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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Shelby County Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE MASK REQUIREMENT FOR ALL INDOOR PUBLIC SETTINGS

New requirement to go into effect Friday, August 20, 2021 at 7:00 a.m.

SHELBY COUNTY, TN – The Shelby County Health Department announced today it will amend Health Order No. 24 to add a face mask mandate for all indoor public settings as the average number of new daily cases of COVID-19 in Shelby County surpasses 638. All individuals aged 2 and over, regardless of their vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask as of Friday, August 20, at 7:00 a.m., while indoors in public settings.

Masks are required in all indoor public settings, including bars and restaurants, common areas of hotels, multi-residential buildings, and private clubs. Similar to previous mask mandates, masks may be removed at restaurants, bars and other eating/drinking establishments by patrons when they are seated. Masks can also be removed for certain activities that require their removal, such as while one is engaged in cardio activity inside a gym, certain grooming activities (e.g. facials), or theatre performances. The Department recommends using outdoor settings while engaged in any strenuous exercise and maintaining a 6-foot distance between yourself and others who do not live in your household.

Masking remains optional in outdoor settings, where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is lower. Masks are recommended for unvaccinated individuals in crowded outdoor settings.

“With the highly transmissible Delta variant causing case rates to increase, now is the time to re-institute this measure to prevent further spread and save lives,” said Shelby County Health Officer Bruce Randolph. “We continue to track the data closely. We will revert back to recommendations as improvements are made in rates of COVID positivity and cases, hospitalizations, and death or by attaining at least 70 percent of Shelby County residents age 12 and older who are fully vaccinated.”

“We must have a universal mask mandate in Shelby County, and it needs to happen quickly,” said Health Department Director Michelle Taylor. “The studies show that if we at least did that today we could see a slowing in the transmission rate in 5 to 7 days. The mask mandate is absolutely needed to give our hospitals and the residents of Shelby County a fighting chance against the Delta variant.”

The Shelby County Health Department will hold a webinar for businesses on Friday, August 20th at 12:00 p.m. to provide an overview of the mask mandate. Click this link to register for the webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_g_Flnj7mSeOMfm13FVk0AA.

“Shelby County businesses have been excellent partners with the Department in efforts to keep their customers and employees safe,” said Director Taylor. “We must once more do what is necessary to save lives. Residents need to continue to follow the public health guidance: get vaccinated, stay home when sick, and wear masks.”

Businesses seeking more information and guidance should visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/workplaces-businesses/index.html>.

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