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Media Contact: Press@Michigan.gov

Governor Whitmer Takes Swift Action to Save Lives, Signs Executive Order Requiring Mask Use in all Indoor Public Spaces

Following uptick in COVID-19 cases, Governor Whitmer Says “Mask Up, Michigan!”

LANSING, Mich. -- Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed executive order 2020-147, which reiterates that individuals are required to wear a face covering whenever they are in an indoor public space. It also requires the use of face coverings in crowded outdoor spaces. Most significantly, the order requires any business that is open to the public to refuse entry or service to people who refuse to wear a face covering, with limited exceptions. Governors in the states of Kansas, Maine, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Washington have imposed similar requirements on businesses.

Governor Whitmer signed this executive order in response to rising COVID-19 cases in Michigan and across the country. Executive Order 2020-147 amends and replaces the governor’s previous Executive Order 2020-114.

“The heroes on the front lines of this crisis have gone hours without taking their masks off every day – doctors, nurses, child care workers, grocery store workers. We owe it to them to wear our masks when we’re on a trip to the grocery store or pharmacy,” said **Governor Whitmer**. “Masks can reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19 by about 70 percent. By wearing masks, we can save lives and protect our family, friends, and neighbors from the spread of COVID-19. And by wearing masks now, we can put our state in a stronger position so our kids can return to school safely in the fall. For the sake of your loved ones, let’s all mask up, Michigan.”

Over the past week, every region in Michigan has seen an uptick in new cases, and daily case counts now exceed 20 cases per million in the Grand Rapids, Detroit, and Lansing regions. Research confirms that a big part of the reason is spotty compliance with the governor’s requirement, issued in prior orders, that individuals wear face coverings in public spaces.

Studies have shown that wearing a mask can save lives and significantly lower an individual’s chance of spreading COVID-19. [A study](#) on different regions in Germany, for example, suggests that the adoption of mandatory mask ordinances decreased the daily growth rate of COVID-19 infections by 40%. [Modeling](#) from the University of Washington similarly indicates that more than 40,000 lives would be spared nationwide if 95% of the population wore a mask

while in public. Furthermore, a study conducted by Goldman Sachs concluded that a federal mask mandate could save the U.S. economy from taking a 5% hit to our GDP.

“Michigan's fight against COVID-19 is nowhere near over, which is why it's so important that we all do our part and wear masks when we're out in public,” said Chief Medical Executive and DHHS Chief Deputy for Health **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun**. “Wearing a mask or face covering can significantly decrease the chance of spreading COVID-19 and save lives. It's important that all Michiganders wear masks properly - not down around the neck, not only over the mouth, but correctly over the mouth and nose. Please everyone stay patient, and remain vigilant.”

Under the governor's order, businesses that are open to the public must refuse entry and service to individuals who fail to comply, and must post signs at all entrances instructing customers of their legal obligation to wear a face covering while inside. Those who are exempt from wearing a mask in Michigan businesses include people younger than five years old, those who cannot medically tolerate a face covering, and those who are eating or drinking while seated at a food service establishment.

The executive order takes effect at 12:01am on Monday, July 13. A willful violation of the order is a misdemeanor subject to a \$500 criminal penalty, but no term of confinement may be imposed on individuals who violate the mask requirement. No individual is subject to penalty under the order for removing a mask while engaging in religious worship at a house of religious worship, although consistent with guidance from the CDC, congregants are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings during religious services.

To view Executive Order 2020-147, click the link below: