

Governor imposes face mask rule statewide

The Columbia Press

A statewide requirement to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces began July 1.

The guidance applies to businesses and members of the public visiting indoor public spaces, such as grocery stores.

"The choices every single one of us make in the coming days matter," Gov. Kate Brown said in making her announcement. "Face coverings that cover your nose and mouth play a critical role in reducing the spread of this disease because droplets from our breath can carry the virus to others without us realizing it."

Face-covering requirements already had been mandated in seven urban counties when Clatsop asked to be included in the rules last week.

With shocking recent spikes in COVID-19 cases, the governor decided over the weekend to require face masks everywhere in the state.

There are a few exceptions to the face-mask rules: Children younger than 12; customers of restaurants and bars while eating or drinking; gym patrons while doing strenuous exercise; and people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from wearing a face covering.

Acceptable face coverings can be cloth, paper or disposable, including bandanas and homemade masks.

Statewide, COVID-19 cases have increased for four straight weeks and at increased speed.

Just under 9,000 cases have been reported in the state with 208 death.

Clatsop County had recorded 49 cases as of Wednesday, with 46 who have recovered.

PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR

Mike McNickel, the Clatsop County director of Public Health, disclosed publicly that he is one of the three new county cases reported recently.



His agency is charged with managing COVID-19 information, testing, and contact tracing.

McNickel told a reporter that he is asymptomatic and

only learned of his positive result when going to the hospital for treatment of an unrelated condition.

McNickel is now on a 14-day quarantine at home.

Public Health has been implementing workplace safety measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, as in any health care setting.

Consequently, the department expects there would have been limited transmission to other staff members and is confident no patients were at risk of exposure.

In an abundance of caution, the department cancelled all patient appointments, shut its offices for deep cleaning and tested employees on June 24.

IRS DEADLINE LOOMS

Taxpayers who put off paying their 2019 income taxes because of economic woes brought on by the pandemic have until July 15, this year's deadline for filing a tax return and paying taxes due.

Oregon extended the usual April 15 deadline when the Internal Revenue Service extended its deadline to file and pay federal taxes.

For personal income tax filers, the six-month extension will allow filing on Oct. 15, but it must be requested and taxes will remain due on July 15.

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