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**NEWS
RELEASE**

06 / 18 / 2020

COVID-19 UPDATE

City, County Amend Face Covering Rules for Businesses

EL PASO, Texas — City and County officials have amended the City-County Local Emergency Directive in response to Governor Greg Abbott’s plan which allows local governments to require businesses to adopt and enforce health policies that include face-covering requirements.

“The amended Local Directive to include the face covering requirement will ensure the safety of our community members,” said Mayor Dee Margo. “We will continue re-opening our economy in a judicious and proactive manner, while balancing public health and our economy.”

The First Amendment to the Fourth Local Emergency Directive will go into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, June 22, 2020.

Face Coverings

Infected persons with little to no symptoms can still spread the virus to others and the people they spread it to may become seriously ill or even die, especially if the person is one of our most vulnerable residents such as our seniors, people with underlying health conditions and those who are immunocompromised.

Health officials report that a face covering, that protects the nose and mouth, can help slow the spread of the virus. When leaving one’s residence, all persons over the age of two (2) are strongly encouraged to wear some form of covering over their nose and mouth, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchief. There are exceptions, which are listed in the Directive and on the FAQs tab at www.epstrong.org.

While face coverings are highly recommended, wearing a face covering is not a substitute for maintaining 6-foot social distancing and hand washing, as these remain important steps to slowing the spread of the virus.

Businesses

All businesses in the City of El Paso must develop and implement a health and safety policy. The Health and Safety Policy must require, at a minimum, the following:

- All businesses must require employees, including volunteers, to have a face covering when either in an area or performing an activity where six (6) feet of separation from others is not feasible;

—more—





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- All businesses must require visitors, to include customers, contractors and vendors, to wear face coverings while on the business's premises;
- All businesses must post the Health and Safety Policy required by this Directive in a conspicuous location sufficient to provide notice to employees, volunteers and visitors; and
- The Health and Safety Policy required to be developed and implemented by this Directive may also include additional measures such as temperature checks and health screenings.

Gyms and exercise establishments must require all individuals inside of the business establishment to wear a face covering at all times except for when an individual is actively engaging in exercise.

Failure to develop and implement the Health and Safety Policy required by this Directive may result in a fine not to exceed \$500 for each violation.

The updated Local Directive once completed and executed will be made available at www.epstrong.org under "Health Orders."

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