

COVID-19 Update for Emerald Isle, NC

Executive Order 147/ Face Coverings

Thursday June 25, 2020

Dear residents, visitors and businesses of Emerald Isle:

On June 24, 2020, Governor Roy Cooper announced Executive Order 147, which extends Phase 2 of the Safer At Home restrictions through July 17, 2020. Additionally, Governor Cooper added a requirement that face coverings are required anytime you are in a public place under certain conditions. This order will go into effect at 5:00pm on Friday June 26, 2020.

To better educate the public on exactly what is required and enforceable under this new order, elected Town Officials in Emerald Isle have reviewed this order and would like to provide the following guidance to our residents, visitors and businesses in Emerald Isle. Additionally, Town staff is always available to provide assistance and answer any questions the public may have regarding the Town's response to COVID-19.

When am I required to wear a face covering? People must wear face coverings when in public places, indoor or outdoor, where physical distancing of six (6) feet from other people who are not members of the same household or residence is not possible, or unless an exception applies. These settings include, but are not limited to:

Inside of, or in line to enter, any indoor public space, including public schools;

Waiting for or riding on public and private multi person transportation, including but not limited to buses, taxis, ride sharing, private care service, vans;

Engaged in work, whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when they are or may be within six (6) feet of other people, including working in or walking through common areas, such as lobbies, hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities;

Obtaining services in a healthcare setting;

While outdoors in public spaces when maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet from persons who are not members of the same household or residence is not feasible. This restriction does not apply to persons while inside their residence or the personal residence of another. Face coverings may be removed to participate in a religious ritual.

Exceptions: Face Coverings do not need to be worn by an individual, worker, customer, or patron who:

1. Has a medical or behavioral condition or disability and cannot wear a face covering (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance);

2. Is under eleven (11) years of age;
3. Is actively eating or drinking;
4. Is strenuously exercising or swimming;
5. Is seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible;
6. Is giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience;
7. Is working at home or alone in a vehicle;
8. Is temporarily removing his or her Face Covering to secure government or medical services or for identification purposes;
9. Would be at risk from wearing a Face Covering at work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
10. Has found that his or her Face Covering is impeding visibility to operate equipment or a vehicle; or
11. Is a child whose parent, guardian, or responsible person has been unable to place the Face Covering safely on the child's face.
12. Children under two (2) years of age should not wear a face covering.

Anyone who declines to wear a face covering for these reasons **should not be required** to produce documentation or any other proof of condition.

How do I prove I have an exception? Under this Executive Order, all North Carolinians will be on the honor system about whether or not there is a reason why they cannot wear a face covering. Everyone in the state is asked to tell the truth and if they are healthy and able, to wear a face covering so that they do not put other people at risk of serious illness and death. You are not required to provide proof of an exception.

What qualifies as a face covering under the new order? "Face Covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face. A Face Covering can be made of a variety of synthetic and natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen. Ideally, a Face Covering has two (2) or more layers. A Face Covering may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. A face shield that covers the nose and mouth also meets the face covering requirements of this order.

Guidance for Businesses

Certain businesses are required to have patrons and employees wear face coverings whether they are inside or outside when they are or may be within six (6) feet of another person, or unless an exception applies. Specific occupational settings, including health care settings, should continue to follow existing

protocols and require surgical or procedure masks or N95 respirators, as indicated. The businesses that must follow the requirements for face coverings as described in Executive Order 147, to the extent they are open are:

- *Retail Businesses;
- *Restaurants
- *Personal Care, Grooming, and Tattoo Businesses;
- *Child Care Facilities, Day Camps, and Overnight Camps;
- *Gyms, Exercise Facilities, and Fitness Facilities,
- *State Government Cabinet Agencies;
- *Transportation;
- *High-Density Occupational Settings Where Social Distancing is Difficult, including manufacturing settings, construction sites, and migrant farm or other farm settings;
- *Meat or Poultry Processing Plants (new surgical mask requirement);
- *Long Term Care Facilities (new surgical mask requirement);
- *Other Health Care Settings (ongoing adherence to CDC guidance)

As a business owner, how do I determine whether or not a person has an exception? Under the Executive Order, operators of businesses and organizations are entitled to rely on their customers or patrons' statements about whether or not they have an exception from the face covering requirements and businesses and organizations do not violate this Executive Order if they rely on such statements.

How will the face covering requirement be enforced? Under the Executive Order, law enforcement personnel **are not authorized** to criminally enforce the face covering requirements of this Executive Order against individual workers, customers or patrons. Citations may only be issued to businesses or organizations that fail to enforce the requirements to wear face coverings, unless an exception applies. However, if a business refuses entry to a worker, customer, or patron because that person refuses to wear a face covering, law enforcement personnel may be contacted to enforce trespassing laws or any other laws that the worker, customer or patron may violate.

Are face coverings required on the beach? If you are unable to keep a physical distance of six (6) feet from persons who are not members of the same household or residence while on the beach, you would be required under this Executive Order to wear a face covering, unless an exception applies.

For the most up-to-date information, please monitor www.emeraldisle-nc.org, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and download the Emerald Isle app.

We apologize for such unprecedented disruption to our normal way of life. Please take precautions to protect you and yours. Together, we will navigate COVID-19!

With great sincerity and concern,

Mayor Eddie Barber

Commissioner Candace Dooley

Commissioner Steve Finch

Commissioner Floyd Messer

Commissioner Jim Normile

Commissioner Mark Taylor