



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**AMENDED HEALTH OFFICER DIRECTIVE  
FACE COVERINGS AND GATHERINGS**

**November 24, 2020**

WHEREAS, a state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency was proclaimed by Lawrence J. Hogan, the Governor of the State of Maryland on March 5, 2020, and renewed on March 17, 2020, April 10, 2020, May 6, 2020, June 3, 2020, July 1, 2020, July 30, 2020, August 10, 2020, September 8, 2020, on October 6, 2020, and on October 29, 2020 to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the state, and the state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency still exists;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is an infectious and contagious respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death which poses a risk to the health and safety of individuals in Montgomery County, Maryland;

WHEREAS, the currently known and available scientific evidence and best practices support continued limitations on large gatherings, increased use of face coverings, and continued social distancing to prevent exposures and transmissions, and reduce the threat to especially vulnerable populations, including older individuals and those with chronic health conditions;

WHEREAS, despite the implementation of the above measures, the available surveillance and epidemiological data demonstrate that there continues to be widespread community transmission of COVID-19 and increases in the daily caseload volumes within Montgomery County, the State of Maryland as a whole, and the surrounding jurisdictions.

I, Travis A. Gayles, M.D., Ph.D., Health Officer for Montgomery County, Maryland, finding it necessary to act immediately in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and for the protection of the health and safety of individuals in Montgomery County, Maryland, hereby authorize and order the following actions for the prevention and control of this infectious and contagious disease pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated Health General §18-208 and COMAR 10.06.01.06:

1. I hereby adopt by reference the following portions of [Local Executive Order 122-20AM](#).
  - a. "Face Coverings" paragraph 2.
  - b. "Gatherings" paragraph 5.
2. Face Coverings.
  - a. Use of the following does not satisfy the County's Face Covering mandate:
    - i. wearing a face covering with a valve or
    - ii. solely wearing a face shield.

- b. Persons leaving their residences shall wear a face covering when they are likely to come into contact with another person, such as being within six feet of another person for more than a fleeting time;
  - c. Face Coverings must be worn unless a person is actively engaged in eating or drinking; and
  - d. All other exceptions contained in paragraph 2.c. of [Local Executive Order 122-20AM](#) continue to be in effect.
3. Gatherings.
  - a. Outdoor gatherings of more than 25 people continue to be prohibited; and
  - b. Indoor gatherings of more than 10 people are prohibited.
  - c. These gathering limits do not apply to businesses, organizations, establishments and facilities that are permitted to operate pursuant to [Local Executive Order 122-20AM](#) paragraphs 6 and 7.
4. This Order remains in effect until rescinded, superseded, amended, or revised by additional orders.
5. If any provision of this Order or its application to any person, entity, or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions or applications of the Order shall remain in effect to the extent possible without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Order are severable.

**THIS ORDER IS ISSUED UNDER MY HAND THIS 24th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2020 AND IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.**

*Travis A. Gayles*

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Travis A. Gayles, M.D., Ph.D.  
Health Officer, Montgomery County