

April 3, 2020

**4:30 p.m. Update Pueblo, CO #PuebloCOVID19
USE FACEMASKS BUT DON'T ABANDON SOCIAL
DISTANCING, HYGIENE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Governor Jared Polis today announced the Colorado Mask Campaign which encourages individuals to wear non-medical cloth face masks when they go out for essential business due to COVID-19 pandemic. Public health officials also urge people to not expect the masks to protect against the virus and become lax on critical social distancing and proper hygiene measures.

The recommendation by the Governor to wear a mask is voluntary but is being requested to protect the most vulnerable community members, to sustain the health care system for the next few months and to slow the spread of COVID-19.

“We are recommending people wear cloth masks, not the medical masks, as it is critical we save those for our health care professionals,” said Dr. Chris Urbina, medical director for the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment.

“Remember, wearing a face mask is not a substitute for social distancing, washing your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based solution and coughing into your elbow or a tissue.”

Urbina reminds people that when wearing a face mask, avoid adjusting the mask and touching your eyes, nose and mouth. “If you are sick stay at home,” he added.

Public health officials are requesting the public refrain from buying and using critical medical masks and other personal protective equipment that healthcare workers need to do their job safely and effectively.

The public is asked to use fabric masks beginning today and those coverings can include bandanas, scarves, sewn fabric masks or by repurposing a t-shirt or dish towel to fit your face. The masks should cover the nose and mouth. All cloth masks should be worn once and then washed with hot water and soap before wearing them again.

The Centers for Disease Control has announced that 25% of people infected with COVID-19 are asymptomatic and spreading infected respiratory droplets. A face covering helps lower the risk of spreading by someone who may be sick and not realize it. Cloth face coverings can be worn to reduce the spread of large droplets. This can help prevent community spread when people travel from their homes for necessary activities like grocery shopping. Individuals should also wear masks while recreating.

Everybody has a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in Pueblo by:

- Minimize social activities and being physically close to other people
- Isolate yourself if you feel symptoms of shortness of breath, cough, temperature of 100.4 or higher call your medical provider before visiting them.
- **Do not go to the emergency room unless medically necessary.**
- Wash your hands with soap regularly.
- Cough or sneeze into elbow or tissue.
- Stay home when you're sick.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Clean surfaces frequently touched.

Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment encourages residents to seek out credible, reliable sources of information on COVID-19:

- www.puebloemergency.info
- Call CO HELP at **1-877-462-2911** or email COHELP@RMPDC.org
- Pueblo's COVID-19 Hotline 719-583-4444