



WILLIAMSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

WILLIAMSON COUNTY MAYOR REINSTATES MASK MANDATE AS COVID-19 CASES RISE

Today, Thursday October 22, 2020, Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson is issuing a new Declaration of Public Health Emergency, which includes a face covering mandate. After consultation with mayors of the various municipalities in Williamson County, the School Superintendents for the two school districts within the County, as well as physicians and members of the health care community, Mayor Rogers Anderson has determined that it is appropriate to require cloth or other face coverings in certain circumstances in Williamson County to slow the spread of COVID-19.

After Governor Lee authorized County Mayors to require face coverings within their jurisdictions, Mayor Anderson issued a face covering requirement for the months of July and August due to escalating numbers of COVID-19 cases in Williamson County at that time. Williamson County was successful in reopening businesses, opening schools for in-person learning, and providing government services while reducing the spread of COVID-19 through this and other health and safety measures. Once the numbers were reduced, the face covering mandate was allowed to expire on August 29, 2020. However, in the past thirty days, numbers have again significantly increased, putting the continued operation of businesses, schools and governmental services in jeopardy. "No one likes the fact that it is necessary to reinstitute a mask mandate in our county. Unfortunately, the numbers can't be ignored," Anderson said.

The Mayor's declaration containing the mandate, which is attached, will be effective Saturday, October 24, at 12:01 a.m. through 11:59 p.m. on October 30, when Tennessee Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 63 expires. The Governor's office has announced that he anticipates extending the authority through the end of the calendar year. If the Governor issues the anticipated extension, Mayor Anderson intends to extend the mask mandate for Williamson County through the end of the calendar year.

Mayor Anderson said, "I appreciate the Governor giving us the tools to address this issue without forcing a one-size-fits-all state-wide order. I believe local government is best positioned to make these decisions, even when they are difficult. At the end of the day, I believe this order is in the best interest of our community." Mayor Anderson recognizes that there are many varying opinions on this issue, but believes this mandate is a necessary safety measure for our local businesses and schools to remain open in the coming months.

Citizens should carefully read the order, as there are several exceptions based upon specific health or safety issues, as well as situations where individuals can safely distance and do not need to wear face coverings for their safety.

The Williamson County Emergency Management Agency is releasing a COVID-19 Toolkit today which includes social media graphics, decision trees, slideshows, and flyers. The toolkit has information on safety measures, decision making regarding social events and



more. Citizens and local partners can find the tool kit at www.williamsonready.org, download content, and add their own branding. A local, Williamson County COVID-19 hotline number will also be available beginning Monday, October 25, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for any questions or concerns. The number is (615) 595-4880. For more information on Governor Lee's executive orders and statewide COVID-19 numbers, visit <https://covid19.tn.gov/>.

Respectfully,

Williamson County Government
Rogers C. Anderson, Mayor

City of Brentwood
Rhea Little, Mayor

City of Fairview
Debby Rainey, Mayor

City of Franklin
Dr. Ken Moore, Mayor

Town of Nolensville
Derek Adams, Mayor

Town of Thompson's Station
Corey Napier, Mayor

RCA/dg

Attachment

Rogers C. Anderson
Williamson County Mayor



WILLIAMSON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

October 22, 2020

DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY BY WILLIAMSON COUNTY MAYOR

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of Tennessee, and the Mayors of a number of municipalities in the state of Tennessee have made emergency declarations related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and have recognized it as a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) advise the use of cloth or other types of face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, immediate action to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our communities is necessary in order to be able to safely allow governmental operations to continue, businesses to remain open, and schools to remain open for in-person learning; and

WHEREAS, widespread use of face coverings is believed to be effective in slowing the spread of COVID-19 by reducing the chances of symptomatic and asymptomatic people transmitting the virus to others, especially when used together with other protocols including 6-foot social distancing and hand hygiene; and

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2020, Governor Bill Lee signed Executive Order 54, strongly urging all persons to wear cloth face coverings or other similar coverings in public settings where being in close proximity to others is anticipated, and

WHEREAS, Governor Lee, through Executive Order 54, Executive Order 55, and Executive Order 63 delegated authority to county mayors in the 89 counties that do not have a locally-run health department (including Williamson County) to issue orders requiring the wearing of face coverings within their jurisdictions, subject to certain limitations, for the purposes of slowing the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Williamson County implemented a mandate for face coverings in July and August, 2020 after the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases in Williamson County and surrounding counties significantly increased; and

