



For Immediate Release

October 20, 2020

Due to the overwhelming rise in COVID-19 cases across Christian County and subsequent increase in the number of hospitalized residents, the City of Ozark Mayor Rick Gardner has enacted an executive Mask Covering Order* to take effect Wednesday October 21, 2020 at 12:01 AM to help slow the spread across the county. An executive order from the Mayor does not require public comment or for the Board of Aldermen to cast a vote and was announced accordingly and in compliance with (lawyer words here) at the regularly scheduled October 19, 2020 Board of Aldermen meeting.

The Mask Covering Order is set to expire December 31, 2020 at 11:59 PM unless otherwise extended, rescinded, superseded or amended.

“The decision to enact this Mask Covering Order was not taken lightly and a great deal of consideration went into this decision,” Mayor Gardner said. “We considered that hospitals in our area are overwhelmed with patients, and the Ozark School District is seeing an increase in quarantined students and teachers. We need to do our part in helping slow the spread of COVID-19 and support our neighboring cities such as Springfield, Nixa, and Branson that have also enacted individual Masking Orders. After taking in consideration the thoughts of individual board members, and consulting with local officials I believe this is the right time. I am asking City of Ozark residents to wear their masks in accordance with this order so that we may see a healthier Ozark in the near future.”

Under the ordinance, everyone over the age of 11 will be required to wear a face covering when in public spaces in the city limits of Ozark. Exemptions are made for those with a medical condition, mental health condition or any disability that prevents wearing a face covering, and those who are hearing impaired and people communicating with individuals who are hearing impaired.

Other exemptions for when inside Ozark city limits include:

- While you are indoors or outdoors and when able to maintain a distance of at least six feet from others
- When engaged in the following activities;
 - Exercising
 - Eating or Drinking only when inside or outside dining area of a restaurant or other food or beverage-serving establishment
 - Giving a speech, presentation, performance, or other similar activity to a group of individuals indoors provided that the presenter or performer maintains six feet of distance while not wearing a mask
 - Obtaining a service that requires temporary removal of the covering such as a dentist appointment
- If you are asked to by:
 - A law enforcement officer
 - Medical provider including medical personnel
- When necessary to confirm the identity of a person
- When federal or state law prohibits wearing a face covering or requires the removal of it.

Enforcement

It is recommended that businesses place signs on their entrances to notify customers/visitors of the mask requirement. The City of Ozark has created signs that all businesses can print and place on their doors, or businesses can create their own signage, located on our website at OzarkMissouri.com.

The Ozark Police Department will work to educate any violators of the ordinance before citations are issued. Individuals and business owners, operators or persons who otherwise control their business that fail to comply with the provisions of this order can be punished with a fine not to exceed \$100.00. Each individual within or working for the entity is considered a separate violation.

Violations can be reported by emailing coronavirus@ozarkmissouri.com or calling 417-720-9854. If a customer at a business refuses to wear a face covering and is causing immediate danger to the business's staff, call 911.

For questions about the ordinance, please visit the COVID-19 page on the City of Ozark website OzarkMissouri.com.

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*Executive Order- is an official directive or command from the Mayor. On March 18, 2020 the Board of Alderman of the City of Ozark approved an Ordinance No 20-017, delegating authority to the Mayor, after consultation with appropriate city, county and state officials as determined within his discretion, to issue orders amending the original declaration of civil emergency.