October 7, 2021

NOTICE OF JCPH ORDER 21-004 REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS AGES 2+ IN INDOOR SPACES IN ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS (JCPHO 21-004)


JCPH is working to stop the spread of Coronavirus 2019 (“COVID-19”). To support this effort, the Jefferson County Board of Health (the “Board”) finds it necessary to implement mitigation measures to require all individuals aged 2 and older to wear Face Coverings while indoors in all Local Government buildings within Jefferson County. The intent of this Order shall be to control and reduce the spread of COVID-19 to prevent unnecessary deaths and serious illness, to maintain consistent health care capacity in Jefferson County, and to protect public employees as well as those members of the public who must do business at local government offices. Additionally, this Order follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (“CDC”) Guide to Masks, which recommends that all individuals aged 2 and older should wear a Face Covering indoors in public areas of substantial or high transmission as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Transmission Tracker.

FINDINGS AND NECESSITY OF ORDER

A. Jurisdiction and Authority

JCPH has public health jurisdiction over Jefferson County, Colorado (“Jefferson County”), including all cities and towns therein. In furtherance of its jurisdiction, JCPH has the power and duty to investigate and control the causes of epidemic or communicable diseases and conditions affecting the public health within Jefferson County, as well as the power and duty to close schools and public places and to prohibit gatherings of people when necessary to protect public health, and to establish, maintain, and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, to exercise physical control over property and over persons within Jefferson County as JCPH may find necessary for the protection of public health.

B. The COVID-19 Virus and the Delta Variant

COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan, China in late 2019, and since then has spread to over 213 countries, including the United States.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness transmitted like other respiratory illness primarily through person-to-person contact via respiratory droplets or aerosols.1 Persons infected with COVID-19

may become symptomatic anywhere from two (2) to fourteen (14) days after exposure. Symptoms include fever, cough or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and other symptoms.\(^2\) Persons infected with COVID-19 may be asymptomatic yet still able to transmit the virus. Individuals with serious chronic health conditions and older adults are most at risk for becoming very ill with this disease but unvaccinated individuals of all ages are at high risk of infection.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (“CDPHE”) first detected the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Colorado the week of April 18, 2021. As of September 19, 2021, the Delta variant constituted 100% of all COVID-19 tests sampled for the variant in Colorado.\(^3\)

Due to the recent surge of Delta variant COVID-19 cases, it is now estimated that more than 80% of the population must be vaccinated to achieve herd immunity due to the high rate of transmissibility of the Delta variant.\(^4\) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) reports that the Delta variant is twice as contagious as previous variants and the greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to contract, and therefore transmit, the virus.\(^5\) Some data suggests that the Delta variant may cause more severe illness than previous strains of the virus in unvaccinated persons.\(^6\) Immunocompromised individuals are at an increased risk of serious, prolonged illness due to COVID-19, even after vaccination.\(^7\) Moreover, fully vaccinated people with Delta variant breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others, although vaccinated people appear to be infectious for a shorter period of time.\(^8\)

Certain areas of the United States have now exceeded, or are close to exceeding, hospital and ICU capacity in light of the surge of cases. The current 7-day average hospitalization in HHS Region 8, which includes Colorado, for September 28 through October 4, 2021 is 410.\(^9\) This is a 4.2% increase over the previous 7-day average for the period of September 21 through September 27,

\(^6\) Id.
2021, which was 393.\textsuperscript{10} In Jefferson County, the 14-day average hospitalization rate for the period of September 27 through October 4, 2021 is 1.14 per 100,000.\textsuperscript{11} This is a substantial increase from the period of June 28 through July 12, 2021, when the 14-day average hospitalization rate was .26 per 100,000.\textsuperscript{12}

In Colorado, as of Oct 6, 2021, fully vaccinated individuals were 3.3 times less likely to become a COVID case, 8.3 times less likely to be hospitalized for COVID, and 3.6 times less likely to die from COVID than unvaccinated individuals. Additionally, the median age of unvaccinated hospitalizations was 57 compared to the median age of vaccinated hospitalizations which was 73.\textsuperscript{13}

While the COVID-19 vaccines are currently available to all Coloradoans aged 12 and older, estimates indicate that as of Sept 29, 2021, only about 70\% of the Colorado population is currently immune to COVID-19;\textsuperscript{14} this is far short of the percentage of the population needed to reach herd immunity. In Jefferson County, 79.7\% of the eligible population and 69.5\% of the total population has received at least one (1) vaccine dose as of October 3, 2021.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Total Number of Jefferson County Residents Who Have Received at Least One Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine by Age Group (12/14/2020 - 10/03/2021)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{11} JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH, \textit{COVID-19 Case Summary} (October 4, 2021), available at, https://www.jeffco.us/4007/Case-Summary
\textsuperscript{12} JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH, \textit{OPR COVID19 Indicators 27} (July 19, 2021).
\textsuperscript{13} COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT, https://covid19.colorado.gov/vaccine-breakthrough
\textsuperscript{14} COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT, \textit{LPHA Director’s Epi Update} (Sept. 29, 2021).
According to the CDC, COVID-19 continues to pose a serious risk, especially to individuals who are not fully vaccinated, and certain viral mitigation measures remain necessary to protect against COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. On July 28, 2021, the CDC updated its guidance and recommended that all individuals, including those who are fully vaccinated, wear a Face Covering in all public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission.16

