



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor
210 Main Street Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275D
mayor@northamptonma.gov

For Immediate Release - April 14, 2020

**Northampton Health Department Issues Mandatory
Orders on Face Coverings**

NORTHAMPTON - The City of Northampton's Public Health Director, Merridith O'Leary, issued orders, effective April 16, 2020, at 12:01 a.m., establishing that all consumers and employees must wear face coverings at all times when social distancing can not be maintained, at any businesses providing essential services within the City of Northampton.

On April 3, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control issued an advisory concerning the wearing of face coverings when people are unable to maintain safe social distancing (a distance defined as six (6) feet or greater). On April 10, 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued a similar advisory regarding the wearing of face coverings in public. The following policies and procedures, outlined by the Northampton Health Department, are intended to expand on those advisories and to provide specific direction for customers and employees of brick and mortar businesses providing essential services in the City of Northampton.

The Health Department and Mayor David Narkewicz urge Northampton residents to stay home. This is absolutely the most effective way to protect yourself and others against COVID-19. If you must go out because you are out of food or medication, wearing a mask, or even a bandana across your nose and mouth, is a small measure of protection meant to compliment all other personal protection guidance that has been provided. We now know that you can spread disease up to two days prior to becoming ill with COVID-19. Wearing a face covering helps protect those around you if you don't know you are ill yet. "You don't need a surgical mask," said Mayor Narkewicz, "we need those for our health care workers and first responders."

Residents are warned that face coverings are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers. When someone

wears a face covering, they must make sure they are properly wearing it, using it, washing it, and disposing of it. Furthermore, using correct procedure to wear and remove a mask must be followed to ensure its effectiveness.

- Before putting on a face covering, clean hands with soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover mouth and nose with a face covering and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the cover.
- Avoid touching the face cover while using it; if you do, clean your hands thoroughly immediately.
- Replace the face cover with a new one after long use (4 hours) or as soon as it is damp. Do not reuse single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind, without touching the front of the mask (do this by only touching ear-loops if possible), discard immediately in a closed bin or laundry basket; clean hands with soap and clean water or alcohol-based hand rub.

Wearing a mask when residents must go out to an essential business may help reduce transmission to the employees of these businesses who are at great risk of exposure due to the nature of their job. These public facing, front line employees help keep us alive by providing us with the supplies that we need, so we owe it to them to do everything that we can to keep them safe while they work, and right now that is wearing a mask.

The City of Northampton and Cooley Dickinson Hospital have partnered to streamline collections, launder and package donations, and distribute. We are currently seeking donations for face coverings. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention provides instructions on how to make sew and no-sew face coverings.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings>

Residents who wish to donate approved face coverings should drop them off at Cooley Dickinson Hospital's North Entrance, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. - See more at: <https://www.cooleydickinson.org/home/coronavirus-resources/donations>

Residents, businesses, and public agencies in need of face coverings can request them at <http://northamptonma.gov/FormCenter/Health-Department-18/Request-for-Cloth-Face-Coverings-131> or by visiting <http://northamptonma.gov/2104/COVID-19-Coronavirus>.

Important Exclusions:

1. Nothing in this order is intended to encourage residents to act as an enforcement authority for the City of Northampton. Residents should not take it upon themselves to approach people in violation of this order. Residents are urged to focus solely on their personal compliance with this order.
2. Nothing in this order shall be construed to require a mask to be worn by children under age two (2) or children who frequently compromise mask integrity with frequent manipulations or removals, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance or anyone who cannot wear a mask for other underlying health and safety reasons.
3. Nothing in this order shall be construed to reduce or eliminate the requirement of maintaining safe distancing.
4. Nothing in this order shall be construed to recommend or require the wearing of masks or face coverings outdoors where safe distancing can be maintained.