

## WEARING OF MASKS

In the May Guidelines for the Resumption of Public Worship, the following was one of the fundamental tenets: “In all circumstances, appropriate social distancing and the **regulations put forth by public health authorities must be observed.**”

Governor DeWine issued an order effective July 8 at 6:00 p.m. mandating face coverings while in public in high risk, “Red Alert Level 3” counties. In our archdiocese, these include Butler, Hamilton and Montgomery counties. As described in the Ohio Department of Health press release, people in these counties are required to wear a face covering:

- In any indoor location that is not a residence;
- When outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their household; or
- While waiting for, riding, driving, or operating public transportation, a taxi, a private car service, or a ride-sharing vehicle.

The order does not apply to children under the age of 10 or any other minor who cannot safely wear a face covering.

Until such notice, or until the order expires, Mass attendees in Butler, Hamilton and Montgomery counties **must** wear a mask while in church. In any event, strongly encouraging Mass attendees to wear a mask is consistent with our emphasis on public safety and the common good.

Even though the order exempts “officiants” of religious services, for this archdiocese, a mask must still be worn by the priest celebrant while processing in or out of Mass or while distributing Holy Communion. Additionally, priest celebrants are encouraged to wear a mask, even in the sanctuary, when unable to maintain social distancing from others.

For more assistance, please [contact the ODWS](#).

