



News Release

Immediate Release

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Pinellas County COVID-19 ordinance still in effect

- *Face coverings still required in indoor public places*
- *Bar and restaurant customers must be seated to be served*

A Pinellas County ordinance put in place to facilitate safe reopenings while slowing the spread of COVID-19 remains in effect Monday, following the announcement of Phase 3 of the state's *Safe, Smart, Step-by-Step* phased plan Friday.

[Executive Order 20-244](#), signed Friday by Governor DeSantis, does not impact the local ordinance Pinellas County adopted, including the face covering requirement for indoor facilities and that customers be seated to be served at a bar or restaurant.

While the governor's order suspends the collection of fines and penalties associated with COVID-19 enforced upon individuals, it does not restrict counties and municipalities from enforcing rules on businesses.

Face Coverings

The countywide [ordinance 20-14](#) took effect in June and remains in effect through the duration of Pinellas County's State of Local Emergency.

The ordinance defines a face covering as a material that covers the nose and mouth and remains affixed or a face shield. A cloth face covering, or mask, may be factory-made or sewn by hand and can be improvised from clothing or other household fabric items.

- Citizens must wear a face covering in indoor public places within Pinellas County, although the Board provided several exceptions. Among them:
 - The County ordinance mandate cannot conflict with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- The ordinance does not apply if a person is strictly adhering to social distancing and there are 10 or fewer people in the location who are also maintaining social distancing.
- It does not apply to governmental entities such as schools, courthouses or city halls, although those entities are encouraged to develop procedures to protect employees and the public.
- If a person is under age 18, that person's use of a face covering to comply with the ordinance is left to the discretion of that person's parent, guardian or an accompanying adult.
- Religious rituals such as various forms of singing are permitted under the ordinance provided that social distancing is strictly maintained.
- The ordinance does not prohibit exercising while social distancing, such as in a gym, without a face covering.
- Retail employees must wear face coverings unless working in an area of the business that is not open to the customers and has social distancing measures in place.

Bars and Restaurants

[Ordinance 20-14](#), passed by the Board of County Commissioners in June, has specific requirements for restaurants and bars that continue to be in effect in conjunction with the state's limitations. The ordinance will remain in effect until the Board of County Commissioners repeals it or allows the county's State of Local Emergency declaration to expire.

- Patrons must be seated to be served drinks for on-site consumption.
- Patrons must wear a face covering except when seated and consuming food or a drink and distanced six feet from other parties.
- Employees must wear a face covering whether directly or indirectly preparing food or drinks, whether having customer contact or not, and whether indoors or outdoors.
- Tables/bar stools must be spaced so that individuals and their companion(s) are separated six feet from others. Tables are limited to 10 guests.
- Standing areas are not allowed. Patrons waiting to be seated must remain distanced in groups of no more than 10 people.
- Bars and restaurants must establish rules that encourage social distancing, hand-washing and other protective measures based on CDC guidance.
- Businesses are reminded that the ordinance does not affect their obligations under federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Public Meetings

While the governor's executive order Friday did not address public meetings, [Executive Order 20-69](#), which authorized virtual meetings, is currently set to expire at 12:01 a.m. Oct. 1.

To read County ordinances and state orders, and access a wide array of COVID-19 information, visit <https://covid19.pinellascounty.org/>.

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