



# SISKIYOU COUNTY

## Health and Human Services Agency

### Public Health Division

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DATE: 04/8/2020

To: Citizens of Siskiyou County  
From: Siskiyou County Public Health Officer

### Update: Public Health Advisory

On April 6, 2020 Siskiyou County announced the presence of the fourth positive case of COVID-19 in the county. Given evolving best practices based on experience in other countries and healthcare systems that have successfully prevented transmission of the virus in various settings, additional safeguards are warranted. Three of the previous positive cases in Siskiyou County have recovered due to diligently following public health and health provider's directions of isolation for 14 days, symptom free for seven days and fever-free for three days.

In addition to the stay at home order, social distancing and frequent handwashing, the Health Officer recommends that community members who leave their home for an essential activity wear a face covering, such as: a mask, scarf, bandana, or similar garment while outside. Additionally, everyone should continue to remain at home except for essential activities and observe social and physical distancing of at least 6 feet when out in the community. These masks do not replace the N95 masks that health care workers will continue to use in the presence of ill individuals.

#### The Health Officer is asking for your help to do the following:

- **Protect your COMMUNITY**

Ordinary face coverings have not been shown to protect the wearer. When worn by someone with COVID-19, however, they may reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others. Since not everyone with COVID-19 knows that they are sick, wearing a face covering helps make sure that you are not unknowingly affecting others. If worn by everyone when outside the home, this may help slow the overall spread of the virus and keep our community safer.

- **Protect your MEDICAL PROVIDERS**

Use the best face covering that you can but save purchasing new surgical masks and protective equipment for the professionals. Our Doctors, PAs, NPs, nurses, paramedics, and other healthcare workers are risking their own health and working through this emergency to protect us. To do so, however, they need adequate personal protective equipment and supplies are limited. Surgical masks, unexpired N95 masks, and other essential protective equipment are not recommended for everyday use at this time unless you already have a supply at home for personal use.

Please also refrain from visiting local emergency departments unless you believe you have an acute life-threatening medical issue.

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- **Protect your SELF**

Please follow all guidance on the use of face coverings and continue to use social and physical distancing. Face coverings are only one small part of the overall effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. Everyone should continue to stay home, except for essential activities, and to take every precaution when going out, including frequent hand washing, social and physical distancing and cleaning of frequently used surfaces. Please read and follow the guidance below on the cleaning, fitting, and use of face coverings. California Department of Public Health has produced some guidance here:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages?Face-Coverings-Guidance.aspx>

## **WASH YOUR HANDS, STAY IN PLACE, MAINTAIN YOUR SPACE AND COVER YOUR FACE**

### **Face Covering Usage:**

The public should continue to use physical and social distancing any time they leave home for an essential activity.

### **General Public**

The Health Officer endorses the use of homemade cloth face coverings for members of our community when leaving their homes to engage in essential activities among the public while continuing to practice social distancing.

A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth, such as a bandana, a scarf, neck gaiter, or a homemade cover. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower-face including the mouth and nose. Homemade face coverings can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

Patterns for homemade face coverings can be found on the [CDC website](#).

### **When used, cloth face coverings or homemade masks should be:**

- Worn only by one person
- Fitted carefully to prevent frequent adjustment; practice strict hand washing before and after touching and adjusting the face covering or mask.
- Washed frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily;
- If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing during the day, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.
- Discarded if it no longer covers the nose and mouth, if it is stretched out or damaged and cannot stay on the face or has holes or tears in the fabric.

### **Individuals Providing Essential Governmental Functions**

The Health Officer recommends that individuals providing essential governmental functions wear surgical or cloth masks which cover the nose and mouth or expired N95 masks, as resources allow and when:

- They are at work in either public or shared workspace, **and**
- The use of Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”), is not otherwise required, recommended, or advised.

### **Healthcare Workers and First Responders**

The Health Officer recommends that healthcare workers and first responders wear surgical masks which cover the nose and mouth or expired N95 masks, as resources allow and when:

- They are performing general work-related activities in conditions in which it is not reasonably possible to maintain six feet of separation or a physical screen (such as plexiglass) from members of the public or coworkers, and
- The use of Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”), is not otherwise required, recommended, or advised.
- According to their healthcare system’s guidance and policy.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Public Health at 530-841-2134.

Sincerely,

Aaron Stutz, MD  
Siskiyou County Public Health Officer

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