

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RELATING TO June 19<sup>th</sup> Supplemental Order (“Order”)**

### **What does the Order require?**

This order requires that all commercial entities in Dallas County providing goods or services directly to the public develop and implement a health and safety policy (“**Health and Safety Policy**”). The Health and Safety Policy developed by commercial entities in Dallas County **must** require, at a minimum, that all employees or visitors wear face coverings when in an area or performing an activity which will necessarily involve close contact or proximity to co-workers or the public where six feet of separation is not feasible. The Order also requires that a Health and Safety Policy be developed by a particular commercial entity and be posted in a conspicuous location readily visible to the public.

### **Does the Health and Safety Policy have to be in a specific form?**

No. There is no required format so long as the policy is clear and it meets the minimum requirements contained in the Order. The County recognizes that not all commercial entities are alike and so the posting of this policy attempts to remain flexible. The Health and Safety Policy required to be developed by the Order may be customized in consideration of each commercial entity’s particular business practices and customers so long as it meets the minimum requirements. Some commercial entities may decide to require additional mitigating measures which exceed the requirements of the Order such as temperature checks or health screenings.

### **Why was this order issued?**

It was issued because the transmission of COVID-19 remains a significant threat to the health and safety of Dallas County residents and rates of infection and hospitalizations are increasing at an alarming exponential rate. Health experts agree that implementing protective health measures such as social distancing and face coverings help in reducing the rate of transmission of the virus.

### **FOR BUSINESS OWNERS**

**Which order should I follow? Governor Abbott’s or the County Judge’s order?**

The answer is both. Judge Jenkins' order supplements Governor Abbott's current executive orders. The Dallas County order does not replace any order, direction or guideline put in place by Governor Abbott and the State of Texas.

**I do not know how to write a policy. Do you have a template I could use?**

Dallas County has prepared a downloadable template and graphic, in both English and Spanish, which you may use. They are located [here](#). Posting the template in a conspicuous location and implementing the facial covering requirement for your business is sufficient to meet the requirements of the Order. Please keep in mind that you may still need to customize your Health and Safety Policy to include additional measures specific to your business. Please remember to post your Health and Safety Policy in as prominent a location as possible, such as the front door or window.

**I am a small business owner and cannot find any masks?**

First, do not worry. A business is not required to supply masks to employees or customers. Customers are required to provide their own mask or face covering. Cloth coverings, bandanas, and other homemade face coverings are allowed under the Order. The goal of the Order is education, cooperation and compliance, with enforcement by issuing citations or assessing fines as a last resort.

**If I own a restaurant, do my employees have to wear a mask?**

The short answer is yes. At a minimum, the Health and Safety Policy developed as a result of the Order should require your employees to wear masks when working alongside other employees or providing services to the general public or if they are not able to maintain social distancing of 6 feet or more.

**I am a dentist. Do I need to require patients to wear a mask?**

Yes. All employees and visitors should wear a mask when entering the office. However, patients receiving medical services may remove their mask when necessary during procedures so long as the health care provider takes appropriate safety precautions. Please ensure that all employees and medical staff are wearing a mask and appropriate protective equipment when administering medical services.

## **Additional Business Guidance:**

### **Gyms and Exercise Establishments**

Gyms and exercise establishments must require all individuals including employees inside of the business establishment to wear a face covering at all times except for when an individual is actively engaging in exercise. This means that people must wear a mask upon entering the gym, while in the bathroom or changing room, and in any other part of the gym while they are not actively exercising. While not required, people are encouraged to wear a face covering while exercising if they can do so safely.

### **Office buildings and Individual Office Suites**

Any business that provides goods or services to the public must require the use of face coverings in their stores and their office buildings. People must wear a face covering in an office building when 6 foot distancing cannot be maintained, such as staff meetings in a conference room. People do not have to wear a face covering if they are alone in their individual office.

### **Distribution Centers**

Distribution centers are commercial entities that provide goods to the public so they must develop a Health and Safety Policy and require their employees and any visitors to wear masks.

### **Apartment Complexes**

All apartment complexes must develop a Health and Safety Policy that requires staff, vendors, residents, and guests to wear a mask or face covering in the common areas of the complex, including the front office, laundry facilities, mailroom, and elevators. Residents are not required to wear face coverings in their own apartment. Staff are not required to wear a face covering if they are alone in their individual office.

## **FOR INDIVIDUALS**

### **Are individuals still required to wear masks, and practice social distancing?**

Individuals are required to wear masks and practice social distancing when they are in public. Starting Wednesday, June 24, 2020, all commercial entities in Dallas County will require visitors to wear a mask in order to enter their business premises and receive services or purchase goods.

### **Should I still practice social distancing while exercising outdoors?**

Yes, keeping a distance of at least 6 feet from others while engaging in physical activities, even when outdoors, reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

### **Do I need to wear a mask when I go to a restaurant?**

Yes, a mask is required when entering a restaurant. When you are sitting at the table and/or eating or drinking, you may remove your mask. However, when getting up to visit the restroom or leaving the restaurant, you will be required to put your mask back on.

### **When will the Order take effect?**

It took effect as of 11:59 p.m. on June 19, 2020, and will remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on August 4, 2020 unless extended by Dallas County. Commercial entities in Dallas County are required to develop and implement their Health and Safety Policy as soon as possible, but will not be issued a fine for non-compliance before Wednesday, June 24, 2020.