

Exeter, New Hampshire, Mask Ordinance Press Release and Frequently Asked Questions

During their August 31, 2020 meeting, the Exeter, New Hampshire Select Board (“Select Board”) enacted “Emergency Ordinance #2020-1, Requiring the Wearing of Face Coverings Under Certain Conditions Within the Town of Exeter” (“Ordinance”).

This Ordinance is effective on September 2, 2020. It will be in effect for sixty one (61) days after September 2, at such time it will be reviewed by the Select Board to either continue or rescind the face covering requirement.

Q: To whom does this Ordinance apply?

A: Both Exeter, New Hampshire residents and anyone visiting Exeter from another location.

Q: Is anyone exempt from this Ordinance?

A: Yes, children under the age of ten (10) and any person with a pre-existing medical condition for whom a face covering poses further medical risk are exempt from this Ordinance.

Q: Where am I expected to wear a face covering?

A: Non-exempt persons are only expected to wear face coverings in designated areas in Exeter, New Hampshire’s commercial district. Please refer to the shaded areas of the map provided to supplement the Ordinance.

Q: When am I expected to wear a face covering?

A: Importantly, face coverings are most necessary whenever you cannot maintain at least a six (6) foot distance between yourself and another passerby.

Q: Why am I expected to wear face coverings whenever I cannot maintain at least a six (6) foot distance between myself and another passerby?

A: The goal of this Ordinance is to educate the public about the benefits of face coverings in preventing the spread of COVID-19, as well as to protect the public. Back on April 20, 2020, the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services Bureau of Infectious Disease Control published a paper that explained the purpose and proper use of face coverings. That paper can be found here: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdes/covid19/covid-mask-guidance.pdf>

Q: Am I going to be punished for not wearing face coverings in designated areas within Exeter, where six (6) foot social distancing is not possible?

A: The goal of this Ordinance is to educate the public about the benefits of face coverings in close contact with another passerby. Representatives of the town Health Department will respond to instances of non-compliance with masks and educational materials. Additional penalties will be used as a last resort, and only in instances that are (1) repeated, (2) considered intentional, and (3) a potential risk to others in our community.

Q: What are the penalties if not wearing a face mask is considered repeated, intentional, and a potential risk to others?

A: The initial penalty will be a verbal or written request to comply. In response to further intentional and risky non-compliance, a \$25 fine will be imposed. A \$50 fine will be imposed for third and each subsequent offense.

Q: What should I do if I observe another person not complying with this Ordinance?

A: This Ordinance was not designed for civilian enforcement, nor was it intended to increase confrontations within our community. The Select Board affirms its commitment to allowing qualified Health Department officials to enforce this Ordinance. Please do not approach or confront members of our community for their real or perceived non-compliance with this Ordinance. The Select Board also does not condone or encourage confrontations that might be construed as public shaming or cyber bullying.

Town of Exeter NH Mask Ordinance Map 8-31-2020

