



St. Michael's Catholic Church

Diocese of Duluth COVID-19 update – Face Covering as required by the Executive Order 20-81

On July 22, 2020, Governor Tim Walz signed Emergency Order 20-81 **Requiring Minnesotans to Wear a Face Covering in Certain Settings to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19**. This executive order will go into effect on Friday, July 24, 2020 at 11:59pm.

Order 20-81 states, "Minnesotans must wear a face covering in indoor businesses and indoor public settings, as described in this order and the related industry guidance, available at Stay Safe Minnesota website (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>), as well any other guidance referenced in this order. Workers must also wear face coverings outdoors when it is not possible to maintain social distancing. When leaving home, Minnesotans are strongly encouraged to have a face covering with them at all times to be prepared to comply with the requirements of this Executive Order." (2.)

- **Masks are required in all indoor spaces unless alone.**
- **Masks are required in all outdoor spaces where it is not possible to maintain social distancing.**
- **The Mask requirement does apply to places of worship.** Minnesota Department of Health *Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings*, p. 5/11.

In the Order, "Social distancing means individuals keeping at least 6 feet of distance from other individuals who are not members of their household." (3.d)

- **Indoors and Outdoors, Capacity: 6 feet of social distance, max 50%, maximum of 250 people within a single self-contained space.**

Those who are exempt from these face covering requirements are:

"Individuals with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the individual to maintain a face covering." (8.a)

"Children who are five years old and under." (8.b)

"Individuals at their workplace when wearing a face covering would create a job hazard for the individual or others, as determined by local, state or federal regulators or workplace safety and health standards and guidelines." (8.c)



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Among the circumstances where mandatory face coverings may be temporarily removed are situations, "When testifying, speaking or performing in an indoor business or public indoor space, in situations such or settings such as theaters, news conferences, legal proceedings, governmental meetings...presentations or lectures, provided that social distancing is always maintained." (10.c)

- **This also includes when singing.** See Minnesota Department of Health *Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81*, p. 3/7.
- **Priests, Deacons, Lectors and Cantors need not be masked when they are praying, reading and/or singing at Mass, Sacraments and Devotions but they should take care to be socially distancing.**
- **Priests and Deacons should mask whenever they are within 6 feet of another individual.**
- **Priests and Deacons should mask for the distribution of Holy Communion.**
- **The lay faithful should mask unless exempted.**

The Order states, "All businesses must update their COVID-19 Preparedness Plans to include the face covering requirements of this Executive Order..." (13)

- **The updated COVID-19 Preparedness Plan should be posted in your churches and schools.**

This is followed by, "Businesses must post one or more signs that are visible to all persons-including workers, customers and visitors-instructing them to wear face coverings as required by this Executive Order." (14)

- **Please post the required signs.**

Further, "Nothing in this Executive Order requires businesses or their workers to enforce this requirement when it is unsafe to do so, or authorized them to restrain, assault or physically remove workers or customers who refuse to comply with this Executive Order." (15.e)
See: *Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings*, p. 4/11.

- **Place masks near the door for the use of visitors.**
- **Use your own mask as appropriate (Be a good example).**
- **There are legitimate reasons why people might not use a mask.**
- **If you are concerned, you can socially distance.**
- **There is no need to have someone at the doors to enforce compliance, as masks are strongly encouraged but not always required.**
- **Remember the good of another and be charitable.**



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It should be noted there are fines attached to the violation of the Executive Order for Individuals (20.a) and businesses. (20.b)

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Jim Bissonette
Diocesan Administrator