



**COLORADO**  
Governor Jared Polis

## Colorado Mask Campaign

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**On Friday, April 3, Governor Polis announced the Colorado Mask Campaign encouraging Coloradans to wear non-medical cloth face coverings when leaving the home for essential business.**

### **When does the campaign start?**

The campaign starts Friday April 3.

### **When does the campaign end?**

We want every Coloradan to have a non-medical mask (e.g., scarf, bandana) by April 15. Everyone should wear a mask when outside of their home for necessary activities.

There is new evidence that people can spread the virus while being asymptomatic. Although staying at home is still the best way to prevent the spread, when you need to leave your house for necessities or if you work in a critical, non-medical field, wearing a bandana or non-medical mask made of cloth on your face can help prevent the spread to others if you have the virus. Because of the lack of medical-grade masks that are so crucial to protecting health care providers on the front lines, it is paramount that these types of masks not be sought after or used by the general public.

### **Why is this campaign necessary? What is the science behind it?**

The CDC has announced that up to 1 in 4 people infected with COVID are asymptomatic and spreading infected respiratory droplets. If people wear face coverings, it will help reduce spread.

Many people are not aware that they are spreading COVID-19 because they don't have symptoms, or their symptoms are mild. A face covering helps lower the risk of spreading by someone who may be sick and not realize it.

### **Is wearing a mask encouraging or is the Governor requiring Coloradans wear it?**

The Governor is encouraging all Coloradans to wear a cloth face coverings when going out in public. **Please DO NOT go out and buy surgical masks** - those are needed by our healthcare workers and first responders. If this recommendation leads to a run on surgical masks, taking them from those who need them, then we have hurt more than helped.

### **In the past, health experts have said that healthy people should not wear a mask? Why now? what has changed?**

With up to 25% of people not knowing they may be carrying COVID-19, it is a good idea to have everyone wear a face covering to reduce the spread.

Face coverings are also a good reminder not to touch your face. Wearing a face covering will prevent you from touching your own face and make you aware of how often you are tempted to touch your nose and mouth.

**Will this take away from health professionals that desperately need the supplies?**

No, we are prioritizing N95 and surgical masks for front-line health care professionals only. We are recommending everyone else wear cloth face coverings.

**What's the difference between a cloth mask and a N-95? Do they work the same, and if not, why should people wear a cloth mask?**

N95 respirators look like a face mask but are designed to prevent transmission of at least 95% of droplets. They are manufactured with a special material and have a tight seal around the nose and mouth. Surgical masks are also made from a special material, but they don't provide a seal around the nose and mouth, so they are not as effective as N95 masks. Both N95 and surgical masks must be reserved for health care workers and first responders to protect them when they come into contact with COVID-19 patients.

Cloth face coverings can be worn to reduce the spread of large droplets. They can help prevent "community spread" when people travel from their homes for necessary activities like grocery shopping.

**If N-95 masks are better to prevent the spread, why not provide those for critical workers like grocery store workers?**

There is a global shortage of N-95 masks. The state is working with urgency to acquire all the PPE and N-95 masks we need for all of our essential workers, beginning with front-line health care workers.

**Is this campaign for the whole state?**

Yes.

**How will this be enforced?**

We are asking Coloradans to do this voluntarily and to help their neighbors. As a community we must work together to protect our most vulnerable community members, sustain our health care system for the months ahead and slow the spread of COVID-19. It is good for all of us.

**When you say people should wear for necessary activities what does that mean?**

CDPHE has outlined a number of necessary activities that people can engage in outside their homes while the Governor's Stay at Home Executive Order remains in place. These activities include things like grocery shopping, purchasing supplies for your residence, taking care of a family member or loved one at another location, and recreation close to home. You can find the complete description of Necessary Activities in [Public Health Order 20-24](#).

Remember, Social Distancing Requirements must be observed at all times, even when engaging in Necessary Activities.

**Should people wear a mask to walk their dogs or workout?**

We want to make it the norm to wear a face covering for the duration of the COVID-19 response, so please wear your non-medical mask whenever you leave your home. When you are walking your dog you should. When it comes to exercising use discretion.

**Should kids wear a mask?**

Yes, they should wear ones that fit their face. This is a great way to engage kids in helping on COVID. Have them decorate their masks, use fun fabrics, and encourage their friends to do it.

**What about homeless people, will they be provided masks?**

We are working with private partners who are donating at least 100,000 masks a week and will distribute those masks to homeless service providers who can help us get masks to every Coloradan, including people experiencing homelessness

**What if I can't afford a mask, where can I get one?**

There is no need to buy a mask! You can repurpose a t-shirt, a dish towel, a bandana, or other fabric item into a mask that fits your face! There are great instructions online at [coloradomaskproject.com](http://coloradomaskproject.com).

**Will businesses be required to provide masks for their employees?**

We ask that all critical businesses ask their employees to wear face coverings, and we hope that they help provide them. We all must work together to protect our most vulnerable community members, sustain our health care system for the months ahead and slow the spread of COVID-19.

**If someone is wearing a mask, do they still need to be 6ft apart?**

Yes! This is a new PART of our infection reduction strategy. Maintaining 6ft of physical distance is still absolutely important!

**Can I go out to buy fabric to make masks?**

No, please don't. There is no reason to purchase new supplies. Instead use fabric you already have. A t-shirt, a dish towel, or a bandana is perfect. Staying home is still #1! Or order online.

**What if someone does not know how to sew or does not have a sewing machine?**

If you cannot sew a face covering from fabric you have, you should use a bandana or other fabric you have to tie around your face when you are out in public. Go to [coloradomaskproject.com](http://coloradomaskproject.com) to get ideas.

**Are you doing this because of the President's announcement?**

We are doing this because it is the best thing for Colorado. This should help in our effort to increase physical distancing between people, and therefore reduce the spread of the disease. We all should be committed to do everything we can to not only keep vulnerable people safe, but help prevent our doctors and nurses from being overwhelmed by this pandemic.