COVID-19 response now requires MASKS in the Worksite

Kent County employees must now wear a face covering while working within 6 feet of other staff and in areas open to the general public according to the 13th modification of Governor John Carney’s State of Emergency declaration. Social distancing must also continue. The new requirement has been incorporated into the County’s Business Continuity Response plan.

For purposes of the Governor’s Order, a “face covering” means a soft cloth or fabric covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, not a medical-grade mask. The term “face covering” includes, without limitation, scarves and bandanas. The face covering should be comfortable, so that the wearer can breathe comfortably through the nose and does not have to adjust it frequently, so as to avoid touching the face. A “medical-grade mask” means an N95, KN95, surgical, or other mask that would be appropriate for a health care setting. For as long as medical grade masks such as N95 masks and surgical masks are in short supply, members of the public should not purchase those masks as face coverings under this Order; those medical grade masks should be reserved for health care providers and first responders. Wearing a medical-grade mask satisfies any requirement in this Order to wear a face covering, but all Delawareans are urged to reserve medical-grade masks for use by health care workers and first responders.

A video showing how to make a face covering and additional information about how to wear and clean face coverings may be found at the website of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html.

In consultation with Levy Court, the Kent County leadership team has begun to initiate preparations for reopening facilities to the public and returning most employees to worksite when safe and permitted to do so. Some of these actions may include continued use of masks and social distancing as well as plexi-glass dividers, floor markings, infrared temperature checks upon entry, staggered work shifts, relocated work stations, etc. Due to the changing nature of this crisis, employees should stay informed by checking the County’s website/Employee Portal and County email often.

In the meantime, Kent County’s day-to-day operations continue with essential employees reporting for duty each day. The Levy Court sincerely appreciates the dedication and patience of all Kent County employees during these challenging times.

Exempt employees (Directors, Asst. Directors, upper level Supervisors) continue to manage the workload, check on and instruct staff, conduct meetings, engage the
public, respond to queries, fill in the gaps, etc. with many continuing to report to the worksite every work day.

Critical staff continues to step up when called upon in person or via technology to complete vitally important work such as payroll processing, tax & fee deposits, invoice payments, purchase approvals, grounds & park maintenance, building inspections, plans review, teleconference meeting preparation, technology solutions, training, clerical needs, deed recordings and so much more. The citizens continue to expect our services and we continue to provide them to the best of our ability.

For those few employees unable to fully contribute at this time, we ask that you stay safe & healthy. See you again very soon.

Please remember that all employees must continue to follow mandates of Delaware Governor John Carney’s state of emergency declaration and modifications. The County requires the following, especially for those that continue to report to the worksite:

1) All employees must immediately report to their Department Head and the Personnel Director if they:
   (a) have been diagnosed with COVID-19,
   (b) are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19,
   (c) have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, or
   (d) reside or intimately interact with persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are reasonably suspected to have COVID-19, or have symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

   Symptomatic employees must stay home and cannot come to work until they are free of fever (CDC considers a fever to be 100.4 °F or greater using an oral thermometer), or signs of a fever, and any other symptoms of acute respiratory illness for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees who have been told they must be isolated or quarantined are prohibited from work on-premises until cleared by DPH or a medical professional.

2) All employees must check themselves for a fever each day before reporting to the worksite using a reliable personal thermometer. If a fever is apparent, then the employee must notify their supervisor and stay home.
3) All employees **must** hand wash with warm water and soap or use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the worksite.

4) All employees **must** follow cough and sneeze hygiene guidelines (cough/sneeze into bent elbow or tissue).

5) All employees **must** endeavor to maintain 6 feet of space between co-workers and other persons at all times per State and CDC guidelines and recommendations for social distancing (the exception being healthcare workers using appropriate PPE).

6) All employees **must** wear a face covering when working within 6 feet of co-workers or the public.

The County's COVID-19 response continues to designate public safety, wastewater employees, and custodians as essential. Levy Court has acted to limit equal time off/extra half pay for essential employees to a maximum of 80 hours for this response.

FLSA exempt/salaried staff continue to report operationally. Other hourly employees "critical" to business continuity are required to report to the worksite or via technology to perform duties as needed (please be ready to report when called upon).

Critical hourly employees may not work overtime unless specifically authorized by the County Administrator and total timesheet recorded time should not exceed 35/40 hours per work week (unless physically worked time/overtime has been authorized). Employees must continue to take at least a 30-minute lunch break and two short 15-minute breaks if reporting in person or continuously (without interruption) via technology.

Employees must track all time physically worked during the response for possible reimbursement by the Federal government. In addition, all time spent physically teleworking must be recorded on a timesheet with project completion milestones documented and reported regularly to supervisors.

If you have any questions, please forward them through the proper Chain of Command. Upon resolution, the answer will be shared with all Department Heads for communication to affected staff.

**Please stay safe & healthy!**

*(posted 04/27/20)*
Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings
Cloth face coverings should—
- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings
CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?
Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?
A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a cloth face covering.

How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?
Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

cdc.gov/coronavirus
Sewn Cloth Face Covering

Materials
- Two 10"x6" rectangles of cotton fabric
- Two 6" pieces of elastic (or rubber bands, string, cloth strips, or hair ties)
- Needle and thread (or bobby pin)
- Scissors
- Sewing machine

Tutorial
1. Cut out two 10-by-6-inch rectangles of cotton fabric. Use tightly woven cotton, such as quilting fabric or cotton sheets. T-shirt fabric will work in a pinch. Stack the two rectangles; you will sew the cloth face covering as if it was a single piece of fabric.

2. Fold over the long sides ¼ inch and hem. Then fold the double layer of fabric over ½ inch along the short sides and stitch down.

3. Run a 6-inch length of 1/8-inch wide elastic through the wider hem on each side of the cloth face covering. These will be the ear loops. Use a large needle or a bobby pin to thread it through. Tie the ends tight.
Don't have elastic? Use hair ties or elastic head bands. If you only have string, you can make the ties longer and tie the cloth face covering behind your head.

4. Gently pull on the elastic so that the knots are tucked inside the hem. Gather the sides of the cloth face covering on the elastic and adjust so the mask fits your face. Then securely stitch the elastic in place to keep it from slipping.
Quick Cut T-shirt Cloth Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials
- T-shirt
- Scissors

Tutorial
1. [Diagram of T-shirt]
   7-8 inches
2. [Diagram showing cutting a small square]
   Cut out
   6-7 inches
   Cut tie strings
3. [Diagram of face with strings]
   Tie strings around neck, then over top of head.

Bandana Cloth Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials
- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20")
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

Tutorial
1. [Diagram of bandana]
   Fold bandana in half.
2. [Diagram showing folding bandana]
   Fold top down. Fold bottom up.
3. [Diagram of bandana with rubber bands]
   Place rubber bands or hair ties about 6 inches apart.
4. [Diagram showing folding side of bandana]
5. [Diagram showing final shape of bandana]
6. [Illustration of bandana on a face]