in health care or an occupation that requires medical-grade protective equipment (e.g., certain construction professions) are discouraged from wearing them as they should be reserved for those workers.

#### Persons exempted from the face covering requirement

Children under age 2 years must not wear face coverings. Children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old are not required to wear face coverings, but are encouraged to wear a face covering when in public if they can do so reliably in compliance with CDC guidance on how to wear cloth face coverings (i.e., without frequently touching or removing the



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**IF I HAVE TO, I WILL:** Although she has medical problems including breathing issues, Elaine Iversen said that if she has to wear a mask she will.

face covering).

Persons who have medical or other health conditions, disabilities or mental health, developmental, or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a face covering. Any person who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, sleeping, incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

Persons at their workplace when wearing a face covering would create a safety hazard to the person or others as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

Alternatives to masks such as clear face shields may be considered for those with health conditions or situations where wearing a mask is problematic. Face shields may also be used as an alternative to face coverings when specifically permitted in the applicable industry guidance available at Stay Safe Minnesota.

#### When it is required to wear a face covering

In all public indoor spaces and businesses, including when waiting outside to enter the public indoor space or business.

When riding on public transportation such as buses or trains, or in a taxi, ride-sharing vehicle, or vehicle that is being used for a business purpose.

For workers only: When working outdoors in situations where social distancing (i.e., maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet from other individuals who are not in the same household) cannot be maintained.

When present in a business, whether indoor or outdoor, that has elected to require face coverings. Busi-

nesses are allowed to require face coverings even in situations where face coverings are not otherwise required by Executive Order 20-81. When applicable industry guidance, available at Stay Safe Minnesota, specifically requires face coverings (refer to the industry-specific guidance section, below).

#### When a face covering is not required

When at home or in an assigned room or living unit in a place of temporary lodging (e.g., hotel or motel room) or other place whether a person may reside short- or long-term (e.g., shelter, dormitory, residential treatment facility, long-term care facility, correctional facility).

However, workers who enter a person’s home or assigned living unit for purposes of their job—for example, home health care aides or staff in a residential treatment, long-term care, or correctional facility—must wear face coverings when doing so. Certain facilities—including hospitals, shelters, long-term care facilities, residential programs licensed under Minnesota statutes chapter 245D, residential treatment facilities, or correctional facilities—may also require visitors and residents, patients, or inmates to wear face coverings even when in a living unit. When in a private vehicle being used for private (i.e., non-business) purposes.

When outdoors or participating in outdoor recreation (e.g., exercising, walking, gardening) for private purposes. However, workers are required to wear face coverings when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.

Even in situations where face coverings are not required, all persons should carry a face covering to prepare for close interactions with others or to enter an indoor space.

#### When can a face covering be temporarily removed

While eating or drinking, if you can maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others who are not a member of the same party.

When someone asks to verify an identity for lawful purposes, such as when ordering an alcoholic beverage or entering certain events.

When participating in an activity in which the face covering will get wet. For example, when swimming.

While communicating with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, or who has a medical condition, disability, or mental health condition that makes communication with that individual while wearing a mask difficult, provided that social distancing is maintained to the extent possible between persons who are not members of the same household.

While receiving a service—including a dental examination or procedure, medical examination or procedure, or personal care service—that cannot be performed or would be difficult to perform when the individual receiving the service is wearing a face covering. When alone, such as when working in an office or a cubicle with walls higher than face level when social distancing is maintained, in an enclosed indoor area, in a vehicle, or in the cab of heavy equipment or machinery. In such situations, persons should still carry face coverings to be prepared to wear when no longer alone.

When participating in organized sports where the level of exertion makes wearing a face covering difficult.

When participating in indoor physical exercise—such as in a gym or fitness center—where the level of exertion makes wearing a face covering difficult, as long as social distancing can be maintained at all times.

When testifying, speaking, singing, or performing in an indoor business or public indoor space, in situations or

settings such as theaters, news conferences, courtroom proceedings, or lectures, provided that social distancing is always maintained. Face shields should be considered as an alternative in these situations.

During practices or performances in an indoor business or indoor public space when a face covering cannot be used while playing a musical instrument, provided that social distancing is always maintained.

#### When it is strongly recommended (but not required) to wear a face covering

In any public outdoor space or business when it is not possible to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others or where close person-to-person interaction is possible or likely, such as when entering or exiting a business, moving around in a space with others present, using the restroom, ordering food, or waiting in line.

In private social gatherings—for example, when visiting in a private home with friends or relatives that do not reside in the same household—especially when it is not possible to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others.

At home, for individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. This will help protect other members of the same household from being infected.

During participation in organized sporting activities, if wearing a face covering is safe and practical.

When at home or in a private vehicle when someone who is not a member of the same household is present, particularly when social distancing cannot be maintained.

#### Businesses’ obligations under the executive order

Under Executive Order 20-81, businesses must:

Require that all persons, including their workers, customers, and visitors, wear face coverings as required by Executive Order 20-81 and take reasonable steps to enforce the requirement.

Mitigate or eliminate worker and customer exposure to persons who cannot wear or refuse to wear a face covering.

