

Further Guidance and Suggestions on Face Coverings Order

July 8, 2020

For Pastors and Church leaders – from Kurt Weaver and our Church Ambassador Network.

As promised, we wanted to give you more information in regards to the latest Universal Face Covering Order:

On July 1st, the Governor and Secretary of Health announced an expansion of the current Emergency In-person Operations Order (from April 15 and May 27) to change face mask wearing from being strongly encouraged to being mandatory. You can read the Universal Face Covering Order by [clicking here](#).

The Pennsylvania DOH released a number of FAQs addressing questions in regards to the Face Covering Order. You can read the entire FAQs document by [clicking here](#). We have read through the FAQs and are using the answers as a guide to answer common questions we have received from pastors based on that information:

“Do I have to wear a mask at a house of worship such as a church, synagogue or mosque?” Yes, individuals must wear a face covering in any public place as well as outdoors when they are in a place where people are congregating and they cannot remain 6 feet apart from persons who are not a part of their household. Individuals should consider carrying a face covering in case they unexpectedly [sic] come in close contact with others.”

Are Masks Required in both Indoor and Outdoor Services? “Secretary’s Order requires individuals to wear a face covering, in both indoor public places and in the outdoors when they are not able to consistently maintain social distancing from individuals who are not members of their household, such as on a busy sidewalk, waiting in line to enter a place, or near others at any place people are congregating. Whether inside in a public place or outside, and when wearing a face covering or not, everyone should socially distance at least 6 feet apart from others who are not part of your household.” (Answer to FAQ – Do I have to wear a mask both inside and outside?)

Are Masks Required for Public Speaking or Preaching? “Individuals speaking for a broadcast or to an audience may remove their face coverings while speaking, so long as they are social distancing during the speech or broadcast. Those persons in attendance, including employees of the venue, and any person speaking must social distance during, before and after the speech or broadcast.” (Answer to FAQ – I see the people remove their masks while making public speeches. Isn’t that a violation of the Order?)

Are Church Leaders Required to Enforce The Order? “The Department wants to emphasize that it does not expect businesses to put employees in harm’s way. Again, in making a determination about whether or not to

comply with the Order, an individual should consider not only his or her right to make that decision, but his or her responsibility to family, friends, and other persons with whom they may contact, and to whom they may spread disease.” (Answer to FAQ – Do businesses need to deny entry to those not wearing a face covering such as a mask?)

As a reminder, we are supplying information for you to make decisions that are best for your congregation, setting, location, and community. Our intent is to inform you of the information coming from our Governor and Department of Health to help you in your decision making process.