



## INYO COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES PUBLIC HEALTH BRIEF

James Richardson, M.D.  
Public Health Officer, Inyo County

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### INYO COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER ORDER UNIVERSAL USE OF FACE MASKS IN RESIDENTIAL, LONG TERM CARE AND SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

DATE ORDER ISSUED: APRIL 27, 2020

**Please read this Order carefully. Violation or failure to comply with this Order is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. (Cal. Health & Safety Code § 120295)**

WHEREAS, a state of emergency has been declared by the State of California, and both a local health emergency and local emergency has been declared in the County of Inyo (the “County”) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in the County as well as throughout California and the nation, there are insufficient quantities of critical healthcare infrastructure, including hospital beds, ventilators and workers, capable of adequately treating mass numbers of patients at a single time – should the virus spread unchecked; and

WHEREAS, in direct response to that lack of healthcare infrastructure, governments across the nation are taking actions and implementing infection control protocols to slow the spread of COVID-19 in order to “flatten the curve” of infection and reduce the numbers of individuals infected at any one time by minimizing situations where the virus can spread; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) have issued recommendations and infection control guidance to facilities to limit the spread of COVID-19 within the facility, including, but not limited to, restricting visitation, symptoms screening, and masking; and

WHEREAS, social distancing can be difficult—or even impossible—to achieve at residential, long-term care facilities or skilled nursing facilities due to the concentration of individuals in one location and the in-person services that Health Care Personnel (“HCP”) need to provide to many residents or patients of these facilities; and

WHEREAS, residents or patients of residential, long-term care facilities or skilled nursing facilities tend to be at a higher risk of experiencing serious complications or death from COVID-19 due to their advanced age and/or the prevalence of underlying medical conditions; and

WHEREAS, visitors and HCP continue to be sources of introduction of COVID-19 into nursing homes, the use of infection control strategies, including face masks and coverings, by HCP and any other individuals who must enter a residential, long-term care facility or skilled nursing facility is an effective means to provide additional protection to residents, patients, and staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175 AND CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 17, SECTION 2501, THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF INYO (“HEALTH OFFICER”) ORDERS as follows:

1. The following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them by this section:
  - a. “Facility” shall mean any residential, long-term care or skilled nursing facility in Inyo County.
  - b. “Healthcare Personnel (HCP)”: HCP include, but are not limited to, emergency medical service personnel, nurses, nursing assistants, physicians, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted in the healthcare setting (e.g., clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, engineering and facilities management, administrative, billing, and volunteer personnel).
  - c. “Visitor” shall mean any individual other than a HCP who enters a residential, long-term care or skilled nursing facility who is not a resident or patient, regardless of the purpose of the individual’s visit.
2. Effective immediately and for the duration of the local COVID-19 emergency, all facilities shall require the use of PPE as follows:
  - a. Any HCP at the facility shall wear a facemask at all times while they are in the facility. When available, facemasks are generally preferred over cloth face coverings for HCP as facemasks offer both source control and protection for the wearer against exposure to splashes and sprays of infectious material from others. If there are anticipated shortages of facemasks, facemasks should be prioritized for HCP and then for patients with symptoms of COVID-19 (as supply allows). Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn instead of a respirator or facemask if more than source control is required.
  - b. Full PPE, including gown, gloves, N95 mask (as fitted and available – if not available, at least a facial mask), and eye protection such as face shields or goggles, shall be worn per CDC guidelines for the care of any resident with known or suspected COVID-19 per CDC guidance on conservation of PPE.

It shall be the responsibility of the facility to ensure compliance with these rules. If a facility discovers any visitor on its property who is out of compliance, the facility must order that visitor to immediately leave the property or must provide the visitor with the necessary PPE and ensure that the visitor utilizes the PPE in an appropriate manner.

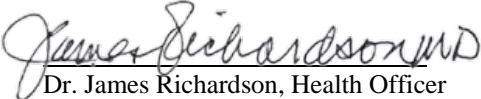
3. Inyo County recognizes that medical-grade PPE is in limited supply throughout the United States and that facilities may struggle to obtain sufficient PPE to comply with the rules set forth in section (1). Therefore, if a facility has made a good-faith effort to obtain PPE but still cannot obtain sufficient quantities to comply with section (1), the following alternatives, listed in order of preference, may be used:
  - a. Some HCP whose job duties do not require PPE (e.g., clerical personnel) may wear a cloth face covering for source control while in the healthcare facility.
  - b. In settings where face masks are not available, HCP will only use cloth face coverings for care of patients with COVID-19 as a last resort. Caution should be exercised when considering this option. Cloth face coverings should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face. CDC provides additional guidance on the use of cloth facemasks: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
4. In no event shall any HCP or visitor to a facility have his or her mouth or nose uncovered at any time. In other words, at the absolute minimum, all HCP and visitors to a facility must wear a homemade cloth face covering that follows the CDC's best practice guidelines for cloth face coverings, available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.
5. Facilities must educate their staff and visitors on the proper donning (putting on), doffing (taking off), and disposal of any PPE. If a facility does not have specific guidance, the CDC has recommended sequences for donning and doffing PPE: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/PPE-Sequence-508.pdf>
6. All residents or patients of a facility shall wear a cloth mask whenever the resident or patient cannot remain 6 feet away from other individuals. This requirement shall not apply to any resident or patient who, for medical reasons, cannot safely wear a cloth mask.
7. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, the following:
  - a. The March 4, 2020 Proclamation of a State Emergency issued by Governor Gavin Newsom
  - b. The guidance issued on March 11, 2020 by the California Department of Public Health regarding large gatherings of 250 people or more
  - c. The March 16, 2020 declaration by the Inyo County Health Officer of a local health emergency
  - d. The March 17, 2020 declaration by the Inyo County Board of Supervisors of a local emergency
  - e. The March 17, 2020 ratification by Inyo County of the March 16 declaration of a local health emergency
  - f. The guidance issued on March 15, 2020 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Public Health, and other public health officials through the United States and around the world recommending the

cancellation of gatherings involving more than fifty (50) or more persons in a single space at the same time

- g. Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-33-20 of March 19, 2020 ordering all persons to stay at home to protect the health and well-being of all Californians and to establish consistency across the state in order to slow the spread of COVID-19
  - h. The March 20, 2020 order of the Inyo County Health Officer temporarily prohibiting non-essential public gatherings, requiring social distancing, and closing certain businesses
  - i. The March 27, 2020 order of the Inyo County Health Officer mandating quarantine periods for anyone diagnosed with or potentially exposed to COVID-19
  - j. The April 1, 2020 guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health recommending the use of masks to prevent the asymptomatic transmission of COVID-19 (no. NR20-040)
8. This Order is made in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws, including but not limited to: Health and Safety Code sections 101030, et seq.; Health and Safety Code sections 120100, et seq.; and Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations section 2501.
9. To the extent necessary, pursuant to Government Code sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code section 101029, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and all Chiefs of Police in the County ensure compliance with and enforcement of this Order.

Any person who wishes to discuss this may contact the Department of Health and Human Services at 760-873-3305.

**IT IS SO ORDERED:**

  
Dr. James Richardson, Health Officer

04/27/2020

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Date