



Guidance on Masks: Covering Nose and Mouth

Fort Bend County Judge KP George strongly recommends that all residents use masks that cover their noses and mouths in order to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the community.

REASON: Mask coverings are important because a significant percentage of individuals with the COVID-19 virus are asymptomatic, they are unknowingly spreading the virus to the other people.

UPDATED GUIDELINES ON STAY HOME ORDER: Staying home is the best way to help reduce the spread of the virus, but if an individual must leave their place of residence to visit an essential business, wearing a fabric face mask should be used. People should continue to practice health habits, such as practicing social distance and frequent hand washing.

WHO: To the greatest extent possible, everyone over the age of two years old should wear simple face cloth covering over his or her nose and mouth.

WHAT: The County recommends that face cloth coverings be created from household items or from common materials such as a t-shirt, a scarf, bandana or handkerchief. It is not recommended to use medical grade (N95) and surgical masks. Those supplies should be reserved for medical professionals and first responders. Visit the CDC's website [for directions on how to make cloth coverings-](#)

WHEN: People should wear masks when patronizing an essential business, such as a grocery store, pharmacy, health care office. Masks should be worn when using public transportation, taxis, or ride shares.

EXCEPTIONS: It is not necessary to wear masks when in your home, riding in a personal vehicle, engaging in outdoor activity or eating. It is not recommended to wear a mask when doing so poses a greater risk to mental or physical health, safety or security. This would include those who have trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.

CHILDREN: Parents/guardians of children under 10 years old shall be responsible for appropriately masking children. The parent/guardian must supervise at all times to ensure the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation. The American Academy of Pediatrics has a detailed guide on helping parents of young children [on the use of masks at their website.](#)

CHILDREN EXCEPTIONS: Children/infants under the age of two should not wear face coverings over their nose and mouth. Children with breathing problems should not wear a face covering.

ESSENTIAL WORKERS: To the greatest extent possible, all individuals working for an essential business are advised to wear a mask or cloth face covering whenever in public and whenever performing job duties in the presence of others.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESS EMPLOYERS: To the greatest extent possible, employers shall provide employees with a mask or face covering. An owner or operator of an Essential Business may refuse admission or service to any individual who fails to wear face covering.

HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS: Health care and medical workers, first responders and others whose work requires close contact with people who are ill should only use medical grade (N95) and surgical masks, not cloth face coverings.

COVID-19 SUSPECTED POSITIVES: Those who are currently being tested and those who have not tested but have a cough and/or a fever -- and all their household members -- shall not leave their residence unless it is for a medical reason. The patient must wear a mask or cloth face covering to prevent the spread to others.