



## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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### NOTICE

#### **RE: ADDITIONAL WORK-RELATED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT – MOUTH AND NOSE COVERING DUE TO COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.**

ALL COUNTY OF HIDALGO EMPLOYEES:

Pursuant to Chapter 121 of the Texas Health & Safety Code, the County has appointed Dr. Ivan Melendez as the Hidalgo County Health Authority, along with Eddie Olivarez the Hidalgo County Health & Human Services Director, together they have the authority to administer state and local laws relating to public health within the jurisdiction of the County of Hidalgo.

The County is under a Declared Local State of Disaster due to COVID-19 public health emergency. Dr. Melendez and Mr. Olivarez have advised the County that covering an individual's nose and mouth can diminish the chance of cough droplets being spread in the air, and that wearing even a homemade mask, scarf, or bandana will reduce the propensity for people to touch their faces thereby partially preventing asymptomatic individuals with COVID19 from unknowingly spreading the disease.

As such, in addition to practicing physical distancing and personal hygiene measures, the County of Hidalgo shall mandate that all County Employees wear a facial covering to prevent the spread of COVID-19, during the Declared State of Public Health Emergency.

All County Employees are required to wear some form of covering over their mouth and nose, such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchief at all times when: entering into or inside of any County premises, including parking lots, offices, buildings, or outdoor property.

This Additional Work Related Standard of Conduct shall not apply to Employees that are: engaging in individual permissible work related outdoor activity; driving alone in a County owned vehicle; working alone in a separate single office space; or Employees that are not covering for consumption (food/drink) purposes. However, Employees are still expected to observe any other applicable safety measures during these times.

MEDICAL GRADE MASKS ARE NOT REQUIRED AND ARE DISCOURAGED TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH USE MAY DISRUPT THE SUPPLY OF MEDICAL GRADE MASKS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ESSENTIAL WORK FORCE. COVERING NOSE AND MOUTH CAN ONLY DIMINISH THE CHANCE OF EXPOSURE AND PARTIALLY PREVENT ASYMPTOMATIC PERSONS WITH COVID-19 FROM UNKNOWINGLY EXPOSING AND OR SPEADING THE DISEASE.