

**STATE HEALTH OFFICER'S CONTINUATION, AND MODIFICATION, OF  
WASHAKIE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER'S PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER 2020-002  
ORDER REQUIRING INDIVIDUALS WITHIN WASHAKIE COUNTY, WYOMING TO  
WEAR FACE COVERINGS IN CERTAIN PLACES, WITH EXCEPTIONS**

**WHEREAS**, Washakie County Public Health Order 2020-002 was initially ordered by the Washakie County Health Officer, Edward Zimmerman, MD (and authorized by the Wyoming State Health Officer) on November 18, 2020 to run from November 22, 2020, to December 4, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, as of the date this Order, Washakie County does not have a designated County Health Officer, pursuant to Wyoming Statute § 35-1-306. However, the previous Washakie County Health Officer, Dr. Zimmerman, MD, determined that it was necessary to protect public health in Washakie County to enter Public Health Order 2020-002, Order Requiring All Adults Within Washakie County, Wyoming, To Wear Face Coverings In Certain Places Open to the Public, with Exceptions; and

**WHEREAS**, the State Health Officer, Alexia Harrist, MD, PH.D., has determined that it is necessary to continue, and modify, Public Health Order 2020-002 through December 18, 2020, for the protection of public health in Washakie County and as evidenced by her signature below, the Wyoming State Health Officer has reviewed and does authorize the continuation of this Order; and

**WHEREAS**, Wyoming Statute § 35-1-240(a)(i), (ii), and (iii) gives the power to the Wyoming Department of Health, through the State Health Officer or under her direction and supervision, or through other employees of the Department of Health to investigate and control the causes of epidemic affecting the public health, and to establish, maintain and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, and for such purposes only, to exercise such physical control over property and over the people within this state as the State Health Officer may find necessary for the protection of the public health; and

**WHEREAS**, as evidenced by her signature below, Alexia Harrist, MD, Ph.D., the Wyoming State Health Officer has reviewed and does hereby authorize the issuance of this Order. Dr. Harrist, also specifically makes the finding that this Order is necessary for the protection of the public health in Washakie County; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan, China in 2019, and since then has spread to at least 216 countries including the United States.<sup>i</sup> There are 29,966 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Wyoming as of December 2, 2020, and 395 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Washakie County as of December 2, 2020, as well as the presence of community spread in Wyoming and Washakie County; and

**WHEREAS**, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic on March 11, 2020<sup>ii</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency concerning the coronavirus, specifically stating that “in December 2019 a novel (new) coronavirus known as SARS-Co V-2 was first detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, People's Republic of China, causing outbreaks of the corona virus disease (COVID-19) that has now spread globally. The spread of COVID-19 within our Nation’s communities threatens to strain our Nation’s healthcare systems and cause great economic and social disruption. Additional measures are needed to successfully contain and combat the virus in the United States”; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 13, 2020, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon declared a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency in the State of Wyoming, stating that on March 11, 2020, an individual within the State of Wyoming tested presumptive positive for COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Gordon’s Declaration of a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency directs the Wyoming Department of Health to take all appropriate and necessary actions, and that in the judgment of the Director of the Wyoming Department of Health, any actions necessary should be taken to provide aid to those locations where there is a threat or danger to public health, safety, and welfare; and

**WHEREAS**, a significant number of Wyoming citizens are at risk of serious health complications, including death, from COVID-19. Although most individuals who contract COVID-19 do not become seriously ill, people with mild symptoms, and even asymptomatic persons with COVID-19 place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a respiratory illness, transmitted through person-to-person contact or by contact with surfaces contaminated with the virus. Persons infected with COVID-19 may become symptomatic two to fourteen days after exposure<sup>iii</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, respiratory droplets from infected individuals are a major mode of SARS-CoV-2 transmission.<sup>iv</sup> This understanding is the basis of the recommendations for physical distancing, and of the PPE guidance for healthcare workers. Droplets do not only come from coughing or sneezing: in a-/pre-symptomatic individuals, droplets are generated via talking and breathing;<sup>v</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, Face Coverings reduce droplet dispersal and cloth-coverings reduce emission of particles by variable amounts; and

**WHEREAS**, evidence indicates that wearing Face Covering reduces the transmissibility per contact by reducing transmission of infected droplets; and

**WHEREAS**, in the most comprehensive, systematic review and meta-analysis of Face Coverings published to date, Chu *et al.* found that Face Coverings could reduce risk of transmission of COVID-19 by an expected 85 percent;<sup>vi</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, guidelines published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on April 3, 2020, recommend that all people wear cloth Face Coverings in public settings where other physical distancing measures may be difficult to maintain. The CDC also advises the use of a

simple Face Covering to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know from transmitting it to others.<sup>vii</sup>

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that persons within Washakie County, Wyoming, shall wear Face Coverings as described below:

1. "Face Covering," as used in this Order, means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face.
2. "Business" means any business entity (retail or commercial) that employs or engages workers or volunteers.
3. Except as specifically exempted below, all members of the public must wear a Face Covering outside their home or other place of residence in the following situations:
  - a. When any person is inside, or in line to enter, any business, or any government facility open to the public, including county and municipal buildings but excluding state and federal buildings; or
  - b. When any person is obtaining services at, or visiting healthcare operations, including, but not limited to, hospitals, clinics, and walk-in health facilities, dentists, pharmacies, blood banks, other healthcare facilities, behavioral health providers, and facilities providing veterinary and similar healthcare services for animals; or
  - c. When any person is waiting for or riding on public transportation or paratransit, or while they are riding in a taxi, private car service, shuttle, tour, or ride-sharing vehicle. The driver shall also wear a Face Covering when passengers are in the vehicle.
4. All businesses must post notices stating that Face Coverings are required in a clearly visible location at or near the entrance of the business.
5. All government facilities open to the public, including county and municipal buildings, but excluding state and federal buildings, must post notices stating that Face Coverings are required in a clearly visible location at or near the entrance of the building.
6. All employees, owners, and volunteers of businesses and employees and volunteers of government facilities open to the public, including county and municipal buildings but excluding state and federal buildings, shall wear Face Coverings at their business or government facility when they are within 6 feet of customers, clients, other staff/workers, or volunteers. They must also wear a Face Covering when working or volunteering in a space that could be visited by members of the public, such as by way of example, but not limited to: reception areas, hallways, grocery store aisles, service counters, public restrooms, cashier and checkout areas, waiting rooms, service areas, and other spaces that could be used by members of the public.

7. For clarity, state buildings are governed by the State Building Commission's policy titled "Face Covering Policy for State Buildings in Wyoming" which requires all individuals to wear a Face Covering when entering a state building and in any shared or public space within the state building. The policy also requires the occupant agency to post notices stating that Face Coverings are required in a clearly visible location at or near all entrances and public lobbies of the state building that they occupy.
8. A Face Covering is not required under the following circumstances:
  - a. When a person is in a personal office (a single room) where others outside of that person's household are not present as long as the public does not regularly visit the room, but that individual must put on a Face Covering when they are within 6 feet of a client, customer, volunteer, worker, or other member of the public.
  - b. Children who are under 12 years of age. Children 3 to 11 years of age are encouraged to wear Face Coverings.
  - c. When a person is seated at a table of a restaurant or other food service venue, the person is separated by at least 6 feet from other patrons at other tables, and no more than 8 people in total are seated at the table. If more than 8 individuals are seated at the table, but all individuals are members of the same household, this exception applies. This exception also applies if a person is seated at a booth. However, individuals shall wear a Face Covering while entering, exiting, or otherwise moving about the establishment.
  - d. When a person is inside or obtaining services at a location engaged primarily in providing congregate care, residential health care, or shelter care, and the individual is engaged in activities not conducive to wearing a Face Covering, such as eating or drinking, or the individual is in an area of that facility that is not designed for community gathering, such as a sleeping area.
  - e. If a person has a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents him or her from wearing a Face Covering. This includes, by way of example, but is not limited to, persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a Face Covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a Face Covering without assistance. A person is not required to provide any documentation demonstrating that the person cannot wear a Face Covering for any medical condition, mental health condition, or disability.
  - f. Individuals who are hearing impaired, or communicating with an individual who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
  - g. Individuals for whom wearing a Face Covering would create a risk to the individual related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal workplace safety guidelines.

- h. Individuals who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the Face Covering is necessary to perform the service.
- i. Individuals who are purchasing a product or receiving a service that requires identification may briefly remove a Face Covering as necessary, so that the retailer or service provider can verify identity.
- j. When actively exercising in a gym in accordance with Statewide Public Health Orders, as amended.
- k. When law enforcement asks an individual to remove a Face Covering for identification purposes.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that this Order does not alter but supplements the requirements in the current Statewide Public Health Orders; and

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that the State Health Officer may grant exceptions to this Order on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the request; and

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that this Order shall become effective on December 5, 2020 and remain in effect through December 18, 2020, or until such time as the State Health Officer issues an Order revoking or modifying this Order; and

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that any business or person that violates this Order may be subject to criminal prosecution under Wyoming Statutes §§ 35-1-105 and 35-1-106.

**DATED** this 4 day of December, 2020.



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Alexia Harrist, M.D., PhD  
Wyoming State Health Officer

- <sup>i</sup> World Health Organization. *Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic*. Available: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>. (Accessed: 10/30/2020)
- <sup>ii</sup> Wyoming Department of Health Infectious Disease and Epidemiology Unit. *COVID-19 Map and Statistics*. Available: <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/disease/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-map-and-statistics/>. (Accessed: 10/30/2020).
- <sup>iii</sup> United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): How to Protect Yourself & Others*. Available: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html> (Accessed: 10/30/2020)
- <sup>iv</sup> World Health Organization. 2020 Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19: implications for IPC precaution recommendations. Available <http://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/modes-of-transmission-of-virus-causing-covid-19-implications-for-ipc-precaution-recommendations>. (Accessed: 10/30/2020)
- <sup>v</sup> Anfinrud P., Stadnytskyi V., Bax CE., Bax A. 2020, *Visualizing Speech-Generated Oral Fluid Droplets with Laser Light Scattering*. New England Journal of Medicine. Available: <https://nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmc2007800> (Accessed 10/30/2020)
- <sup>vi</sup> Chu DK, AKL EA, Duda S, et al. *Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systemic review and meta-analysis* (published June 1, 2020) Available: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31142-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31142-9) (Accessed: 10/30/2020)
- <sup>vii</sup> United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention. *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Use of Cloth Face Covering to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19*. Available: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html> (Accessed: 10/30/2020)