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**COUNTY OF DELAWARE**  
**GOVERNMENT CENTER BUILDING**  
201 W. FRONT STREET  
MEDIA, PENNSYLVANIA

www.DelcoPA.gov

Department of Public Relations  
Adrienne Marofsky  
Director  
Office: 610-891-4943  
Cell: 610-306-4497  
MarofskyA@co.delaware.pa.us

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## **Residents Urged to Wear Masks when Leaving their Homes**

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf is urging all Pennsylvanians to wear a mask any time they leave their homes for life-sustaining reasons. To be clear, the Governor and Secretary of Health are urging everyone to reserve N-95 and paper masks for healthcare workers, and therefore are recommending the use of a cloth or homemade mask for everyday use.

The statewide stay-at-home order remains in effect and wearing a mask should not be considered an alternative. Travel outside of the home should still be limited to essential tasks such as work, a trip to the grocery store or pharmacy. During the stay at home order residents are welcome to go outside but should adhere to the same guidelines that apply to indoors including social distancing and wearing a mask. When using a trail, at a park or walking in your neighborhood- stay at least 6 feet away from others and wear a cloth or homemade mask.

Because homemade masks protect others from the droplets created by the wearer, it is important that as many people as possible wear these masks when leaving their homes. This helps prevent those who may be infectious but are only mildly symptomatic or not symptomatic from spreading the virus to others in the community.

The best practices for making and wearing fabric or cloth masks include:

- Consider buying materials online to avoid exposure in public places
- Before putting on a mask, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water
- The mask should fit snugly around the mouth and nose
- If the mask has a metal wire- it should be fitted snugly to the bridge of the nose
- Avoid touching the mask while using it, if you do wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Make the mask from two layers of tightly woven 100% cotton fabric
- Discard or wash the mask after every use
- The mask should not be worn damp or when wet from spit or mucus
- To remove the mask: remove it from behind, do not touch the front of mask
- The wearer should immediately wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing the mask.

Guidance and instructions on how to make your own mask can be found here:  
<https://www.chesco.org/4458/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Face-Mask-Guidance>

Wearing a mask alone is not effective in reducing transmission of COVID-19.

The below recommendations should be followed by everyone to help slow the spread of and minimize exposure to COVID-19.

- Practice social distancing: stay at least 6 feet apart from others when in public both indoors and outdoors
- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer when soap and water is not immediately available
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow