



Mayor of Markham

For immediate release

July 9, 2020

My mask. Your safety. York Region mandates the use of masks in public indoor spaces.

Statement from Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Wearing masks and face coverings in public indoor spaces will be mandatory in York Region. I applaud York Regional Council for making this bold decision in the name of public safety. Today's move goes beyond recommending face coverings to requiring their use in public indoor spaces.

The decision requires operators of indoor establishments and organizations to implement a policy prohibiting people from entering the premises if they are not wearing a mask or face covering. Exemptions include children under the age of five, people with underlying medical conditions and persons who are unable to place or remove a mask or face covering without assistance.

I presented a motion on June 25, 2020 requiring face coverings in public indoor spaces; and today York Regional Council has unanimously endorsed the Medical Officer of Health's recommendation to issue an instruction consistent with other public health units, under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

The onus is on all of us to do our part. We all have a responsibility. Education rather than enforcement will be the principle objective. We are relying on the goodwill of the public and businesses to get on board, get masks on and continue the efforts to beat the pandemic.

I have been calling for a consistent approach and today's decision sets the ground rules for all municipalities across York Region. The community expects us to do everything we can to ensure public safety and to stop community spread. As the economy continues to reopen and we move toward recovery, this is a prudent step in that direction.

When worn properly, masks can act as an important visual reminder that this pandemic is not over. It has also been shown that there is a greater adherence to physical distancing and handwashing when masks are worn. Our collective efforts have made a difference and this is not the time to let our guard down.

Today's decision is necessary to continue to protect public safety and ensure a successful economic recovery. It also is a reflection of public sentiment. We have been hearing loud and clear that most people want the extra layer of protection that masks offer. Masks work.

This new policy will go into effect across York Region as of Friday, July 17, 2020 and will stay into effect until November 30, 2020 with a possible extension.



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Examples of indoor public spaces and establishments:

- Premises or any portion thereof which are used as a place of business for the sale or offering for sales of goods and services, and includes a mall or similar structure, which contains multiple places of business.
- Places of Worship
- Community Centres
- Cultural Establishments (libraries, galleries, museums)
- Community services agencies providing services to the public
- Retail stores, shopping malls/centres
- Grocery stores
- Banquet halls and event centres/spaces
- Indoor sporting venues and concert and entertainment venues.
- Common areas of hotels, motels, short-term rentals

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