



## **Non-medical masks and face coverings mandatory while in indoor places accessible to the public**

**Whitby, Ontario** – The following statement is being issued on behalf of John Henry, Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer for The Regional Municipality of Durham:

“Today, Dr. Robert Kyle, Durham Region Medical Officer of Health, issued instructions to ensure the mandatory use of non-medical masks or face coverings within most public and enclosed indoor spaces, effective July 10.

This means that non-medical masks or face coverings are mandatory for all community members, with the exception of those who have health, respiratory and sensory issues; various disabilities; are unable to remove the mask without assistance; children under the age of two; or other valid reasons.

This guidance from the Region’s Medical Officer of Health provides clear direction to businesses and individuals, with respect to their obligations under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. At this point, non-medical masks or face coverings will be required, while the provincial emergency orders remain in force.

As a result of this instruction, face coverings will be mandatory in commercial establishments, which includes, but is not limited to, retail and convenience stores; malls; enclosed farmers’ markets; libraries and community centres; and business offices open to the public.

This instruction also requires business owners to implement a policy for the use of non-medical masks or face coverings; and to use discretion, under that policy, to refuse entry when people are not wearing a face covering.

You do not need to wear a non-medical mask or face covering at home with your immediate family members; while eating on a restaurant patio; or in the workplace where other standards apply, such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

There is growing public health evidence that widespread use of non-medical masks or face coverings—when used with other public health recommendations—is effective in the fight against COVID-19. This includes physical distancing in public spaces, frequently washing your hands, and staying home when you are sick.

We intend to enforce this policy in ‘good faith’; using it as an opportunity to educate people on the use of face coverings, combined with other recommended public health practices, to help keep our community—and each other—safe.

To learn more about non-medical masks and face coverings, including how to make one at home, visit [durham.ca/novelcoronavirus](https://durham.ca/novelcoronavirus). Business owners looking to source Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are invited to visit the Local PPE Directory link at [InvestDurham.ca/CovidResponse](https://InvestDurham.ca/CovidResponse).

Let’s work together to continue fighting this virus. Take care and stay safe.”