The CDC created a “transmission tracker” to monitor the transmission of COVID-19 in each county and identifying the transmission status of COVID-19 as “low,” “moderate,” “substantial,” or “high.”17 As of October 4, 2021, the CDC identifies Jefferson County as an area with high transmission at a 7-day new COVID-19 case rate of 172.93 per 100,000.18 As of October 4, 2021, there were 680,935 known presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 statewide in Colorado, and 58,954 known presumptive positive cases in Jefferson County, Colorado, as well as 7,946 deaths due to COVID-19 statewide and 934 deaths in Jefferson County.19

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18 Id.

19 Includes confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Jefferson County reported to public health. Confirmed cases are people who have tested positive via PCR or other molecular testing. Probable cases are people who had close contact with a confirmed case and have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, have a death certificate listing COVID-19 as a cause of death and have no laboratory test of have a positive antigen test. Data accessed September 16, 2021.
The hospitalization rate per 100,000 for COVID-19 in Jefferson County rose sharply over the summer and early fall in a 5th wave of COVID-19 and currently exceeds the hospitalization rate per 100,000 seen at this time last year as demonstrated in the graph below.\(^{20}\)

![14-Day Rolling Average COVID-19 Hospitalization Rate per 100,000 people](image1)

Note: Due to delays in identifying and reporting of hospitalizations related to COVID-19, the data displayed above do not include the most recent seven days of hospitalizations.

The cases per 100,000 also rose sharply in summer and early fall and currently exceeds the number of cases per 100,000 seen at this time last year as demonstrated in the graph below.\(^{21}\)

![Seven Day Case Incidence Rate per 100,000 people](image2)

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent transmission of COVID-19, to limit COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths and to prevent the health care system from becoming overwhelmed.

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\(^{21}\) [https://www.jeffco.us/4007/Case-Summary](https://www.jeffco.us/4007/Case-Summary) (last accessed October 6, 2021).
When vaccination is not possible, a layered viral mitigation strategy including wearing Face Coverings, testing, social distancing, hand hygiene, and ventilation decreases risk of transmission of COVID-19.

C. Public Health Emergency Declarations and Orders

On January 31, 2020, then-Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar declared a Public Health Emergency under the Public Health Services Act for the COVID-19 pandemic. The current Secretary of Health and Human Services, Xavier Bercerra, most recently renewed the Public Health Emergency on July 19, 2021.

On March 10, 2020, the Governor of the State of Colorado, Jared Polis (“Governor”) declared a State of Emergency related to the presence of COVID-19 in the State of Colorado, and this disaster declaration was extended on July 8, 2021 through Executive Order D2021-122 and most recently on October 3, 2021 through Executive Order D2021-132.

On March 13, 2020, by Proclamation 9994, President Trump declared a national emergency concerning the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Because the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant risk to the public health and safety of the Nation, on February 24, 2021, President Biden gave notice that he was continuing the national emergency declaration. That Proclamation remains in effect today.

On May 21, 2020, the Governor issued Guidance to Employers and Places of Public Accommodation regarding equal opportunity employment and reasonable accommodations due to the presence of COVID-19.

On August 31, 2021, CDPHE extended Public Health Order 20-38, continuing requirements for medical-grade Face Coverings in homeless shelters, prisons, jails, community corrections programs and facilities, and emergency medical and other healthcare settings.

On May 31, 2021, CDPHE amended Public Health Order 20-20, which remains in effect for Colorado Skilled Nursing Facilities, Assisted Living Residences, Intermediate Care Facilities, and Group Homes, to incorporate the Face Covering requirements in CDPHE’s Residential Care Facility Comprehensive Mitigation Guidance, which requires everyone who enters a facility to wear a Face Covering at all times.

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On July 30, 2021 and July 31, 2021, CDPHE extended Public Health Orders 21-01 and 20-33, respectively, concerning laboratory reporting for COVID-19 and vaccine access and data reporting requirements.

