FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:
Wyandotte County Local Health Officer Order Requiring Masks

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General
Where do I need to wear a mask?
The short answer: almost any public space, indoor or outdoor. This includes workplaces, businesses, places of worship, community centers, public transportation, ride-sharing services, bus stops, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, farmers markets, and more.

Exceptions include:
- Solitary, enclosed workplaces, such as an individual office
- When driving alone or with others in your household
- During outdoor exercise in which you can absolutely guarantee 6 feet or more of social distancing from people who do not live in your household
At restaurants or bars, masks may be removed when you are actively eating or drinking, but must be worn at all other times.

**Do I need a surgical mask or N95?**
No. Cloth face coverings are effective at reducing the spread of COVID-19. Surgical masks and N95s are best left for healthcare workers who need them for their jobs.

The most important thing is to wear the mask/face covering correctly. It must cover both your mouth and nose. Do your best not to touch or readjust your mask until you are ready to remove it. It's best to clean your hands before taking your mask off or putting it back on.

**Where can I get a mask?**
You can make a mask at home out of items you likely already have. You do not need sewing skills or sewing supplies to make a cloth face covering. Find information on how to make both sew and no-sew masks at: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html)

Cloth face coverings should include multiple layers of fabric, and may have ties or straps around the head or behind the ears.

Some community organizations also provide masks, and several retailers sell cloth masks. Wear whatever mask is accessible to you – any mask is better than no mask!

**Does everyone have to wear a mask, or are there exceptions?**
Some people are exempt from wearing masks for health, safety, or accessibility reasons. Exemptions include:

- Those who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Children younger than five years old
  - Please note: the CDC recommends masks for anyone over the age of two. Children under age two should *never* wear face coverings due to the risk of suffocation
- People with medical conditions, mental health conditions, or disabilities that prevent wearing a face covering. This includes individuals for whom a face covering would obstruct breathing, and people who are unable to remove a face covering without assistance.

People who are medically unable to wear a mask/face covering must wear a full face shield covering the mouth, nose, and eyes as an alternative to a face mask. Face shields have a piece of hard, clear plastic that sits in front of the face; these are often worn by healthcare workers in addition to other protective equipment.
What about eating or drinking, like at a restaurant?
At restaurants or bars, masks may be removed when you are actively eating or drinking, but must be worn at all other times. Please clean your hands with soap and water or with hand sanitizer before taking your mask off and before putting your mask back on.

Do I need to wear a mask when I’m outside?
Yes, you do need to wear a mask in all public outdoor gathering spaces, including bus stops, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, and farmers markets.

One exception would be during socially distanced outdoor exercise, in which you can absolutely guarantee 6 feet or more of social distancing from people who do not live in your household. It may be a good idea to keep a mask on hand in case you unexpectedly encounter other people.

Do I need to wear a mask when exercising indoors, like at a gym/fitness center?
Yes, masks must be worn in public indoor spaces, including exercise or recreation spaces.

How will the state order from Governor Kelly affect this local mask order?
On Monday, June 29, Governor Kelly announced that she would be issuing an order requiring masks across the state. The Executive Order is set to be released on Thursday, July 2, and go into effect on Friday, July 3. As the Executive Order has not yet been released, we do not know yet exactly how it will compare to our local order, or if it will supersede our local order.

No matter what, Wyandotte County will fall under an order requiring mask wearing. On July 2, we will find out if there are any differences in the specific requirements imposed by the state.

Businesses

Do employees need to wear masks at work?
Yes, employees are required by the Local Health Officer Order to wear masks at work, and employers are strongly encouraged to enforce mask-wearing among their employees. An exception to this can be made for solitary, enclosed workspaces, such as individual offices.

When eating or drinking, such as on a lunch break, employees may remove their masks while actively eating or drinking, and replace masks immediately afterward. Employees should practice social distancing of at least 6 feet.
Do businesses have to require customers to wear masks?
Businesses are not legally responsible for the enforcement of mask-wearing among customers, but are strongly encouraged to promote mask wearing in their establishment. Businesses are asked to post signage about masks that is clearly visible to patrons. Posters encouraging people to wear masks and notifying them of the mask order will be made available by the Unified Government Public Health Department for download or in hard copy, printed form.

Please note that while businesses are not legally responsible for enforcement, customers are legally required to wear masks in any public spaces, including inside businesses.

Childcare

Do children have to wear masks?
Children age five or older are required to wear masks/face coverings, unless they are exempt for health, safety, or accessibility reasons. Children age two, three, and four are strongly encouraged to wear masks, with the assistance and close supervision of an adult. Children under age two should never wear face coverings due to the risk of suffocation.

What about parents and staff?
Anyone on the premises age five or older, including staff, parents, and children age five or older, must wear a mask.

What about nap time, meals, and snacks?
Masks may be removed while actively eating or drinking, then immediately put back on afterward.

Children do not need to wear a mask during nap time, but nap cots should be placed in a way that at least 6 feet of space is maintained between the heads of napping children.

Do masks have to be worn outdoors?
When outdoors, masks should be worn if 6 feet of space cannot be maintained between children and/or providers. If space can be maintained then they can remove masks but depending on the age of the child, they may not understand social distancing and therefore masks should be worn.