

Cape Girardeau County Public Health Center

1121 Linden, P.O. Box 1839
Cape Girardeau, MO 63702 – 1839
www.cgcohealthdept.com
Phone (573) 335-7846 Fax (573) 335-5909



Face Covering Order FAQ

This is a running document and subject to change.

When does the Face Covering Order go into effect?

This order goes into effect on Monday, July 13, 2020, at 12:01 AM.

When will the Face Covering Order expire?

At this time, there is no expiration date listed on the order. However, the order will be in effect until the Public Health Board rescinds the order, or the Cape County Public Health Emergency Declaration is lifted.

Can my local health authority impose requirements to address COVID-19 in my community?

“Yes. There is currently no state-wide public health order in place. Local health authorities retain their statutory and regulatory authority to establish public health orders as needed for businesses or individuals within their jurisdiction to address positive cases.” See <https://showmestrong.mo.gov/faq/#615-c35> or Missouri State Statue Section 192.300.

How will this order be enforced?

As a Local Health Authority, it is our role to issue a Public Health Emergency Order to protect the health and safety of the community, provide education, and listen to concerns. The Cape County Prosecuting Attorney is charged with carrying on the prosecution in legal proceedings. The County Health Board has for many years acted under its authority in situations to make necessary rules, regulations and orders to enhance public health and prevent infectious and communicable diseases when action is necessary. This action is being taken consistent with that authority which is granted by state law (Section 192.300). Many residents of the county are familiar with the actions that have been taken by the Health Department under their authority, such as to food safety requirements, septic inspections and other actions similar programs.

What defines a face covering?

Face Coverings for the purpose of this order means a device, usually made of cloth, which covers the nose and mouth. Consistent with current CDC guidelines, face coverings prevent those who may have COVID-19 from spreading it to others. Cloth face coverings are recommended for the general public over surgical or N95 respirators, which should be reserved for medical professionals and first responders. Nothing in this Order should prevent workers or customers from wearing a surgical-grade face covering or other more protective Face covering if the individual is already in possession of such equipment, or if the business otherwise provides their workers with such equipment due to the nature of the work involved.

Does everyone have to wear a face covering?

- a. All persons over the age of 9, including employees or visitors, present at any Business or Public Space; or
- b. All persons over the age of 9 when outdoors in a Public Space when anyone other than members of their household or living unit will be within six feet; or
- c. All persons over the age of 9 attending a Gathering of individuals who are not members of their household in any area, which will necessarily involve close contact or proximity to others when six feet of separation is not feasible. This restriction does not apply to Gatherings of individuals at personal residences.

What are some examples of when to wear a face covering? Please note these are just a few examples and not a comprehensive list.

- When shopping at the grocery store or other retail establishment.
- When sitting in the stands close to others while watching a sporting event.
- When walking around your office/place of work when others are present.
- When riding in a vehicle with someone who is not a member(s) of your household (i.e. when utilizing public transportation, when driving in a work vehicle with other employees, etc.)
- When standing in line at the store or other event.
- Anytime you are in close contact with someone who you do not live with.

When should I not wear a face covering? There are several exemptions listed in this order. Those include:

- a. Children under the age of 3;
- b. Children between the ages of 3-9 are strongly encouraged, but not required, to wear a Face Covering, while under the direct supervision of an adult;

- c. Persons with health conditions that prohibit wearing a Face Covering. Nothing in this Order shall require the use of a Face Covering by any person for whom doing so would be contrary to their health or safety because of a medical condition;
- d. Persons who have trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the Face Covering without assistance;
- e. Persons who are hearing impaired, or someone who is communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- f. Persons who are at a place of Business or Public Space who are consuming food or drink while adequately distanced from other patrons and staff;
- g. Persons who are at a public pool while in the water;
- h. Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or Face for which temporary removal of the Face Covering is necessary to perform the service; and
- i. Persons playing a sport;
- j. Persons exercising or using exercise equipment where participants are at least 6 feet apart.

Do I need a doctor's note to prove I have a medical condition that prevents me from wearing a face covering?

No. You do not need a doctor's note or documentation proving you have a medical condition preventing you from wearing a face covering. However, you may be required to provide certification to your employer if that is their policy.

Do I need to wear a face covering in the gym or during physical activities?

If you are engaged in physical activity or in the gym and are distanced from others, you do not need to wear one. If you are not engaged in a physical activity, then one must be worn in a gym.

Do I need to wear a face covering at a restaurant or bar?

Face coverings should be worn in restaurants and bars as you wait to be seated and while you walk to your table in the dining area. Once seated, you can remove your Face covering if you are safely distanced from others. The Face covering should be put on anytime you leave the table.

Do I need to wear a face covering at the pool?

Face coverings should not be worn while swimming. Face coverings should be worn when in and around the pool area when physically distancing from others is not possible to maintain. This may be when entering and exiting the pool facility or when visiting the locker room or restroom areas.

Do I need to wear a face covering when playing golf?

Face coverings should be worn while golfing anytime that physical distancing is not possible to maintain.

There is an exemption for wearing a face covering during a sporting activity. Does that include coaches, umpires, or other volunteers on the field/court/etc.?

