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For Immediate Release:

(Jefferson County, Kansas- February 17, 2021) **Mask Mandate Extended to March 1, 2021.**

The Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners in the regular Commission meeting Tuesday voted 2-1 to continue the Mask Mandate in Jefferson County until March 1, 2021, as set out in the Governor Kelly Executive Order 20-52.

Jefferson County continues to see a decreasing trend in the cases in the county for the week of January 31, 2021 and a decreasing trend in cases for the week of February 7, 2021 as reported by the Health Department. The Percentage Positive for the week of January 31 and the week of February 7 is 5.0% as compared to the previous reporting period which was 6.8%.

This Mask Mandate for Jefferson County took effect on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 starting at 12:01 a.m. and is extended until 11:59 p.m. on March 1, 2021. This will be re-evaluated at that time.

As of Monday, there has been one thousand, five hundred and ninety (1,590) total cases of COVID-19 in Jefferson County with sixty-five (65) hospitalized, five thousand two hundred and twenty-two (5,222) negative tests and twenty-eight (28) deaths have been reported. In the past ten (10) days there have been a total of 36 individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in Jefferson County.

The Jefferson County Health Department continues to monitor residents in quarantine and those who are pending results per the Kansas Department of Health and Environment surveillance system.

Restating the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-52 is as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Kansas, including the authority granted me by K. S.A 48-924 and K. S.A 48-925(b) and (c)(11), in order to ensure that Kansans can to help keep each other safe and keep our businesses open as we restore our economy, I hereby direct and order the following:

1. Effective at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, July 3, 2020, any person in Kansas shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or other face covering when they are in the following situations:
 - a. Inside, or in line to enter, any indoor public space;

- b. Obtaining services from the healthcare sector in settings, including but not limited to, a hospital, pharmacy, medical clinic, laboratory, physician or dental office, veterinary clinic, or blood bank, ⁽¹⁾
- c. Waiting for or riding on public transportation or while in a taxi, private car service, or ride-sharing vehicle;
- d. While outdoors in public spaces and unable to maintain a 6-foot distance between individuals (not including individuals who reside together) with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity.

(1) Unless directed otherwise by an employee or healthcare provider.

- 2. Also effective at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, July 3, 2020, all businesses or organizations in Kansas must require all employees, customers, visitors, members, or members of the public to wear a mask or other face covering when:
 - a. Employees are working in any space visited by customers or members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time;
 - b. Employees are working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others;
 - c. Employees are working in or walking through common areas, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities;
 - d. Customers, members, visitors, or members of the public are in a facility managed by the business or organization; or
 - e. Employees are in any room or enclosed area where other people (except for individuals who reside together) are present and are unable to maintain a 6-foot distance except for infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity.
- 3. The following are exempt from wearing masks or other face coverings in the situations described in paragraphs 1 and 2:
 - a. Persons age five years or under—children age two years and under in particular should not wear a face covering because of the risk of suffocation;
 - b. Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a face covering—this includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a face covering could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;

- c. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- d. Persons for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
- e. Persons who are obtaining a service involving the nose or face for which temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service;
- f. Persons who are seated at a restaurant or other establishment that offers food or beverage service, while they are eating or drinking, provided they maintain a 6-foot distance between individuals (not including individuals who reside together or are seated together) with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity;
- g. Athletes who are engaged in an organized sports activity that allows athletes to maintain a 6-foot distance from others with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity;
- h. Persons who are engaged in an activity that a professional or recreational association, regulatory entity, medical association, or other public-health-oriented entity has determined cannot be safely conducted while wearing a mask or other face covering;
- i. Persons engaged in an activity or event held or managed by the Kansas Legislature;
- j. Persons engaged in a court-related proceeding held or managed by the Kansas Judiciary; and
- k. Persons engaged in any lawful activity during which wearing a mask or other face covering is prohibited by law.

4. Definitions:

- a. "Mask or other face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face. A mask or other face covering can be made of a variety of synthetic and natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen. Ideally, a mask or other face covering has two or more layers. A mask or other face covering may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.
- b. "Public space" means any indoor or outdoor space or area that is open to the public; this does not include private residential property or private offices or workspaces that are not open to customers or public visitors.

5. Nothing in this order shall restrict, limit, or supersede the Secretary of Health and Environment's authority to make isolation, quarantine, or other orders restricting movement as necessary to respond to escalating or worsening conditions in any local jurisdiction.
6. Local governments retain authority to issue and enforce equally or more restrictive orders or provisions and retain any authority to issue or enforce isolation or quarantine orders or other orders as necessary to respond to escalating or worsening conditions in any local jurisdiction. Counties may also exercise authority granted by K.S.A. 48-925 as amended by 2020 special Session House Bill 2016, sec. 33.
7. As currently permitted pursuant to state law, the Attorney General, county attorneys, and district attorneys enforcing this order should use their discretion and consider the totality of the circumstances as they determine appropriate enforcement actions.
8. In order to more accurately track and assess statewide status of COVID-19 cases, private labs conducting testing for COVID-19 shall report both positive and negative tests to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.
9. The Four Tribes of Kansas (Iowa Tribe, Kickapoo Nation, Prairie Band Potawatomie Nation, and Sac & Fox Nation) retain any authority to regulate through their respective tribal councils for the health and welfare of their population.
10. This order should be read in conjunction with other executive orders responding to the COVID-19 pandemic that are still in effect and supersedes any contrary provisions of previous orders.

In order to protect yourself and those residents in Jefferson County who are at risk for severe illness we encourage you to:

- **Wear a mask when in public.**
- **Maintain social distance of six (6) feet or greater.**
- **Continue good hand hygiene, and limit hand contact with the face, wash hands often.**
- **Stay home if you are ill, contact your medical care professional.**
- **Boost your immune system- eat a balanced diet, get adequate sleep, increase exercise, and reduce stress.**

For updated COVID-19 information, please go to:

Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment's (KDHE) <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/>

Center for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Jefferson County www.jfcountyks.com

If you have any questions, please call the Jefferson County Health Department at 785-403-0025.

Crystal VanHoutan, RN, Administrator, Jefferson County Health Officer