Update their COVID-19 Preparedness Plans to include the face covering requirements of Executive Order 20-81, inform their workers how their plan has been updated, and make the revised plan available to their workers. Post one or more signs that are visible to all persons—including workers, customers, and visitors—instructing them to wear face coverings as required by Executive Order 20-81.

When possible, provide accommodations to persons, including their workers and customers, who state they have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the person to maintain a face covering. Accommodations could include permitting use of an alternate form of face covering—a face shield, for example—or providing service options that do not require a customer to enter the business.

Executive Order 20-81 does not: Require businesses or their workers

to enforce face covering requirements when it is unsafe to do so.

Authorize businesses to restrain, assault, or physically remove workers or customers who refuse to comply with Executive Order 20-81 when it would not otherwise be legal to do so.

Authorize businesses and their workers to violate other laws, including anti-discrimination laws.

For additional information about the steps businesses can take to ensure compliance with Executive Order 20-81, refer to Executive Order 20-81 which is available at Executive Orders from Governor Walz, and the FAQ about the requirement to wear face coverings.

#### Enforcement

While Minnesota expects that businesses and individuals will voluntarily comply with the requirements of this guidance and Executive Order 20-81 to keep their fellow Minnesotans safe, there are consequences for violation of these requirements. These consequences can include petty misdemeanor citations and fines for people, and criminal, civil, and regulatory sanctions for businesses (and their owners and managers). For more information, see Executive Order 20-81 available at Executive Orders from Governor Walz, and the Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings.

#### Where to report concerns with compliance or ask questions?

To report violations by businesses or individuals: Contact local law enforcement or one of the agencies listed below, if applicable.

To ask questions or report violations of this executive order that relate to worker health and safety: Contact the Department of Labor and Industry by email at osha.compliance@state.mn.us or by phone at 651-284-5050 or 1-877-470-6742.

To ask other workplace-related questions about this Executive Order: Contact the Department of Employment and Economic Development using the form on questions about returning to work.

To report violations by restaurants and food service establishments, pools, or lodging services: Follow the instructions on MDH online complaint form. In some instances, you may need to contact a local public health agency to report your complaint. Refer to the “Before reporting a complaint” section on the above webpage or to the Minnesota State and Local Food, Pools, and Lodging Contacts (PDF) to determine whether a local public health agency is the right contact for your area.

To report discrimination in relation to this executive order: Contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights at 1-833-454-0148 or submit a report at Report Discrimination Online.

For general questions about face covering requirements or COVID-19: Contact the Minnesota Department of Health by phone at 651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504, or submit an inquiry using the “Have a Question? We’re here to help” online form.

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## ACT: Otter Tail County putting CARES Act funds to six primary categories

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to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

- Were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020, (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the state or local government.

- Were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on Dec. 30, 2020.

In early July, Otter Tail County received its allocation of \$7.2 million. It is the county’s desire to rapidly invest these funds into local communities and townships

through the “Navigating the Road Ahead Program,” which includes six primary categories:

**Community resilience:** Housing, food, and financial assistance for struggling individuals and families.

**Workforce:** Resources for those who have lost their jobs as well as employers who need workers.

**Small business:** Support for small business and non-profit organizations to stay open and adapt.

**Education and child care:** Assistance for local school districts and child care providers.

**Emergency response:** Public safety and public health

expenditures by the county.

**Small Towns:** Resources specifically for small communities under 200 people.

Cities and towns under 200 people were not eligible for a direct distribution from the state. However, Otter Tail County has developed a specific fund to reimburse eligible costs for those cities and towns.

Specific programs and investment recommendations are currently being developed by staff and community stakeholders. We welcome your feedback and input on ways in which this program can best support individuals, families and businesses during this period of signifi-

cant need. The goal is to begin rapidly investing these funds into area communities beginning in August.

Otter Tail County will continue applying for other funding opportunities from federal and state governments and private foundations to offset the many costs associated with an effective COVID-19 response and recovery.

Otter Tail County is committed to ensuring individuals, families, businesses, and communities are supported during this challenging time. The county wants to ensure every dollar of eligible CARES Act aid is invested within Otter Tail County.

## PEACHES: Trailer to be available on or about Aug. 14

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or visit the trailer behind Olson Furniture Store on Aug. 14. “The trailer will be here on or about Aug. 14, which is a Friday, and we will have those available behind Olson Furniture in the alley,” says Keith Olson, a Noon Rotary Club member and owner of Olson Furniture Store. “They should act quick if they want them.”

Every year, the club orders just under a thousand lugs of peaches for

the fundraiser and usually sell out over the course of a single weekend. “This year we may have gone a little bit back because of this COVID thing, we’re not so sure if we’re going to have the exact same turnout,” Olson says, “but we’re hopeful that we will and so we’ll have plenty of peaches.” Many buyers return to the Noon Rotary Club with a number of experimental baked goods they made using the peaches they pur-

chased.

The money raised will go toward youth programs in the area. “We have a children’s reading program that we do through the school system called Josh the Otter, and we also give away dictionaries to (grade school kids),” Olson says. “The main emphasis this year will be on our 100th anniversary and that’s going to be toward the splash pad goal, everybody can benefit from that.”