

FACE COVERING DIRECTIVE FOR GRANT COUNTY, WA

Whereas, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed a state of emergency within the State of Washington due to COVID-19, a contagious disease caused by a novel coronavirus capable of creating communitywide outbreaks and causing serious harm to human health, which may result in death; and

Whereas, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a National Emergency due to COVID-19, and on March 22, 2020, a Major Disaster was declared for the State of Washington; and

Whereas, on May 23, 2020, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) approved Grant County's Phase II variance per Governor Inslee's "Phased Approach to Reopening Washington" Plan (the Plan), which will now increase the number of interactions among Grant County residents and visitors and the frequency of encounters with non-household members, increasing the risk of exposure to persons with COVID-19; and

Whereas, the activities and business services listed in Phase II of the Plan are now permitted in Grant County and exempt from the Stay Home – Stay Health Proclamation's prohibitions, thus further increasing human-to-human contacts; and

Whereas, a surge in the number of persons with COVID-19 can compromise the ability of Grant County to stay "open" or "reopen", and may simultaneously endanger the County's capacity to deliver essential governmental, public health, and healthcare services to the public; and

Whereas, the key transmission method for COVID-19 is respiratory droplets that individuals expel when they breathe, talk, cough, or sneeze; and

Whereas, individuals can be infected and contagious before or even without developing COVID-19 symptoms, and the evidence suggests a significant number of infections may be transmitted in this manner, especially when indoor and in confined spaces; and

Whereas, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DOH recommend that members of the public should cover their noses and mouths with a face covering to prevent inadvertently spreading COVID-19 while interacting with others outside their homes in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain; and

Whereas, wearing a fabric/cloth mask or face covering has been shown in published research to significantly reduce the risk of spread of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, to others; and

Whereas, the Revised Code of Washington, Title 70.05.070(2)-(3), requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to maintain health and to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction; and

Whereas, the Washington Administrative Code, Title 246-100-036, requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control measures as he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information.

Based upon the above, as the Local Health Officer for Grant County, I hereby find that directing the residents and visitors in Grant County to wear face coverings in certain public places is reasonable and important to maintaining health and to controlling and preventing of COVID-19 throughout Grant County.

EFFECTIVE on Wednesday, May 27, 2020, as the Grant County Health Officer, I hereby DIRECT as follows:

- 1. All individuals at indoor or confined public settings MUST WEAR FACE COVERINGS over their noses and mouths if they are likely to be in contact with another individual who does not share their household and maintaining a distance from those individuals of approximately six feet is not always possible.** At this time, because it is still important to conserve medical-grade masks or N95 respirators for health care workers, unless a particular health reason requires it, individuals should use fabric coverings, such as cloth face masks, scarves, and bandana coverings or other material as recommended by the CDC.
 - 2. Cloth face masks must be worn properly in order to avoid contaminating the hands or face of the user.** Before putting on a mask and after removing a mask, an individual should clean their hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water. Masks should be changed and washed when soiled, moist, and after use. Worn masks may be contaminated with infectious agents: while in use, avoid touching the mask.
 - 3. This Directive applies to any indoor or confined public setting where a person will be within six feet of another individual, who does not share the same household, and includes, but is not limited to the following sectors:**
 - a. Groceries, pharmacies, and other retail that sells food and beverage products, including but not limited to grocery stores, corner stores, and convenience stores (including liquor stores that sell food), farmers' markets, food banks, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, "big box" stores that sell groceries and essentials, and similar food retail establishments.
 - b. Commercial retail stores that supply essential sectors, including convenience stores, pet supply stores, auto supplies and repair, hardware and home improvement, garden stores
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and indoor sales for nurseries that support food cultivation and production, office supply stores that support working-from-home, and home appliance retailers.

- c. Restaurants, food carry-out, quick-serve food operations—including food preparation, carry-out, and delivery food employees.
- d. Cannabis retail and dietary supplement retail stores; liquor, tobacco, and vapor retail stores.
- e. Hair and nails salons and barbers.
- f. Real estate locations (including in-office, vehicle, house demonstrations, if necessary).
- g. Veterinary care and pet grooming services.
- h. In-home domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.).
- i. Buses, light rail, and other forms of public transportation.
- j. Agricultural work and housing.
- k. Food and produce processing (frozen processing, produce sorting and packing, etc.).
- l. Any indoor manufacturing and indoor construction and remodeling.

4. The following individuals may be excluded from this Directive:

- a. Any child aged two years or less;
- b. Any child aged 12 years or less unless parents and caregivers supervise the use of face coverings by children to avoid misuse;
- c. Any individual who has a physical disability that prevents easily wearing or removing a face covering;
- d. Any individual who is deaf and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication, or an individual who is communicating with a person who is deaf and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication;
- e. Any individual who has been advised by a medical professional that wearing a face covering may pose a risk to that individual for health related reasons;
- f. Any individual who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

5. Face covering use does not replace the need to practice physical distancing and adhering to Phase II limitations of the Plan (staying away from ill people, staying home and avoiding all activities not permitted in Phase II), frequent handwashing, regular cleaning of all surfaces, environmental barriers, avoiding touching of the face, etc.

6. Nothing in this Directive reduces or eliminates the requirements imposed by other directives and /or orders from the Local Health Officer, Governor, or other regulatory local, state, or federal agency including employer and business specific directives from the business owners or the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, and any prior requirements to wear face masks or coverings in healthcare settings.

7. All commercial establishments in Grant County are directed to post signage advising individuals to wear face coverings on the premises. Establishments can download a sign example for this purpose at <http://granthealth.org/resources-for-covid-19/#Signs,-Flyers,-and-Posters>

8. At present time, violation of this Directive does not create grounds to detain, issue a citation, arrest, or prosecute individuals who do not comply with it. This Directive may and should be used to educate, encourage, and persuade individuals to wear face coverings.

I strongly urge all people in Grant County to voluntarily comply with this Directive without delay.

This Directive shall EXPIRE upon determination by the Grant County Health Officer that there is no longer a need for face coverings due to COVID-19.

Signed and directed this 27th day of May 2020, in Ephrata, Washington, by



Alexander L. Brzezny, MD, MPH, FAAFP

Grant County Health Officer
