



DIRECTIVE NO. 2021-4

JEFFERSON COUNTY LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER DIRECTIVE REGARDING COVID-19; REQUIRING THE WEARING OF CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by a virus known as SARS-Cov-2 that spreads easily from person to person which may result in serious illness or death and has been classified by the World Health Organization as a worldwide pandemic;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has spread throughout Washington State, including Jefferson County, significantly threatening the life and health of persons in Jefferson County;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 can spread from people without symptoms, including persons who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic, to others;

WHEREAS, whereas airborne spread of SARS-CoV-2 is now acknowledged to be the predominant route of transmission and that the overwhelming majority of cases of transmission occur in indoor spaces;

WHEREAS, respiratory droplets and aerosols from infected individuals can be transmitted not only through coughing or sneezing but also through other actions including talking, shouting, singing, or breathing;

WHEREAS, vaccination is a highly effective method for both preventing COVID-19 and preventing the spread of SARS-CoV-2;

WHEREAS, non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as physical distancing and the wearing of cloth face coverings, are also effective measures to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Inslee issued Proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a State of Emergency for all counties throughout the state of Washington as a result of COVID-19 outbreak in the United States and confirmed person-to-person spread of COVID19 in Washington State;

WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Health Officer issued a masking mandate on May 26, 2020 and Governor Jay Inslee issued a statewide masking mandate on June 26, 2020;

WHEREAS, the Governor established a phased approach to economic reopening in Washington State known as the Roadmap to Recovery and has announced his intention to remove all COVID-related restrictions by June 30, 2021 or earlier if statewide vaccination targets are met;

WHEREAS, Jefferson County is a popular travel and leisure destination which experiences a large influx of visitors throughout the year, particularly in and around the summer months;

WHEREAS, on May 13, 2021 the Centers for Disease Control issued new guidelines regarding masking based on scientific studies that demonstrated the Covid vaccinations were highly effective in

both preventing infection and preventing the spread of infection;

WHEREAS, while CDC guidelines are evidence-based and document that fully vaccinated individuals may safely congregate in indoor spaces with both fully vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, the CDC cautions that these guidelines should be interpreted in the context of local SARS-CoV-2 transmission and vaccination levels;

WHEREAS, widespread use of cloth face masks, surgical masks, and N-95/KN-95 respirator masks have been demonstrated to control the spread of COVID-19 by reducing the transmission of respiratory droplets and aerosols from infected individuals into the environment from asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic, and symptomatic individuals infected with SARS-CoV-2, particularly in indoor public space;

WHEREAS, While Jefferson County has maintained one of the lowest rates of COVID-19 transmission and one of the highest percentages of residents fully vaccinated against COVID-19;

WHEREAS, indoor transmission of COVID-19 remains a significant risk for all unvaccinated individuals (both unvaccinated adults as well as children under 12 years old who are not eligible for vaccination) and for those who are immunosuppressed and may be incompletely protected by vaccination;

WHEREAS, Unvaccinated individuals congregating without masks in indoor spaces poses an unacceptable risk of increased transmission of SARS-CoV-2 between those who are infected and those who are susceptible to this infection;

WHEREAS, RCW 70.05.070 requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, WAC 246-100-036, requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control measures as he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information; and

WHEREAS, legally enforceable orders have been issued by the Washington State Secretary of Health, Department of Labor and Industries, and the Centers for Disease Control that fully address the ongoing need for individuals who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to continue masking and distancing to prevent COVID transmission;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Thomas Locke, MD, MPH, Local Health Officer for Jefferson County, under the authority of RCW 70.05.070, RCW 43.20.050, and WAC 246-100-036, and on the basis of the foregoing recitals rescind Health Officer Directive 2021-3 dated June 7, 2021 requiring the wearing of cloth face coverings in indoor public spaces. State and Federal masking requirements will remain in effect. Reimposition of more stringent masking and distancing standards may become necessary at a future time if current efforts are ineffective in controlling the spread of more transmissible and virulent variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Three directives regarding masking to prevent COVID transmission are currently in effect for Washington State residents:

- 1) The Order of the Washington State Secretary of Health 20-03.2 signed May 15, 2021 requiring indoor masking of all unvaccinated individuals 5 years of age and older and available at: [Secretary of Health Order 20-03 Statewide Face Coverings.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#).
- 2) The Washington State Labor and Industries, Division of Occupational Safety and Health regulations concerning prevention of COVID transmission in the workplace. A summary of these rules is available at: [F414-164-000 L&I Requirements and Guidance for Preventing COVID-19 \(wa.gov\)](#) , and
- 3) The Centers for Disease Control Order requiring wearing of masks by all passengers on public transportation including but not limited to airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares. [Mask-Order-CDC GMTF 01-29-21-p.pdf](#)

DATED this ____30____ day of ____June_____, 2021 at ____4:00____ pm.



Thomas Locke, MD, MPH
Jefferson County Health Officer