

NEWS RELEASE

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HEALTH UNIT RELEASES DETAILS ABOUT MANDATED FACE COVERINGS

NORTH BAY, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) has released detailed information about mandated use of face coverings, which will take effect Friday, Jul. 24, 2020. Face coverings must be worn in ‘enclosed public spaces’. This means indoor spaces of businesses, organizations, and services accessed by the public, including public transportation. Face coverings should also be worn in other spaces (indoor or outdoor) where physical distancing is challenging or not possible.

“It is encouraging to see the ongoing low number of positive cases being reported, and the economy opening up,” said Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. “However, as more businesses and public places open, the risk of spreading COVID-19 increases. Wearing a face covering is an added way to protect the people around you.”

A face covering is a cloth face covering, or other face covering with *preferably* two layers of material that securely covers the nose, mouth, and chin and is in contact with the surrounding face without gapping in order to contain coughs, sneezes and respiratory spit and spray of the person wearing the face covering. Face coverings such as a bandana, scarf, cloth, niqab or burka are not designed to filter air and do not have a number of layers; however they are a better alternative if a face covering is not available. (Where possible, a cloth mask should be worn underneath a head covering to ensure best fit against the face.) Medical masks (i.e. surgical, medical procedure face masks and N95 respirators) should be reserved for use by health care workers and first responders.

We encourage our community to be ‘COVID kind’ and understand that not everyone can wear a face covering safely and may need accommodation and understanding. A face covering does not replace physical distancing and other protective health measures such as hand washing, and isolating yourself when you have symptoms and arranging for COVID-19 testing.

Detailed information regarding the mandate can now be found on the Health Unit website at myhealthunit.ca/FaceCoverings. The directive falls under the provisions of the province’s [Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act](#).

Currently, there is no specific treatment for COVID-19. It is important to remember that most people with COVID-19 have no symptoms or mild symptoms. People who are mildly ill should isolate and care for themselves at home. Most will recover in one to two weeks by simply treating the symptoms. For more information on COVID-19 visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19.

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