

# IREDELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Iredell County Health Department

## NEWS RELEASE

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4:00 PM

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### Cloth Mask Guidance

The Iredell County Health Department recommends the following guidance for use of cloth masks or face coverings by the general public, as issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as grocery stores and pharmacies, and especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

As of April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, there has been one COVID-19 related death and 60 positive COVID-19 cases in Iredell County. However, there are likely many more cases than this because not all individuals are tested. Individuals who experience mild symptoms are not recommended to seek testing, according to North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services most recent guidance. This is because most people who get COVID-19 will recover without needing medical care.

Cloth coverings can play a part in controlling the spread of COVID-19. However, the use of cloth masks or face coverings by the general public should not replace the need for social distancing and other everyday prevention measures like handwashing, covering your cough or sneeze, or staying home when you are sick.

The use of cloth face coverings will not protect you from other people's germs, but it will provide a level of protection to others in case you are infected. This would be important if someone is infected with COVID-19 but does not have symptoms. According to the CDC, recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms (asymptomatic or presymptomatic). This is why it remains important for people to stay home as much as possible and only go out for essential trips.

#### Important Points about Cloth Masks and Face Coverings:

- They should cover your nose and mouth.
- They can be worn when out in public where you may be near people like grocery stores or pharmacies.
- They are not a substitute for social distancing. People should still keep 6 feet of distance and stay home to the greatest extent possible.

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Mooresville, NC 28115  
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Environmental Health  
349 N. Center Street  
Statesville, NC 28677  
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- They can be made from household items with common materials at low cost.
- They should not be used on children under the age of 2, people who have trouble breathing or anyone who would be unable to remove the covering without assistance.
- They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use. You can wash the face covering in the washing machine.
- After you remove a cloth covering from your face, you should be careful not to touch your face and wash your hands immediately after removing.

Due to the short supply of personal protective equipment (PPE), surgical masks and N95 respirators should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders. A healthcare worker or first responder should continue to use surgical masks and N95 respirators since these provide better protection from infectious diseases.

The CDC provides guidance on instructions for how to make a cloth face covering for both sew and no sew options and using materials like fabric, t-shirt, and bandana. Guidance can be found at the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

The Iredell County Health Department wants to continue to encourage people to protect themselves to help lessen the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. There are many ways we can all protect ourselves and our communities.

#### How to Protect Yourself:

- Follow the Stay at Home Order
- Practice social distancing, which means avoiding gatherings of more than 10 people while keeping 6 feet or more between you
- Frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw it in the trash
- Stay home when you're sick
- Keep distance from others who are sick
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces in common areas like doorknobs, remotes, light switches, tables and handles
- Wear cloth mask or face covering when out in public where you may be around people like grocery stores or pharmacies and still try to practice social distancing, wash your hands and keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes

Residents with general questions about COVID-19 can call the NC Division of Public Health Coronavirus Call Line 24 hours a day/7 days a week: **2-1-1**. Nurses and pharmacists from the North Carolina Poison Control are available to answer questions.

Additional information related to COVID-19 can be found at the following resources:

NC DHHS-DPH: [epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/diseases/2019nCoV.html](http://epi.dph.ncdhhs.gov/cd/diseases/2019nCoV.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

Iredell County Health Department: <https://nc-iredellcounty.civicplus.com/1383/Coronavirus-COVID-19>

North Carolina Public Information Hotline: 2-1-1 or 888-892-1162 or text COVIDNC to 898211

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