

Update to the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for St. Michael's Lutheran Church

As of July 25, 2020, according to Governor Tim Walz's Executive Order 20-81, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all public indoor spaces and businesses, unless alone. Additionally, workers are required to wear a face covering when working outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained. Research has shown that use of face coverings can greatly reduce the risk of infection when combined with other prevention efforts such as social distancing and hand hygiene.

What this means for St. Michael's:

All visitors are required to wear a mask (beginning Saturday, July 25, 2020.) There will be a basket of masks at the front door for people who do not bring their own. This does include people waiting outside to enter the building.

Employees must wear a mask unless they are working alone in their office.

People attending the parking lot service who do not remain in their car should maintain a distance of at least 6 feet between themselves and other households. If social distancing cannot be maintained, they should wear a face mask.

The following Recommendations and Requirements, as published July 25, 2020, apply to people on the property and in the buildings at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, whether they are workers, church members or visitors:

When it is required to wear a face covering

- In all public indoor spaces and businesses, including when waiting outside to enter the public indoor space or business.
- For workers only: When working outdoors in situations where social distancing (i.e., maintaining physical distance of at least six feet from other individuals who are not in the same household) cannot be maintained.
- When present in a business, whether indoor or outdoor, that has elected to require face coverings. Businesses are allowed to require face coverings even in situations where face coverings are not otherwise required by Executive Order 20-81.

When it is strongly recommended (but not required) to wear a face covering

- In any public outdoor space or business when it is not possible to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others or where close person-to-person interaction is possible or likely, such as when entering or exiting a business, moving around in a space with others present, using the restroom, ordering food, or waiting in line.
- During participation in organized sporting activities, if wearing a face covering is safe and practical.

Businesses' obligations under the Executive Order

Under Executive Order 20-81, businesses must:

- Require that all persons, including their workers, customers, and visitors, wear face coverings as required by Executive Order 20-81 and take reasonable steps to enforce the requirement.
- Mitigate or eliminate worker and customer exposure to persons who cannot wear or refuse to wear a face covering.
- Update their COVID-19 Preparedness Plans to include the face covering requirements of Executive Order 20-81, inform their workers how their plan has been updated, and make the revised plan available to their workers.
- Post one or more signs that are visible to all persons—including workers, customers, and visitors—instructing them to wear face coverings as required by Executive Order 20-81.
- When possible, provide accommodations to persons, including their workers and customers, who state they have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the person to maintain a face covering. Accommodations could include permitting use of an alternate form of face covering—a face shield, for example—or providing service options that do not require a customer to enter the business.

The following additional information may answer questions people may have about the mandate. (From Frequently Asked Questions about the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings, <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facecoverfaq.html>)

How do face coverings slow the spread of COVID-19?

The virus which causes COVID-19 is thought to be mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough or sneeze. Many people with COVID-19 do not show any symptoms but can still spread the virus to others, especially those who have had prolonged close contact with another person. Additionally, people can be contagious before they show symptoms of COVID-19. Wearing a face covering will help to protect the people around you if

you are infected and do not know it. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend that people should wear a face covering in public to limit the spread of respiratory droplets, especially in situations where social distancing is hard to maintain. Face coverings along with other measures like good hand hygiene and social distancing work together to slow the spread.

Why is there a state mandate?

Minnesota has strongly recommended widespread use of face coverings since April. As shown in other states, COVID-19 surges can happen quickly—even in areas with previously low or decreasing case numbers—and with disastrous consequences. Because Minnesota has begun the process of reopening its economy and people are now leaving the home more frequently, smart, simple infection-control measures, like wearing a face covering, are particularly important to prevent further COVID-19 spread. Previously, Minnesota and other states encouraged voluntary compliance with face covering recommendations, but compliance with such recommendations has been inconsistent and face covering requirements have been shown to increase consistent face covering use.⁽⁶⁾ Other states are having success controlling the spread of COVID-19 by mandating face coverings in certain settings in accordance with CDC and WHO recommendations.

How long will the Executive Order be in effect?

This Executive Order is effective immediately upon approval by the Executive Council, with the requirement to wear face coverings starting July 25. It remains in effect until the peacetime emergency declared in Executive Order 20-01 ends or until cancelled by a proper authority (Minnesota Statutes 2019, section 4.035, subdivision 2, and section 12.32).

Should I say something if someone near me isn't wearing a face covering?

There are people who may not be able to wear face coverings for a variety of reasons and you may not be able to tell why just by looking at a person. Unless you are a business responsible for ensuring worker and customer compliance with the Executive Order, do not confront a person about why they are not wearing a face covering but instead, if possible, ask them to maintain social distance. Face coverings protect others from you so the best option is for you to continue to wear your face covering and, where possible, physically distance yourself at least six feet from persons not wearing face coverings. Remember, we're all in this together and not everyone is able to wear a face covering.

Does this requirement apply to places of worship?

Yes, places of worship need to follow the provisions laid out in Executive Order 20-81. Places of worship must also prepare and implement COVID-19 Preparedness Plans and follow the guidance found at [Stay Safe Guidance for Places of Worship](#).

Additional Resources

Guidance for Vehicle Gatherings, Parades, and Drive-ins

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vehiclegather.pdf>

State of Minnesota Emergency Executive Order 20-81

<https://www.leg.state.mn.us/archive/execorders/20-81.pdf>

CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID -19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>