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Citizens of Montague County:

Late today my office received the current number of active COVID 19 cases in our county. There were multiple positive tests reported today which, when added to our previous active cases brings our total number of active cases well above the 20 count limit. Therefore, as per Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-29, the county no longer falls under the exemption for face coverings. The governor's order states all counties which are unable to affirmatively opt out of the face covering requirement shall:

"Wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside a commercial entity or other building or space open to the public or when in an outdoor public space, wherever it is not feasible to maintain 6' of social distancing from another person not in the same household." Exceptions to this requirement are as follows:

- Any person younger than 10 years of age
- Any person with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering
- Any person consuming food or drink or seated at a restaurant to eat or drink
- Any person exercising outdoors or engaging in physical activity outdoors while maintaining a safe distance for others not in the same household
- Any person driving alone or with passengers who are part of the same household as the driver
- Any person obtaining a service which requires temporary removal of the face covering for security surveillance, screening, or a need for specific access to the face such as visiting a bank or while obtaining a personal care service involving the face, but only to the extent necessary for the temporary removal
- Any person in a swimming pool, lake, or similar body of water
- Any person voting, assisting a voter, serving as a poll watcher, or actively administering an election (wearing a face covering is strongly encouraged)
- Any person providing or obtaining access to religious worship (wearing a face covering is strongly encouraged)
- Any person giving a speech or a broadcast or to an audience

Further, this increased number of active COVID cases affects the allowed occupancy rate of businesses in our county. Per Governor's Executive Order GA-28, this drops the current occupancy rate of 75% back to 50%.

When our count drops below 20 and remains there for 30 days, I can apply for an attestation again. Until that time, we will follow the Governor's Executive Orders.

As we are aware, COVID 19 issues and numbers change daily. My office has been and will continue to stay in daily contact with our county health officer. As we have learned, this virus does have the capability of causing serious health issues to some individuals. Please continue to be vigilant, responsible, and use common sense regarding your health, your family's health, and the health of your neighbors.

As I have stated before, many of the COVID 19 issues, reporting of active case numbers, Governor's Executive Orders, and Governor's Proclamations can become confusing. I would encourage you to read the Executive Orders and Proclamations which can be found at gov.texas.gov/opentexas.

I will continue to keep you updated as I receive orders or any information.

Thank you.



Kevin L. Benton
County Judge
Montague County, Texas

