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State of Rhode Island

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

21-69

June 18, 2021

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SECOND
SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION –
REQUIRING MASKS OR CLOTH FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, Executive Order 20-02 was issued for a declaration of a state of emergency due to the dangers to health and life posed by COVID-19 and that Order has been extended to remain in effect through at least July 9, 2021;

WHEREAS, the use of masks and cloth face coverings is an important public health approach to slow the transmission of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the executive order requiring cloth face coverings in public was first issued on April 14, 2020 and, as amended, restated, and extended, remains effective;

WHEREAS, on May 13, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidance on generally not requiring mask wearing or physically distancing for fully vaccinated people;

WHEREAS, reduced rate of COVID-19 related deaths along with increasing rates of COVID-19 vaccination in Rhode Island and projected vaccination coverage continue to

make possible additional incremental relaxation of public health and safety restrictions;
and

WHEREAS, in consultation with the Director of Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), I sought to update certain mitigation measures to continue maintaining public health and safety with appropriate, less restrictive means.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANIEL J. MCKEE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island, pursuant to Article IX of the Rhode Island Constitution and the Rhode Island General Laws, including, but not limited to, Title 30, Chapter 15, and Title 23, Chapter 8, do hereby order and direct the following:

1. Any person, whether indoors or outdoors, shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face covering, with the following exceptions:
 - a. No person shall be required to wear a mask or cloth face covering (i) who is under two years of age, (ii) whose health would be damaged thereby, or (iii) who is developmentally unable to comply, including young children who may not be able to effectively wear a mask or cloth face covering.
 - b. Any person who has received all recommended dose(s) of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or World Health Organization and at least 14 days have elapsed since the administration of the final dose (“fully vaccinated”) is not required to wear a mask or cloth face covering, except as otherwise required by this Executive Order and other applicable state or federal laws or regulations.
 - c. A mask or cloth face covering is not required for any person when:
 - Consuming food or drink;
 - A face covering would impede communication by or with a person who has a hearing impediment;
 - Working alone in an office or at a job site, or when workers can easily, continuously, and measurably maintain three feet of distance in a workplace;
 - Speaking at a live interview or to a live audience when no person is within six feet of the person speaking;

- In a vehicle alone or with members of the same household;
 - Undergoing a medical or dental procedure; or
 - Outdoors.
2. All persons must continue to wear masks or cloth face coverings when providing or using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing, or similar service or any means of mass public transit, or while within an enclosed or semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area. Unless otherwise specified, employees, customers and attendees shall wear a mask or cloth face coverings as required in paragraph 1 above. Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) employees may prevent any person from boarding a RIPTA vehicle if, after being offered a free mask, such person refuses to wear one.
 3. Nothing shall prevent a person from wearing a surgical grade mask or other more protective face covering if the person is already in possession of such equipment. All persons are strongly discouraged from using higher-level respiratory protection, such as N95s, to meet the requirements of this Order; N95s and other high-level respiratory protection should be reserved for healthcare workers or others who have a federal or state requirement to wear one to perform their work safely.
 4. A CDC tutorial for do-it-yourself cloth face coverings is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
 5. The Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) shall promulgate and enforce any rules and regulations necessary to implement this Order.
 6. The Director of RIDOH or her designees are further authorized to assess civil penalties for violation of this Order. Such civil penalties shall be in addition to any other penalties authorized by law.
 7. Nothing herein shall prohibit or otherwise prevent a business, organization, operation, or governmental establishment from developing, adopting and/or implementing a mask or face covering policy that is more restrictive than this Executive Order.

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This Executive Order, superseding Executive Order 21-63, shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect through July 17, 2021 unless renewed, modified, or terminated by a subsequent Executive Order.

So Ordered,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. McKee", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Daniel J. McKee

Governor