The CDC’s Order, Requirement for Persons to Wear Masks While on Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs, remains in effect for indoor areas.\(^{25}\)

On August 16, 2021, JCPH issued Jefferson County Public Health Order 21-002 Requiring Face Coverings for All Individuals Ages 2+ and Regular Testing for Unvaccinated Individuals in Pre-K Through Grade 12 School and Childcare Settings (“JCPHO 21-002”). JCPH amended JCPHO 21-002 on August 28, 2021 to raise the age at which individuals are required to wear a Face Covering to 3 and older.

**INTENT**

The intent of this Order is to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the greatest extent possible in order to reduce unnecessary death and serious illness, to maintain hospital capacity, and to protect public employees as well as those members of the public who must do business with Local Governments in Jefferson County by ensuring that the maximum number of people wear Face Coverings in indoor public settings where Local Government services are rendered.

Except as provided below, all individuals in Jefferson County age 2 and older must wear a Face Covering while inside any Public Indoor Local Government Space, as defined below. All provisions of this Order should be interpreted to effectuate this intent. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Order constitutes an imminent threat and creates an immediate menace to public health.

**ORDER**

Pursuant to the authority granted the Jefferson County Board of Health in C.R.S. §§ 25-1-506(3)(b) and 25-1-508(5)(g), and consistent with CDPHE and the CDC’s guidance, the following is ordered:

1. **Definitions.**

   a. **Face Covering** means a covering made of cloth, fabric, or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers only the nose and mouth and surrounding areas of the lower face. A Face Covering may be factory-made or may be handmade and improvised by using ordinary household materials. The Face Covering should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; allow for breathing without restriction; and either be constructed of disposable mask materials or include multiple layers of fabric that can be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape. Face Coverings must cover the nose and mouth at all times and

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should remain in place until taken off safely. If a Face Covering moves during regular activity exposing the nose or mouth, it must be replaced with one that does not need to be frequently adjusted in order to reduce touching of the face. A Face Covering should be replaced when it becomes dirty, wet, and/or difficult to breathe through.

Note that any mask that incorporates a one-way valve (typically a raised plastic cylinder about the size of a quarter on the front or side of the mask) that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling is not a Face Covering under this Order and is not to be used to comply with this Order’s requirements. Valves of that type permit droplet release from the mask and can put others nearby at risk.

A video showing how to make a Face Covering and additional information about how to wear and clean Face Coverings may be found on the CDC’s website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html.

b. **Full Vaccination or Fully Vaccinated** means an individual is considered fully vaccinated two (2) calendar weeks after an individual has received all required doses of the prescribed COVID-19 vaccine. Unless an individual is Fully Vaccinated, they are considered Unvaccinated.

c. **Local Government** means Jefferson County government and any municipality within Jefferson County. Local Government does not include school districts or special districts (also known as Title 32 districts).

d. **Moderate or Low Transmission** means moderate or low transmission as measured by the [CDC Transmission Tracker](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/).  

e. **Public Indoor Local Government Space** means any enclosed indoor area that is publicly owned, leased, managed, or operated by a county or municipal government to which individuals have access by right or by invitation, express or implied, or that is accessible to the public, serves as a place of employment for Local Government, or is otherwise providing services on behalf of a Local Government.

f. **Substantial or High Transmission** means substantial or high transmission as measured by the [CDC Transmission Tracker](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/).  

g. **Worker** means any full time, part time, temporary, or limited employee. Worker also includes any contractors or volunteers who perform any work functions on behalf of a Local Government or any of its appointed or elected officials.

2. **Face Coverings Required for all Individuals Aged 2+.** Individuals aged 2 or older, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a Face Covering while entering or within any Public Indoor Local Government Space, unless exempt pursuant to Section 3 of this Order or actively engaged in an activity described in Section 4 of this Order.
3. **Exemptions to Face Covering Requirements.** The following individuals are exempt from the Face Covering requirements of this Order:

   a. Individuals under age 2.
   b. Individuals who cannot medically tolerate a Face Covering. Workers who cannot medically tolerate a Face Covering must submit to their Local Government employer a statement provided on an appropriate health care professional’s letterhead including the following:
      i. Clinician’s printed name, license number, address, and phone number;
      ii. Signature of the clinician; and
      iii. Identification of the medical condition preventing the Worker from wearing a Face Covering and any recommended alternative to the Face Covering.

