



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR

POLICY FOR MANDATORY USE OF MASK OR FACE COVERING

PURPOSE:

To establish a policy for the mandatory use of mask or face coverings as directed by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit in response to COVID-19.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Under Ontario Regulation 263/20, Section 4(2) and O. Reg. 364/20, Section 2(2) (or as current) of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA), the Medical Officer of Health, has issued instructions to all persons responsible for a business or organization that is open within the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, effective July 24, 2020 at 12:01 am.

As such, the Township of O'Connor recognizes the emerging evidence that supports that wearing a mask or face covering when in enclosed spaces is an important measure in reducing community transmission of COVID-19 and has adopted the following guidelines provided by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

GUIDELINE:

1. Beginning July 24, 2020 all members of the public, employees, and others who enter or remain in enclosed public areas owned and operated by the Township of O'Connor are required to wear a mask or face covering. The mask or face covering must cover the nose, mouth and chin without gaping.
 - a) The following persons are exempted from the requirements to wear a mask or face covering and will not be required to provide proof of such exemption:
 - i) Children under two years of age, or children under the age of five years either chronologically or developmentally who are unable or refuse to wear a mask or face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver;
 - ii) Individuals with medical conditions rendering them unable to safely wear a mask or face covering, including breathing difficulties, cognitive difficulties, hearing or communication difficulties;
 - iii) Individuals who cannot wear or are unable to apply/remove a mask or face covering without assistance, including those who are accommodated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) or who have protections under the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H. 19 as amended;



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- b) Temporary removal of the mask or face covering is permitted where necessary when:
 - i) actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity, including water-based activities;
 - ii) consuming food or drink;
 - iii) receiving services in a personal service setting on an area of the face that would otherwise be covered by a mask or face covering; and
 - iv) for any emergency or medical purpose.
2. This policy will be implemented and enforced in “good faith” to primarily educate people on wearing masks or face coverings and promote their use in enclosed public spaces. Persons listed under 1a) are not required to show proof of exemption.
3. Signs about the requirement to wear masks or face coverings will be posted prominently at all public entrances. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will also be made available at all entrances and exits for persons entering or exiting public areas owned and operated by the Township of O'Connor.
4. Employees/staff will be trained on the policy, including:
 - a. How and when to provide verbal reminders of the policy's masking requirement to persons entering or remaining without a mask or face covering, and those who remove their mask or face covering for an extended period of time.
 - b. where and how to properly wear a mask or face covering;
 - c. how to respond to customers who do not have a mask or face covering;
 - d. where people can get more information about the policy; and
 - e. how to handle a customer who becomes aggressive about the new requirement.
5. A copy of this policy will be made available on request to a public health inspector or other person authorized to enforce the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

The original policy came into effect July 24, 2020 and was adopted by Council at their meeting held on August 10, 2020.

Reference:

Resolution #4, August 10, 2020.
Rescinded and Revised by Resolution #5, October 13, 2020.
Revised by Resolution #5, November 8, 2021.

Policy Rescinded by Resolution #6 of the September 14, 2022 Council meeting, with the understanding that it can be reenacted as needed.