

ORDER NO. 2020-10

**SAN JUAN COUNTY LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER ORDER
REGARDING COVID-19; AMENDING GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FACE
COVERINGS; AMENDING PORTIONS OF ORDER 2020-4**

WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by a virus that spreads easily from person to person which may result in serious illness or death and has been classified by the World Health Organization as a worldwide pandemic;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has spread throughout Washington State, including San Juan County, significantly threatening the life and health of persons in San Juan County;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 can spread from people without symptoms, including persons who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic, to others;

WHEREAS, in the absence of interventions to limit the spread of the disease, for every case of COVID-19 in the community we can expect 2.5 more cases in the community, leading to a dramatic increase in the number of cases over a short period of time;

WHEREAS, there are currently no known medications or vaccinations that are effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as social distancing and the wearing of cloth face coverings, are presently the only effective measures to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Inslee issued Proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a State of Emergency for all counties throughout the state of Washington as a result of COVID-19 outbreak in the United States and confirmed person-to-person spread of COVID-19 in Washington State;

WHEREAS, the Governor's Proclamations 20-05 et seq. and accompanying guidance (collectively referred to as "Statewide Orders") provide a statewide framework for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, Governor Proclamation 20-25, "Stay Home -Stay Healthy," adopted on March 23, 2020, placed statewide limitations on gatherings, business and leisure activity, and travel;

WHEREAS, the Governor established a phased approach known as "Safe Start Washington" beginning on May 5, 2020, which provides for gradual increases over time in allowable business and leisure activity, travel, and gatherings with an emphasis on simultaneously minimizing the health impacts of COVID-19, reducing the risk of COVID-19 to Washington's most vulnerable populations, and preserving capacity in the health care system;

WHEREAS, the “Stay Home –Stay Healthy” approach was replaced effective June 1, 2020 with the “Safe Start –Stay Healthy” adopted in Governor Proclamation 20-25.4 and was most recently updated on July 24, 2020 by Governor Proclamation 20-25.7 (the plan as it now exists or may later be amended is referred to as the “Safe Start Plan”);

WHEREAS, the two primary modes of transmission of COVID-19 are surface contact routes and respiratory droplets from infected individuals, transmission more rarely occurs through aerosol spread in poorly-ventilated enclosed spaces;

WHEREAS, respiratory droplets from infected individuals can be transmitted not only through coughing or sneezing but also through other actions including talking or breathing;

WHEREAS, widespread use of cloth face coverings to cover the mouth and nose, also known as non-surgical face masks, is recommended by the CDC to help control the spread of COVID-19 by reducing the transmission of respiratory droplets from infected individuals into the environment from asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic individuals, particularly in public spaces where social distancing is not possible or unpredictable;

WHEREAS, requirements for the wearing of cloth face coverings by non-employees inside businesses in San Juan County, including day cares, preschools, summer camps, and similar businesses, were adopted by San Juan County Health Officer Order No. 2020-4 on May 15 and amended by Order No. 2020-6 on May 25, 2020;

WHEREAS, Health Officer Order Nos. 2020-4 and 2020-6 did not establish face covering requirements for schools in anticipation of future statewide school requirements;

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Statewide Orders, the Order of the Secretary of Health 20-03 adopted on June 24, 2020 regarding face coverings as subsequently amended, and Governor Proclamation 20-25.6 and 20-20-25.7 adopted on July 7 and July 24, 2020 together establish detailed requirements for the wearing of face coverings or other protective equipment for employers, employees, and individuals in public settings;

WHEREAS, requirements for the wearing of cloth face coverings in schools were adopted in Governor Proclamation 20-09.2 by reference to the Department of Health K-12 Schools Summer 2020 Guidance document and the Re-opening K-12 Fall 2020-2021 Guidance document;

WHEREAS, although devices known as “face shields” may protect the eyes, nose and mouth from some contamination from respiratory droplets that are propelled toward the wearer and protect others from some droplets that are propelled away from the wearer, face shields generally are not enclosed, allow for smaller respiratory droplets to pass around the shield to the wearer or shared airspace, and have not been proven to provide the level of protection afforded by cloth face coverings;

WHEREAS, face shields can be made to include a cloth element reaching to the body and enclosing the airspace around the face so that there is no open space for respiratory droplets

to freely pass into shared airspace, such devices provide the same functions as cloth face coverings and provide greater protection than face shields alone, furthermore, face shields worn in addition to face masks provide some additional protection by helping to prevent the contamination of the face covering itself and may of use to reduce risk of infection when worn in combination (face shield and face covering together);

WHEREAS, the use of a face shield alone is inadequate as a substitute for a cloth face covering, however, the use of face shields that include a cloth element with at least two layers enclosing the airspace around the face (“enhanced face shields”) as an alternative to cloth face coverings is appropriate to protect the public health and to provide an alternative that will be easier to use for certain persons and allow facial expression and lip reading;

WHEREAS, RCW 70.05.070 requires and empowers the local health officer to take such action as is necessary to control and prevent the spread of any contagious or infectious diseases within the jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, WAC 246-100-036 requires the local health officer, when necessary, to institute disease control measures as he or she deems necessary based on his or her professional judgment, current standards of practice, and the best available medical and scientific information;

WHEREAS, Order of the Secretary of Health 20-03, as amended, acknowledges that local health officers are authorized to adopt more protective measures and that individuals must comply with the more protective requirement regarding face coverings; and

WHEREAS, in order to control and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in San Juan County and protect our most vulnerable populations, in my professional judgment, based on the current standards of practice and the best available medical and scientific information, the following measures regarding school settings and the use of enhanced face shields are necessary;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Frank James, Local Health Officer for San Juan County, under the authority of RCW 70.05.070, RCW 43.20.050, and WAC 246-100-036, and on the basis of the foregoing recitals, make the following ORDER:

San Juan County Health Officer Order 2020-4 is amended to include the following new section, Face Shields and Enhanced Face Shields:

Face shields alone are inadequately protective and may not be used as a substitute for cloth face coverings when cloth face coverings are required by this or any other health officer order. Face shields that include a cloth element with at least two layers reaching to the body and enclosing the airspace around the face so that there is no opening for respiratory droplets to freely pass into shared airspace (“enhanced face shields,” or “combination face shields/face masks”) may be worn as an alternative to cloth face coverings whenever cloth face coverings are required by this or any other health officer order.

This order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until further order of the County Health Officer following a determination that the wearing of face coverings is no longer necessary.

All other provisions of Health Officer Order No. 2020-4 remain in full force and effect.

DATED this ___23___ day of ___September___, 2020 at ___11:05___ am.



FRANK JAMES, M.D.
SAN JUAN COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER