



PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT



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Mask Protect Others, Social Distancing Protects You

Health officials urge residents to continue to practice non-pharmaceutical methods

BLOOMINGTON, IL- Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)) now recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others (shorturl.at/tCT19).

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure. Instructions on making and using homemade cloth face coverings can be found at www.cdc.gov.

While staying home, social distancing and strict hand hygiene are still preferred methods for preventing further spread of COVID-19, facemasks are one more tool that may be used by the general public and essential workers to protect each other from respiratory droplets produced when we cough, sneeze or talk.

When to Wear a Mask

All residents should wear a mask or face covering when they must leave their home or report to work for essential operations. Examples include:

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- Shopping at essential businesses, like grocery stores or pharmacies,
- Picking up food from the drive-thru or curbside pickup,
- While visiting your health care provider,
- Traveling on public transportation,
- Interacting with customers, clients, or coworkers at essential businesses,
- Performing essential services for state and local government agencies, such as laboratory testing, where close interactions with other people are unavoidable, and
- When feeling sick, coughing, or sneezing.

Those who are staying home and have no close contacts that are infected with COVID-19 don't need a mask while at home.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit coronavirus.illinois.gov or <https://health.mcleancountyil.gov>



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