Players engaged in the sporting activity are exempt from the Face covering requirement while they are physically active in the sport. This exemption does not apply to players on the sidelines/bench/dugout, coaches, referees/umpires, or spectators who are not engaged in a physical activity unless they are able to maintain at least 6ft from others.

Are childcare providers required to wear a face covering?

Yes, childcare providers are required to wear a face covering. This includes in-home providers.

Where can I get a face covering if I do not have one?

Both reusable and cloth face coverings can be purchased at many different locations around the county, including grocery stores, retail establishments, or online retailers. There are also many local cloth face covering makers in and around Cape County that you can find via Facebook marketplace or other buying and selling groups. If you are unable to purchase a face covering, there are many options to turn household items into face coverings. See the link provided on how to make a cloth face covering.

What should I look for when buying a face covering?

Look for face coverings made with at least 2 layers of fabric. It should cover your nose and mouth without large gaps. The Face covering should have ear loops or ties so you can adjust it. For people who wear glasses, look for a face covering with a bendable border at the top so you can mold the Face covering to fit the bridge of your nose and prevent your glasses from fogging.

I am an employer. Where can I get face coverings for my employees?

Employers can order face coverings through any supplier. One option is the Missouri PPE marketplace located on the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services website: PPE Resource Process and Requests | COVID-19 Outbreak | Health & Senior Services. Also, our local chambers of commerce have a limited supply of face coverings for local businesses.

How long can I wear a disposable face covering?

Disposable face coverings can be reused multiple times until they are damaged or soiled. You can clean disposable face coverings before reuse by spraying with an alcohol solution and allowing them to dry completely before wearing again. It is important to always remove face coverings correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used face covering.

How can I wash my cloth face covering, and how often should I clean it?

Cloth face coverings should be washed at least once a day. It is important to always remove face coverings correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used face covering. The CDC has more information on how to wash a cloth face covering: [How to Wash a Cloth Face Covering](#). You can also check with local cleaners to determine if they will clean cloths face coverings for you.

What are some tips for making a cloth face covering?

Bandanas, scarves, hand towels, or any items made of cotton or linen can easily be used as a face covering, as many have these items at home. The CDC has more information on how to make cloth face coverings at home. Instructions are included for sewn and non-sewn face coverings: [How to Make Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow Spread](#).

How do you properly wear a face covering?

Your face covering should cover your face from the bridge of your nose to under your chin. It should be loose-fitting but still secure enough to stay in place. Make sure you can talk with your face covering on and that it does not irritate you, so you are not tempted to touch it or pull it out of place, which could put you at risk from touching your face or limit its effectiveness.

What is the science behind the effectiveness of face covering wearing?

The recommendation from the CDC to wear a cloth face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic is based on what we know about the role respiratory droplets play in the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19, paired with emerging evidence from clinical and laboratory studies that shows cloth face coverings reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth.

How do face coverings prevent the spread of COVID-19?

According to the CDC, cloth face coverings are recommended as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the cloth face covering coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. This is called source control. COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with one another

(within about 6 feet), so the use of cloth face coverings is particularly important in settings where people are close to each other or where physical distancing is difficult to maintain.

Why are face coverings being encouraged now when they were not before?

COVID-19 is a new virus, and we learn new things about it every day. As we learn more about the virus, we now have more evidence to suggest that face coverings could slow the spread of the virus. We will continue to adapt our recommendations as we discover more about the novel Coronavirus.

Can I wear a face shield instead of a face covering?

The CDC does not recommend the use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings. However, for persons with health conditions that prohibit the wearing of face coverings a face shield may be a better alternative than nothing.

Do I have to wear a face covering in my own home?

A face covering is not necessary when in your own home and only with members of your household. If you are hosting a gathering with people from other households, everyone should wear a face covering in order to protect each other from possible exposure to the virus. If you live in a multi-family unit, such as an apartment building, wear a face covering in communal spaces, such as the laundry room and shared hallways.

Can wearing a face covering make me sick?

Face coverings may be uncomfortable or difficult to get used to, but there is not sufficient evidence suggesting that wearing a face covering can make a healthy individual sick. Both surgical and cloth face coverings are porous, allowing for normal breathing. According to the CDC, it is unlikely that wearing a face covering will cause a buildup of CO₂.

If I wear a face covering do, I still have to physically distance?

Yes, physical distancing should always be practiced, and face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing. Face coverings act as an additional layer of protection in slowing the spread of the virus.

I am a business owner/manager. How do I notify customers of this order?

All Businesses and other entities that provide a Public Space must post the requirement that face coverings are required for entry and must continuously be worn while present in the business.

How does the face covering order work at events such as weddings, anniversary parties, conferences, etc.?

Any food and drink should be consumed at a table or in a setting that is set up to allow for physical distancing. Individuals cannot walk around a room talking and drinking/eating. Face coverings must be worn during times guests are up moving around, for example, when coming in, going to use the restroom, etc. Face coverings do not need to be worn while they are seated at their table physically distanced from others.

Are churches exempt from this order?

No, churches and places of worship are not exempt from the order. Face coverings should be worn in these establishments.