JIM M. COPPINGER
COUNTY MAYOR

REBEKAH T. BARNES, R.N.
ADMINISTRATOR

PAUL M. HENDRICKS, M.D.
HEALTH OFFICER

HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

HAMILTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

DIRECTIVE NO. 1 OF THE HAMILTON COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER EFFECTIVE JULY 10, 2020

WHEREAS, Hamilton County is currently experiencing the effects of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County is empowered to protect the health and lives of Hamilton County citizens, and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County began reopening businesses beginning over two months ago requesting and expecting voluntary compliance with appropriate non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as wearing facial coverings, maintaining social distancing and personal hygiene as recommended by the CDC and required for safely opening those businesses, and

WHEREAS, such voluntary recommendations have not been adequate to slow the spread of COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, protecting the economy of Hamilton County is also essential to the health of our citizens, and any provisions to protect both our county's health and economy are important to consider, and

WHEREAS, simple measures enacted to prevent the spread of COVID-19 will greatly help to prevent more stringent measures such as stay at home orders and closure of businesses, and

WHEREAS, CDC recommends all persons 2 years of age and older wear a cloth face covering in public settings and when around persons outside their household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected, and

WHEREAS, there is clear clinical and scientific evidence that masks or cloth facial coverings which cover the mouth and nose, along with social distancing and proper hygiene can decrease the spread of COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, Hamilton County has seen a rise in new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, and immediate action is needed to minimize this increase.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Paul Hendricks, MD, Hamilton County Health Officer, pursuant to the laws of the State of Tennessee, do hereby issue the following Health Directive:

921 EAST THIRD STREET • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37403 • PHONE (423) 209-8000 • FAX (423) 209-8001

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1. Effective at 12:01 a.m. on July 10, 2020, all persons in Hamilton County shall wear a facial covering or mask which covers the mouth and nose at all times when indoors in all public and private buildings and when outdoors except under the following exceptions:
2. Face coverings are not required for:
   a. Children under 12 years of age
   b. Anyone with documented medical contraindications to facial covers such as active asthma or COPD
   c. Anyone who is acutely short of breath or incapacitated such that they would be unable to remove the covering on their own.
   d. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing – or those who care for or interact with a person who is hearing impaired if they rely on lip reading to communicate. In this situation, consider using a clear face covering. If a clear face covering is not available, consider whether you can use written communication, use closed captioning or decrease background noise to make communication possible while wearing a cloth face covering that blocks your lips.
   e. Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions or other sensory sensitivities, who may have challenges wearing a cloth face covering. Those persons are encouraged to consult with their healthcare provider for advice about wearing cloth face coverings.
   f. Persons in a house of worship unless required by that house of worship, but wearing a face covering in such locations is strongly encouraged.
   g. Persons who are outdoors unless the person cannot substantially maintain appropriate social distancing from others outside of the person's household. Facial coverings should, however, be kept accessible in the event of encountering a larger group.
   h. Persons in cars, trucks, or other private or commercial vehicles either alone or with household members. However, all occupants in vehicles transporting more than one coworker, carpooling or carrying other non-household passengers, shall wear facial coverings.
   i. Persons working under conditions where appropriate social distancing from others outside of the person's household can be maintained. A facial covering should be kept accessible in the event that others enter the area.

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j. Office workers and any other employee working alone in an area (such as a private office) where the public or other workers are not present or do not usually enter. A facial covering should be kept accessible in the event others enter that area.
k. Persons who are exercising, such as jogging, bicycling, or swimming, etc, either alone or in small groups where physical distancing of 6 feet or greater can be maintained. A facial covering should be kept accessible in the event of encountering a larger group.
l. Private residences are exempt, but hallways, elevators and other common areas of apartment buildings, condominiums and other medium or high density residential structures are not exempt.
m. Persons seated for the purpose of dining in any restaurant or business that provides food and/or drink for on premises consumption.

3. Facial coverings shall fit snugly and securely against the side of the face. Cloth facial coverings are preferred and should include multiple layers of fabric. Surgical and other medical masks (e.g. N95) are not required and should be preserved for healthcare personnel.
4. Businesses shall not allow anyone to enter or remain in their establishment unless they are wearing a facial covering. No business shall serve anyone without a facial cover unless seated and eating or drinking consumables served by the establishment.
5. Any business failing to enforce this Directive or person refusing to leave an establishment when requested due to no facial covering will be subject to civil citations for their violation of this Directive as well as criminal sanctions.
6. All businesses shall post signage in a place visible to those entering to remind customers of this requirement. Sample wording will be provided in digital format by the Hamilton County Health Department.
7. Weddings and funerals held on private property are exempt from the requirement, but highly encouraged to abide by appropriate public health measures such as masks, social distancing and recommended personal hygiene. Routine business activities of funeral and wedding businesses shall not be exempt.
8. Voting sites for the purpose of voting or administering an election are exempt but encouraged to abide by appropriate public health measures such as masks, social distancing and recommended personal hygiene.
9. Properties belonging to and under the jurisdiction of the Hamilton County Department of Education will be exempt and allowed to follow their own policies.

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10. Violations of this Directive by businesses and/or individuals shall be punishable by citation issued by the Hamilton County Health Department and/or criminally by local law enforcement as a Class C misdemeanor.
11. This Directive shall remain in effect until Tuesday, September 8, 2020.

DECLARED this 6th day of July, 2020

Dr. Paul Hendricks, MD.

Health Officer

Hamilton County, Tennessee Department of Health

Becky Barnes

Regional Director

Hamilton County, Tennessee Department of Health

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