4. **Exceptions to Face Covering Requirements.** Individuals performing any of the following activities are exempt from the Face Covering requirements of this Order while the activity is being performed:

   a. Individuals who are hearing impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication.

   b. Individuals who are seated at a food service establishment or actively eating or drinking at the Public Indoor Local Government Space.

   c. Individuals who are receiving a personal service where the temporary removal of the Face Covering is necessary to perform the service.

   d. Individuals who are asked to temporarily remove their Face Covering for identification purposes.

   e. Individuals who are actively engaged in a public safety role, such as law enforcement personnel, firefighters, or emergency medical personnel.

   f. Individuals who are officiating or participating in a life rite or religious service where the temporary removal of a Face Covering is necessary to complete or participate in the life rite or religious service.

   g. Individuals who are giving a speech for broadcast or an audience, so long as they remain at least twelve (12) feet away from others.

   h. Individuals who are alone in a closed room.

   i. Individuals in a non-public, defined workspace within a Local Government in which ninety percent (90%) of the individuals present in that space have shown proof of Full
Vaccination. A defined workspace for purposes of this exception is an area with a defined boundary where multiple people work and interact. For illustrative purposes only, a defined workspace could be a conference room, a training room, an open floor with multiple cubicle office areas, or an entire floor of an office building. The Local Government is responsible for establishing procedures to define workspaces based on a particular office’s floorplan. The Local Government must ensure that Face Coverings are removed only in workspaces that meet the 90% vaccination requirement for that defined workspace and must require Face Coverings in all other spaces and at all other times unless another exception or exemption applies.

5. **Americans with Disabilities Act.** The requirements of this Order shall be applied in a manner consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), Title VII of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.), the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act (C.R.S. §24-34-401 et seq.), and any other relevant federal or State law.

6. **Signage Requirements.** All Local Government facilities subject to this Order must post signs at entrance(s) instructing individuals of their legal obligation under this Order. Posting a sign requiring masks for all individuals regardless of vaccination status under the requirements of any state or federal order shall be deemed sufficient for purposes of this Order. The “mask in building.pdf” signs made available by the State is considered sufficient for purposes of this Section. Please see [https://covid19.colorado.gov/print-materials](https://covid19.colorado.gov/print-materials) for sample print materials.

7. **Children Under the Age of Two.** This Order does not require any child under the age of two to wear a Face Covering. Parents and caregivers should supervise the use of Face Coverings by children to avoid misuse.

8. **Recommendations.** JCPH still recommends that all individuals aged two (2) and older who have not been vaccinated practice social distancing of six (6) feet from non-household members, regular handwashing, and wear a Face Covering whenever they are near non-household members.

9. **Conflict and Preemption.**
   
   a. Nothing in this Order should be construed to preempt any State of Colorado regulations (including CDPHE Orders and Executive Orders) concerning Face Coverings, or that impose Face Covering requirements beyond those contained in this Order.

   b. Nothing in this Order should be construed to preempt any Federal orders or laws, including the CDC Order requiring all individuals aged two (2) and older to wear masks on conveyances and transportation hubs, including school buses.

   c. Nothing in this Order should be construed to preempt any local public health orders.

   d. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to prevent a Local Government from adopting more protective standards than those contained in this Order.
e. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to prevent any business or other entity from requiring its employees, staff, customers, or other staff to wear a Face Covering while engaging with that entity or on the entity’s property.

f. Nothing in this order should be construed to require the wearing of a Face Covering when doing so would violate a Federal law, rule, or regulation.

10. **Denial of Entry.** Except for the limited exemptions and exceptions provided in Sections 3 and 4 above, no owner, operator, or manager of a Public Indoor Government Space may provide service to such individuals or allow an individual to enter or be within that Public Indoor Local Government Space unless the individual is wearing a Face Covering as required by this Order.

11. **Reasonable Accommodations.** JCPH recommends that all government facilities subject to this Order review the State of Colorado’s Civil Rights Guidance.

12. **Legal Recourse.** Any facility that is in violation of this Order may be subject to a civil action, including but not limited to injunctive relief pursuant to C.R.S. § 25-1-514 and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to C.R.S. §25-1-516(3).

13. **Severability.** If any provision of this Order, or its application to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, then the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

14. **Duration.** This JCPH Public Health Order 21-004 shall be in effect from October 9, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. and shall remain in effect at all times Jefferson County is in Substantial or High Transmission. However, this requirement shall be suspended when Jefferson County has experienced at least twenty-one (21) consecutive days in Moderate or Low Transmission. If this requirement has been suspended due to Moderate or Low Transmission, but Jefferson County subsequently experiences five (5) consecutive days in Substantial or High Transmission, then this Order shall be reinstated.

Along with CDPHE, JCPH is tasked with protecting the health and welfare of the citizens of Jefferson County by investigating and controlling cases of epidemic and communicable disease. This Order is necessary to control the transmission of disease to others. Immediate issuance of this Order is necessary for the preservation of public health, safety, or welfare.

If you have questions regarding this Order, please contact the JCPH at HealthEPR@jeffco.us or view the COVID-19 information on JCPH’s website at [www.jeffco.us/coronavirus](http://www.jeffco.us/coronavirus).
Issued by:

Greg Deranleau  
President, Jefferson County Board of Health

October 8, 2021

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