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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**City of Menasha Public Health Department
Issues Public Health Advisory Reaffirming the Use of Face Coverings**

(Menasha, Wis.) – April 1, 2021. Effective immediately, the City of Menasha Health Department is issuing a Public Health Advisory which stipulates that everyone age five (5) and older wear a face covering or mask when in any enclosed building where other people, except for members of the person’s own household or living unit, could be present, and when social distancing of six (6) feet or more cannot be maintained or guaranteed.

On the one year anniversary of its first confirmed case of COVID-19, the City of Menasha reaffirms its Public Health Advisory on the Use of Face Coverings. Yesterday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court voted to invalidate the Emergency Order and Mask Mandate issued by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. “While the decision ended the state-wide order, the underlying threat of COVID-19 remains present in our community. Over 10 percent of our community has had the disease. It has resulted in over 100 Menasha residents hospitalized and 19 fatalities. In fact, yesterday we were notified that a variant of SARS-CoV-2, (the virus that causes COVID-19), was identified in Menasha. We do not want another surge, especially while undertaking the vaccination process,” stated Nancy McKenney, Public Health Director for the City of Menasha.

The health department is working diligently to provide vaccination clinics at the Menasha City Center. While Menasha’s [COVID-19 Activity Level](#) has decreased, it is still high, or what the CDC refers to as substantial transmission. “We can’t afford to abandon proven prevention methods during this pivotal time in combating the disease,” McKenney stated.

“The City of Menasha is concerned about the safety and well-being of our citizens and those working in the City,” stated Mayor Don Merkes. “A majority of our citizens have yet to be vaccinated and we want to protect those who can’t currently be vaccinated, such as children under 16,” he added.

Effective immediately, the advisory incorporates elements of the statewide order, and will remain in effect until further notice. It is critical that residents and businesses continue to follow mitigation strategies and take part in vaccination efforts to lower community transmission of COVID-19.

“This virus knows no geographic boundaries, it is highly contagious. We now have vaccinations, along with common sense mitigation strategies (masking, distancing, hand hygiene, and avoiding gatherings) to prevent transmission. Let’s ensure we come out on the other side of this pandemic healthy.” stated Mayor Merkes.

Menasha Public Health Advisory Reaffirming the Use of Face Coverings

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Menasha Health Department advises wearing a face covering that covers the nose and mouth when in public, businesses, health care settings, waiting lines, and public transportation.

People can cover their faces a variety of ways to comply with this advisory:

- Masks can be either manufactured or homemade.
- Masks can be reusable or disposable.
- Masks can have inner filter pockets.
- Clear masks or cloth masks with a clear plastic panel may be used to facilitate communication with people who are hearing impaired or others who need to see a speaker's mouth to understand speech.
- Medical masks and N-95 respirators fulfill the requirements of the Advisory.

The following does not meet the advisory:

- Masks worn in a way that does not cover both the mouth and nose
- Face shields or goggles (only worn to supplement a mask that meets above required attributes)
- Scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, or bandanas
- Shirt or sweater collars (e.g., turtleneck collars) pulled up over the mouth and nose.
- Masks made from loosely woven fabric or that are knitted, i.e., fabrics that let light pass through
- Masks made from materials that are hard to breathe through (such as vinyl, plastic, or leather)
- Masks containing slits, exhalation valves, or punctures
- Masks that do not fit properly (large gaps, too loose or too tight)

Individuals are advised to wear face coverings while in someone else's home if not of the same family group, especially if either is not vaccinated. Exceptions are made for certain activities: eating and/or drinking at a restaurant, but during those activities, 6 feet distancing of individuals not from the same household or living unit should always be followed. Some people may be exempted if they have a physical, mental, or developmental condition that prevents them from wearing a mask.

If someone is unable to wear a mask or face covering in a business due to a condition or disability, request reasonable accommodations, like a curbside pickup or a delivery option.

Children ages 2 through 4 are highly encouraged to wear masks in public, and children age 5 and older are advised to wear masks. If your child is not able to wear a mask, then only bring them to places where it is necessary, so your child does not get or spread COVID-19 to others. In addition to wearing a mask, these actions will help protect both you and others from COVID-19:

- **Get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible.** Complete your vaccination series. It takes two weeks after your final dose to be considered fully vaccinated. Visit www.wcvaccine.org for more information.
- **Stay home if you are sick or feel off.**
- **Stay home if you do not need to go out.** Working from home, virtual gatherings, and using curbside or delivery ordering are still the safest and best options to protect yourself and others.
- **Regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and/or use hand sanitizer.**
- **Stay 6 feet away from other people.** Respiratory droplets are expelled into the air when other people cough, sneeze, talk and breathe. Stay 6 feet from others to lower chances of encountering the virus.
- **Assume you have encountered COVID-19 if you go out.** Watch for symptoms like fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. If you have symptoms, call your doctor, get tested.

This advisory should not be used to justify harassment or harm another person who is either wearing or not wearing a face covering. Individuals may have disabilities or conditions prohibiting mask wearing. Thank you for your commitment to keeping our community safe as we navigate these coming months. This advisory remains in effect until further notice.



Nancy McKenney, MS, RDH, Public Health Director

Dated this 1st day of April 2021.

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