

**EMERGENCY ORDER REQUIRING THAT FACE COVERINGS BE WORN WHILE IN A PUBLIC PLACE IN THE CITY OF ROME DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY TO PROMOTE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE**

The Commission of the City of Rome, Georgia hereby declares that a local state of emergency continues to exist within the geographical limits of the City of Rome, Georgia, and that it shall continue through and including Friday, January 8, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that for the protection of members of the public, face coverings or masks shall be required within the City to slow the spread of COVID- 19, and the Commission of the City of Rome, Georgia hereby ordains and orders the following:

- (a) For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms are hereby defined as follows:
  - (1) Entity means any private business, establishment, corporation, non-profit corporation, or organization, including the curtilage thereof.
  - (2) Face covering or mask means a device to cover the nose and mouth of a person and impedes the spread of saliva, respiratory droplets, or other fluids during speaking, coughing, sneezing or other intentional or involuntary action. Medical grade masks are not required; coverings may be fashioned as advised by the CDC and from other suitable fabrics. The mask must cover the mouth and nose of the wearer.
  - (3) Polling place means the room provided in each precinct for voting at a primary or election.
  - (4) Public place means any place other than a personal vehicle, residential property, or an entity including the curtilage thereof.
- (c) Except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance all persons in an entity or a public place, including public rights-of-way, shall wear a face covering or mask over the mouth and nose at all times where other physical distancing measure may be difficult to maintain from non-cohabitating persons.
  - (1) To the extent consistent with the Governor's Order, all restaurants, retail stores, salons, grocery stores, and pharmacies in the City must require their employees to wear a face covering at all times while having face-to-face interaction with the public.
- (d) Face coverings or masks are not required in the following circumstances:
  - (1) In personal vehicles or upon residential property;
  - (2) When a person is alone in enclosed spaces or only with other household members;
  - (3) When the individual has a bona fide religious objection to wearing a face covering or mask;
  - (4) While drinking or eating;
  - (5) When a licensed healthcare provider has determined that wearing a face covering or mask causes or aggravates a health condition for the individual or when such person has a bona fide medical reason for not wearing a face covering or mask;
  - (6) When wearing a face covering or mask would prevent the receipt of personal services or performing work in the course of employment;

- (7) When complying with the directions of a law enforcement officer or for the purposes of verifying a person's identity, such as when purchasing alcohol, tobacco, or prescription drugs, or when engaging in a financial transaction;
- (8) Children under the age of ten (10) years;
- (9) When the individual is having difficulty donning or removing a face mask or face covering without assistance;
- (10) At any polling place and no individual shall be denied ingress or egress to or from a polling place for failure to wear a face covering or mask; and
- (11) When exercising, or outdoors and maintaining social distancing from anyone other than individuals with whom they cohabitate.

(e) 1) Every entity subject to this Ordinance which does not consent to enforcement of his Ordinance upon its property shall post a clearly legible sign in at least one inch Arial font at all public entrances of such entity stating the following:

"This location does not consent to enforcement of any local face covering requirement upon this property."

(2) If an entity does not post the signage described in subparagraph (1) of this paragraph it shall be conclusively presumed to have consented to enforcement of this Ordinance on its property and failures by individuals to wear face coverings or masks as required by this ordinance shall be determined to be violations and enforced as contemplated in paragraph (f).

(f) Violations of this Section 1 may be enforced by a notice of ordinance violation issued by any police officer, code enforcement officer, or other authorized law enforcement official, as provided below:

(1) A person who fails to comply with paragraph (c) of Section 1 of this Ordinance shall be first given a warning and an opportunity to put on a face covering or mask, leave the entity, or comply with one of the exceptions in paragraph (d) of Section 1.

(2) If the person violating this Ordinance refuses or fails to comply with this Ordinance after being given a warning pursuant to subparagraph (1) of this paragraph then such person may be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$25.00 on the first offense and not more than \$50.00 on the second and any subsequent offenses.

(3) A notice of violation may be served by delivery into the hands of the suspected violator or by other reasonable process for serving notice of ordinance violations used by the City.

(4) Violations of this ordinance shall not be enforced against any entity and shall not be taken against any owner, director, officer, or agent of an entity for the failure of their customers to comply with this ordinance.

(5) Notwithstanding the foregoing, every effort shall be made to bring an individual into voluntary compliance with the terms of this Ordinance prior to issuance of any notice of violation, including providing complimentary masks, explaining the importance of wearing face coverings during this pandemic, and issuing verbal and written warnings.

(6) Any person who is found in violation of this Ordinance and who cannot afford a face mask or face covering shall be provided one.

(g) In all locations where face coverings or masks are not required to be worn pursuant to this Ordinance, they are strongly encouraged to be worn to protect the public health and safety.

The face covering requirement imposed by Section 1 of this Ordinance shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until January 8, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.