



Farmington Valley Health District

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April 7, 2020

To: Emergency Management Directors, Town CEOs, School Superintendents, First Responders

From: Farmington Valley Health District

Re: **COVID 19: Guidance for use of Face coverings**

In accordance with new CDC guidance, the Farmington Valley Health District is recommending that individuals wear a cloth face mask or covering when going outside where there is likely to be interaction with the public. This is especially important in areas such as grocery stores and pharmacies. This is in conjunction with social distancing measures.

Why are members of the community being asked to wear masks now, when they were previously told not to unless they were sick, or at high risk of serious complications?

- Recent studies indicate that a significant portion of COVID 19 positive individuals do not exhibit symptoms (asymptomatic) and those who eventually display symptoms can transmit the virus before they are symptomatic (pre-symptomatic). Wearing a mask will help to reduce the possibility of asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic spread.
- Transmission of this virus is predominantly through droplet spread of saliva through coughing, sneezing and talking and homemade masks can stop these large droplets.
- In addition to using other social distancing measures, there are areas where these measures are difficult to maintain and a face covering can further reduce exposure.

We also recommend that any municipal workers that have interaction with the public also wear cloth face masks or coverings. This might include staff handing out or delivering meals, dial-a-ride drivers, staff conducting inspections. This guidance does not replace any discipline specific guidance that has been issued examples include health care workers and first responders.

Reinforcement of social distancing, hand washing, staying home when sick, and staying away from others who are sick is critically important for everyone. The CDC provides additional information and suggestions on how household items can be made into face coverings. This guidance DOES NOT replace or supplant previously published guidance for healthcare workers, first responders, or health care facilities. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

This guidance is for the general public. We all have a role to play in reducing virus spread within our communities!

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us for more information at 860-352-2333.