

**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Health Officials Change Position on Face Mask Effectiveness

Following new guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Humboldt County Health Officer Dr. Teresa Frankovich is now recommending members of the public wear face coverings when leaving their homes on essential business.

The recommendation comes after emerging information that suggests a possible benefit to having members of the public mask when outside their home.

“Because of this, I am recommending that all members of our community use face coverings of some kind when leaving their home for essential activities,” Dr. Frankovich said. She added that these face coverings may include a cloth mask, bandana, scarf or similar garment and should be used in conjunction with the terms of the shelter order and social distancing guidelines that stipulate a minimum of six feet between people.

Due to a national shortage of masks needed for health care workers and first responders, surgical masks, unexpired N95 masks, and other essential protective equipment is not recommended for everyday use at this time unless you already have a supply at home for personal use.

While there is still no evidence that face covering protects the person wearing it from getting infected, it may help reduce the spread of virus from people who do not yet know they have the infection.

“Because symptoms may be mild and not everyone will even realize they are sick, they may unintentionally infect other people,” Dr. Frankovich said. “Wearing a face covering will help reduce the chance that you are spreading the infection to others. If everyone in our community wears a mask, it can help to keep us all safer.”

For more information about face covering, please read our [Face Covering FAQ](#).

For the most recent guidance related to COVID-19, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or [cdph.ca.gov](https://www.cdph.ca.gov). Local information is available at [humboldt.gov](https://www.humboldt.gov) or during business hours by contacting [covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us) or calling 707-441-5000.

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