

Governor Carney Requires Delawareans to Wear Face Coverings in Public Settings

Children 2-years-old and younger should not wear face coverings due to suffocation risk

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Saturday issued the [thirteenth modification](#) to his State of Emergency declaration, requiring Delawareans to wear face coverings in public settings, including in grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, doctor's offices, and on public transportation.

Governor Carney's order does not require children aged 12 or younger to wear a face covering. Any child 2-years-old or younger **MUST NOT** wear a face covering, due to the risk of suffocation.

[Read Governor Carney's modified order](#), which is effective 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 28.

[Click here](#) for resources about face coverings.

"Now is not the time for Delawareans to get complacent," said Governor Carney. "We face a very serious situation, with additional cases of COVID-19 and hospitalizations statewide. All of our actions are guided by science, and intended to save lives. Wearing a face covering in public settings is important to prevent transmission of this disease. But wearing a face covering is not permission to go out in public more often. Delawareans should stay home unless it's absolutely necessary to go out for essential work or

essential items. Don't go out in public unnecessarily. You will only increase your risk – and the risk to your family, friends, and neighbors.”

Under Governor Carney's modified order, businesses must also take certain steps to keep their employees and customers safe.

By 8:00 a.m. on Friday, May 1, businesses must:

- Require employees to wear a face covering while working in areas open to the public and in areas where coming within 6 feet of other staff is likely.
- Provide, at the business' expense, face coverings and hand sanitizer for their employees.
- Deny entry to individuals who do not have a face covering – or if one is not available for them.
- If any business denying entry is providing medication, medical supplies, or food, the business must provide alternate methods of pickup or delivery.

Delawareans are urged to use cloth face coverings and reserve medical-grade masks for use by health care workers and first responders. Medical-grade masks include N95, KN95, surgical, or other masks that would be appropriate for a health care setting.

Delawareans wearing a face covering should practice strict hand-washing before and after touching the face covering, according to the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH). Face coverings are not a replacement for washing hands, practicing physical distancing, and staying home. Delawareans who are sick should wear a face covering over their nose and mouth if they must be around other people – even while at home.

“Wearing a face covering is not a substitute for existing guidance around hand-washing and social distancing,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director of the Delaware Division of Public Health. “Delawareans should stay at home whenever possible,

only leaving for essential activities. Wash your hands. Keep 6-10 feet between yourself and others.”

Governor Carney’s State of Emergency has the full force and effect of law. The stay-at-home order, and mandatory quarantine for out-of-state travelers, remain in place. Violations of the emergency order, or any of its modifications, constitute a criminal offense.

Delawareans with questions about COVID-19, related to medical or social service needs, should call 2-1-1; or 7-1-1 for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the weekends. Questions may also be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware’s response, visit: de.gov/coronavirus.

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