

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-21

A Resolution concerning

**REQUIRED USE OF FACE COVERINGS IN CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF
COVID-19**

WHEREAS, The Board of Commissioners, by virtue of the authority vested in it under the Annotated Code of Maryland, Public Safety Article, Sections 14-101, 14-102 & 14-111, to preserve the public safety and render all required and available assistance vital to the security, well-being and health of the citizens, did declare a Charles County State of Emergency on August 10, 2021, September 14, 2021, October 12, 2021 and November 2, 2021, to include a mask mandate under certain circumstances as described in the Board of Commissioners' Resolution 2021-16; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners, based on the data which had shown the sharp decline in COVID-19 transmissions, positivity rate, hospitalizations, ambulance transports, and COVID related deaths since the introduction of the State of Emergency, believed that this data no longer supported the need for a continuation of the State of Emergency in Charles County; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, Health General Article, Section 3-306, the Charles County Health Officer is the executive officer and secretary of the County Board of Health; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, Health General Article, Section 3-201, the Board of Commissioners is ex officio the Board of Health for the County; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer continues to report to the Board of Commissioners concerning the status of COVID-19 in the County, to include positivity rates, testing rates, and vaccination rates, as they relate to the State of Maryland averages. Further, the Health Officer has advised that COVID-19 continues to significantly impact the public health of Charles County citizens as variants of the coronavirus with a higher transmissibility are found in those tested, and has advised that there is an increasing percentage of Charles County citizens who have been vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Commissioners continues to receive COVID-19 related updates from the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center, that also point to concerning rates of COVID-19 positive patient admissions, COVID-19 mortality analyses, and continued pressure placed on the hospital and other medical resources as a result of the coronavirus; and

WHEREAS, The Health Officer for Charles County has advised that community transmission of COVID-19 is rated as "SUBSTANTIAL" in Charles County, and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends vaccination efforts and masking in indoor public spaces in communities with "SUBSTANTIAL" or

“HIGH” community transmission; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners and Dr. Diana Abney, the County’s Health Officer, strongly recommend that all Charles County citizens continue to wear a mask, social distance, wash their hands and practice all Covid mitigation strategies.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the data provided to the Board of Commissioners, to include the County’s continued status as “SUBSTANTIAL” community transmission, and in recognition that the conditions caused by COVID-19 are hazardous and may threaten or imperil the health of the citizens of Charles County, we, the Charles County Board of County Commissioners, as the governing body of Charles County and the County Board of Health, for the prevention of nuisance or cause of disease inside of County owned and operated facilities, do hereby **ORDER**:


1. The institution of a mask mandate in Charles County Government operated buildings and public transportation. This mask mandate requires the use of Face Coverings, meaning a covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, inside of any Charles County Government Building, including Senior Centers, Recreational Centers, Correctional Centers, Indoor facilities at Public Parks, Golf Courses, Swimming pools (except when swimming), etc.; while on Public Transportation such as VanGo, or inside of any other building owned and operated by Charles County and open to and allowing entrance of the public. However, this ORDER does not require persons to wear Face Coverings:
 - i. if, due to a bona fide disability or medical condition, it would be unsafe for the person to do so;
 - ii. to the extent wearing a Face Covering would impede communication by or with persons who have a hearing impairment or other disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
 - iii. if wearing a Face Covering would subject the person to an unsafe working condition, as determined by federal, state, or local occupational safety regulators or workplace safety guidelines;
 - iv. to the extent wearing a Face Covering would make it impossible to receive services requiring access to the face, mouth, or head;
 - iv. while consuming food or beverages;
 - v. while swimming or engaging in other physical activities where the use of a Face Covering is likely to pose a bona fide safety risk;
 - vi. while operating any Public Transportation conveyance, provided that the person is (1) the sole operator of the conveyance, and (2) located in a separate compartment that is off-limits to riders; or
 - vii. to the extent it is necessary to observe the person’s entire face to verify such person’s identity for bona fide security purposes;
 - ix. who are under 5 years of age;
 - x. at any outdoor venue owned and operated by the County; and

IT IS FURTHER, ORDERED, that Resolution 2021-20, Required Use of Face Coverings To Reduce the Spread of Covid-19 is hereby terminated and no longer in effect; and

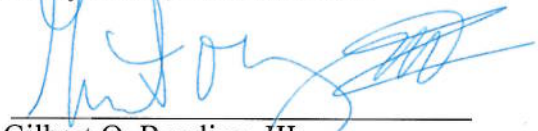
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Resolution and rule shall continue in effect for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days from the date of adoption, and expiring at 4:59 PM on the date of January 14, 2022, unless renewed by the Board of County Commissioners.


ADOPTED this 30th day of November, 2021.

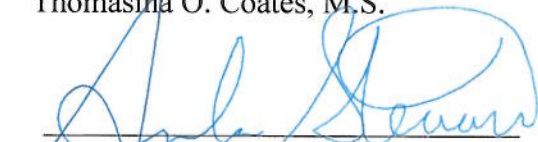
County Commissioners of
Charles County, Maryland


Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President



Bobby Rucci, Vice President


Gilbert O. Bowling, III


Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.


Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

ATTEST:


Carol DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners