



Friday, May 1, 2020

Facial coverings required in public

Be patient with community, do NOT call 911 to report noncompliance

With 20 percent of COVID-19 confirmed cases involving people without symptoms, Bi-County Health Officer Dr. Phuong Luu today issued a public health order requiring facial coverings in public when social distancing is not possible.

“The risk of unwitting transmission to another is high,” said Dr. Luu. “As we begin to allow increased activity in the community, it will be the responsibility of all of us to keep our faces covered to protect each other.”

Recognizing that compliance with the order will not be universal despite the science behind it, local officials were quick to ask residents to be kind to each other, and to recognize there may be medical or work reasons why someone should not wear a facial covering. And, please, don’t call 911. Local law enforcement agencies have more emerging priorities.

Children younger than 2 years old should not wear facial coverings at all, Dr. Luu said, due to the threat of suffocation. A face covering should also not be used by anyone who has trouble breathing, or is otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

“We hope people visiting local businesses will respect the social distancing and facial covering requirements, so everyone has a safe experience,” Dr. Luu said. “This is a matter of personal responsibility.”

A face covering is made of cloth, fabric or other soft or permeable material, without holes, that covers the nose, mouth, and chin. A facial covering should not hide or obscure the eyes. Examples of facial covering includes a scarf, bandana, or neck gaiter.

Under the public health order, all residents shall wear face coverings while indoors other than their residence, and outdoors, and when social distancing of 6 feet or more cannot be achieved between persons from separate households. When a person is alone or with only their household members, they do not need to wear a facial covering.

They are not required while engaging in outdoor recreation such as walking, hiking, bicycling, or running. However, each person engaged in such activity must comply with social distancing requirements including maintaining at least 6 feet of separation from all other people not part of the same household.

For additional information, see the Frequently Asked Questions section on Face Coverings at bepreparedyuba.org, and bepreparedsutter.org.