WHEREAS, the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases in Williamson County began to trend in a favorable direction, at which point the Williamson County mandate was permitted to expire on August 29, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases in Williamson County, as well as the number of COVID-19 related hospitalizations, has again increased significantly in the past thirty days; and

WHEREAS, widespread use of face coverings is a preferred alternative to the continued closure of schools and the closure of businesses in our community, which closures would likely become necessary if action is not taken; and

WHEREAS, after consultation with the Mayors of the various municipalities of Williamson County and the School Superintendents for the two school districts within the County, the County Mayor finds that there is a general consensus that the wearing of cloth or other face coverings should again be required in certain circumstances, and that such a requirement should take effect as soon as possible;

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY DELEGATED BY EXECUTIVE ORDERS 54, 55 and 63, AND PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR LEE'S RECOGNITION OF A CONTINUING STATE OF EMERGENCY AND MAJOR DISASTER RELATED TO COVID-19, the Mayor of Williamson County, Tennessee, after consultation with the Mayors of the various municipalities within Williamson County, the School Superintendents for the two school districts within the County, as well as physicians and members of the health care community, issues a renewed Declaration of Emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and

IT IS ORDERED that cloth or other face coverings that cover the nose and mouth of a person to impede the spread of the virus during speaking, coughing, sneezing or other action, shall be required in Williamson County, Tennessee, within all publicly-accessible areas of commercial business establishments; in public outdoor areas where social distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained; and within the publicly-accessible areas of business offices where there is direct interaction with the public and social distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained. A "commercial business establishment" means any establishment that sells goods or services, or a combination thereof, including but not limited to grocery stores, restaurants, lobbies and public spaces in hotels and other places of lodging, pharmacies, banks, bars, salons, retail stores, medical and dental offices, and entertainment and sports venues.


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order does not apply to:

1. Any person who is age 12 or younger, provided, however, that this exception does not apply to students on school property or at school events who are subject to a face covering mandate imposed by a local board of education. In those instances, the local board of education's mandate shall apply;
2. Any person who cannot safely wear a face covering because he/she has trouble breathing due to an underlying health condition or another bona fide medical or health-related reason for not wearing a face covering;
3. Anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;
4. Persons in a private residence;
5. Persons who are outdoors, unless the person cannot substantially maintain appropriate 6-foot social distancing from others outside of the person's household;
6. Persons while eating or drinking;
7. Persons in a place of worship or participating in activity attendant to worship (unless a face covering is required by the place of worship or other location where worship activity is occurring), although persons in places of worship or participating in activities attendant to worship are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19;
8. Persons within private motor vehicles, unless such vehicle is being used for public transportation or a vehicle for hire;
9. Persons working under conditions where appropriate social distancing of at least six feet from others outside the person's household is substantially maintained;
10. Persons present in government facilities or on government premises, who shall be subject to the rules and regulations of the governmental entity operating the facility or premises. Persons present in the public areas of all Williamson County government facilities will wear cloth or other face coverings, subject to the age and health restrictions outlined herein, and subject to number 11, below. Other local governmental entities may issue their own directives regarding their facilities;
11. Persons in a voting site for the purpose of voting or administering an election; although such persons are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19;
12. Persons who are engaging in strenuous exercise and/or physical activity, provided, however, that such persons shall maintain 6-foot social distancing when not wearing a face covering;
13. Persons for whom wearing a face covering would pose a safety or security risk.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that businesses and facilities subject to this Order shall post signage at public entrances informing patrons of the requirement to wear a mask within the establishment, and shall facilitate compliance with the requirement within the establishment.

This local order constitutes an order promulgated pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 58, Chapter 2, Part 1. While it is the hope and expectation that Williamson County citizens will comply with this Order out of a sense of civic duty and respect for their fellow citizens, and attempts at education and communication are the preferred methods of obtaining compliance, state law provides for enforcement of this Order if necessary. Pursuant to Executive Orders 54, 55 and 63, and Tennessee Code Annotated §58-2-120, violation of this Order shall constitute a Class A misdemeanor.

This Order shall become effective at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, October 24, 2020, and will expire at 11:59 p.m. on October 30, 2020 as required by Executive Order 63, unless sooner cancelled or unless extended pursuant to subsequent authorization by the Governor.


Rogers Anderson, Mayor
Williamson County, Tennessee