



## Monroe County Health Department

Monroe County, Indiana

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### HEALTH BOARD CREATES REGULATION, HEALTH ORDER TWEAKED

**BLOOMINGTON:** The Monroe County Health Officer, Dr. Thomas Sharp, and the Monroe County Health Department (MCHD) tweaked the latest public health order requiring face coverings and limiting gathering sizes for clarity and to better align with a public health regulation issued by the Monroe County Health Board.

The updated health order and health regulation are available on the Monroe County website at [www.co.monroe.in.us](http://www.co.monroe.in.us).

Governor Holcomb released an executive order 20-37, <https://www.in.gov/gov/2384.htm>, today requiring Indiana residents to wear a face covering over the nose and mouth beginning on 7/27/20 until 8/26/20 while in a space open to the public, with some exceptions for social distancing and other exemptions. While largely similar to the Monroe County order, the state order also provides special face covering requirements for K-12 schools.

In the event that the county and state face covering orders differ, residents will be required to follow the most restrictive guidance concerning their situation.

Monroe County residents are still following the Governor Holcomb's Back on Track Indiana Plan except where Monroe County requirements are added.

The Health Board regulation was issued on 7/22/20 to enhance enforcement capabilities for the health order. Although the health regulation allows the order to be enforced by any local or state law enforcement personnel, the health department's intent is not to criminalize violations but to gain voluntary compliance.

"Our main focus will be on businesses and events that are intentionally non-compliant," states Health Department administrator, Penny Caudill.

Caudill encourages the use of a "we not me" mentality and stresses the need for civility when dealing with others who may not be wearing a face covering. "This regulation does not give an individual the authority to intimidate those who do not comply. Help us inform and provide education on the benefit of these measures as they will help us reduce the spread of this virus."

The updated exemptions include:

- Children who are two or younger
- Those who are hearing or speaking impaired where a face covering interferes with communication
- Those unable to wear a face covering for a documented physical, medical or health-related reason.
- While in a health care setting if the provider believes a face covering will impede services
- When alone in an indoor space, such as an office, or in a work-space and physically distanced from all other co-workers (must wear mask if can't socially distance)
- When outdoors and not maintaining 6 feet of distance from others (not including immediate family)
- When traveling in personal vehicles
- When working in a job where a face covering provides a safety risk as determined by government workplace safety regulations
- When incarcerated
- When seated at an establishment that serves food and/or drink. However, face coverings must be worn when not seated at the table, including entering and exiting
- When doing indoor exercise that is incompatible with a face covering, including swimming
- When exercising outdoors, including running, jogging, walking, biking and swimming if in groups of less than 25
- Emergency situations if you lack the time or means to access a face covering

County restrictions regarding gathering size limits and restrictions on restaurant and bar seating go into effect at 12:00 p.m. on 7/31/20.

The City of Bloomington Mayor, John Hamilton, signed an executive order on July 20, 2020 for those within the city limits that accelerates the County's order on gatherings and restaurant/bar seating restrictions to start on 7/23/20 at noon and end when the County order goes into effect.

Per the health order, private or in-home, non-commercial gatherings are limited to 50 people, including fraternities and sororities on or off the Indiana University campus. Commercial gatherings or those held at public venues will be limited to 100 people if held inside or 150 people if held outside.

Those wanting an exemption to the gathering size limit can visit the Monroe County Health Department webpage at [www.co.monroe.in.us/HealthDepartment](http://www.co.monroe.in.us/HealthDepartment) and complete an online application once the county restrictions go into effect. Exemptions may be limited based on the level of community disease spread at the time of request.

Restaurants, bars and nightclubs must provide and require seating for all patrons and may not provide bar top service. Outside seating is encouraged as much as possible and party sizes are limited to 10 per table. Establishments must increase air ventilation to maximum capacity or at least 6 air changes per hour.

Businesses and public accommodations open to the public are responsible for ensuring patrons comply with the health orders or may face fines or other sanctions. Most businesses in Monroe County, including churches, must ensure patrons can maintain social distance while using their indoor or outdoor facilities.

Complaints regarding Covid-19 can be submitted online starting 7/31/20 at [www.co.monroe.in.us/HealthDepartment](http://www.co.monroe.in.us/HealthDepartment).

The new Order will stay in effect until repealed or replaced by Dr. Sharp.

The Governor's Executive Order 20-36:Back On Track Indiana: Continuation of Stage 4.5" is available on the IN.gov website at <https://www.in.gov/gov/2384.htm>.

For more detailed information on the Governor's Back on Track Indiana Plan, visit <https://backontrack.in.gov/>.

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