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To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.



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Stay in your place, maintain your space, and cover your face

County Health Officer, Dr. Milton Teske, recommends **covering your face** in addition to the sheltering-in-place and social distancing measures currently in place here in Kings County. Throughout the Central Valley, COVID-19 is making its presence known and Public Health wants to ensure that Kings County stays ahead of it. By following the current guidelines of the shelter-in-place, we will be able to slow the spread of the virus. However, for those times when you must leave your home, new guidance is available to keep you safe.

Cover your face when you leave your home. Previously, it was stated that healthcare workers were the only people who should be wearing face masks. Fortunately, the U.S. has had the opportunity to research how other countries have limited the spread of the virus. New studies show that covering your face while in public is an effective way of limiting the spread of this virus.

Many of those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 have experienced mild flu like symptoms and some have had no symptoms at all. Those who have experienced symptoms of COVID-19 sometimes do not develop symptoms until the end of the course of the disease. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) states there may be a benefit to reducing asymptomatic transmission with the use of face coverings which would help reduce the release of infectious particles into the air, and on surfaces, when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but feels well. This means, wearing a face mask at all times, while in public, may help limit the spread of the virus, especially if people have the virus and are not showing any signs or symptoms.

It is important to remember that our healthcare workers, who provide direct medical care, are our frontline warriors in fighting this war and protecting us from this virus. We want to ensure that they have adequate amounts of protective gear in order to properly protect themselves when they are treating the ill. As we all know, the shortage of face masks is hindering the ability to obtain the recommended protective gear. Face masks will hopefully become more publicly

available soon, but until then, we ask you to take these preventative measures, as best as you can. Kings County Department of Public Health will not be issuing face masks to the public. Simple homemade masks, bandanas, and scarfs can be used in place of face masks, until more facemasks become readily available.

Ways to obtain face masks, or other means to cover your face include but are not limited to:

- Online and local sources are selling handmade cloth masks. This is also a great way to support your local businesses that have been affected by this pandemic.
- Local stores may have a limited supply of masks available.
- Some fabric stores are selling and/or giving away kits to sew handmade masks, which you can sew for yourself and for others. There are instructions and examples that can be found on the internet. Some helpful links are listed below.

[-https://www.joann.com/how-to-make-a-face-mask/042188731P321.html](https://www.joann.com/how-to-make-a-face-mask/042188731P321.html)

[-https://www.joann.com/make-to-give-response/](https://www.joann.com/make-to-give-response/)

[-https://thestitchingscientist.com/2020/03/how-to-sew-a-face-mask.html](https://thestitchingscientist.com/2020/03/how-to-sew-a-face-mask.html)

- Wear a bandana or scarf across your mouth and nose while out in public.
- If you managed to purchase masks from your local stores before supplies were limited, now is the time to start wearing them and sharing with your neighbors if you have the ability to do so.

CDPH reminds everyone that this preventative measure does not replace other evidence-based measures such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, and remaining at home as much as possible. This recommendation is in addition to these recommendations and for those who **must** go out in public for one of the essential needs or activities listed in the shelter-in-place order. Wearing a face mask or face covering does not guarantee that you won't contract COVID-19.

Recommendations and Guidelines already in place to help prevent the spread of the virus:

- Everyone is asked to **stay home**. There are exceptions in place for critical and essential activities. Your voluntary compliance with these measures will slow the spread and save many people's lives.
- **Social distancing** means to keep a six foot distance between you and others. Many stores in our community have tape markings on the floors of their check out lines to encourage social distancing while shopping for food, medicine, and other essential items. Please remember to maintain social distancing at all times when out in public in order to protect yourself, your family, and your community.
- **Wash your hands!** Washing our hands is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of COVID-19 as well as other viruses. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Try to avoid touching common surfaces when out in public. Wash your hands as soon as you enter your home, in order to avoid bringing in outside germs into your home. It is also important to disinfect frequently touched surfaces in your home.
- When wearing a face mask, it is important to wash your hands before and after touching and adjusting your face mask or covering. Wash your face coverings daily with hot water and laundry detergent. Discard any face coverings that no longer cover the nose and mouth, have stretched or damaged ties or straps, cannot stay on the face, or have holes or tears in the fabric.

It is our job as a community to protect Kings County and help prevent the spread of the virus. Let's remember that we are all in this together. We can stay home, wash our hands, keep our distance, and cover our face to keep this virus under control within our community.

For more information please visit the sites below

www.kingscovidinfo.com

[California Department of Public Health: Face Covering Guidance](#)

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