



**RESOLUTION NO. 6501**

**RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY; RECOMMENDING THE USE OF FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC IN THE CITY OF RIVER FALLS**

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Wisconsin, Pierce and St. Croix Counties and the surrounding community in recent weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the effectiveness of face coverings at reducing the spread of COVID-19 is highest when masks are widely used by people in public settings; and

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is primarily spread via respiratory droplets when people are in close proximity with each other and people that are infected speak, sneeze, or cough; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals can be infected and contagious before or even without developing symptoms (pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic), and the evidence suggests a significant number of infections may be transmitted in this manner; and

**WHEREAS**, health officials are increasingly urging non-medical workers to wear non-medical grade cloth face coverings to help curb the spread of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, mask-wearing and social distancing are important tools to slow the spread of COVID-19 in River Falls, thereby, keeping hospitals stable, saving lives, and keeping local businesses open; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of River Falls pursuant to Wisc. Stat. §323.11 may declare, by ordinance or resolution, an emergency existing within the local unit of government and is provided with emergency powers and authority under Wisc. Stat. §324.14(4) to order, by ordinance or resolution, whatever is necessary and expedient for the health, safety, protection, and welfare of persons within the local unit government in the emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 24, 2020, the Common Council of River Falls adopted Resolution No. 6463 declaring a state of emergency in the City of River Falls; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds that encouraging the use of facial coverings in all indoor spaces within the City, subject to conditions, is now necessary to mitigate the spread of COVID-19; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Common Council of the City of River Falls that:

The Common Council of the City of River Falls, based on the recommendations of public health experts and responsive to a serious threat to the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, hereby strongly encourages its residents, businesses and visitors as follows:

**Section 1. Purpose.** The purpose of this resolution is to educate, urge, persuade, and strongly encourage individuals to wear face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Section 2. Findings.** The recitals set forth above are hereby adopted as findings of fact for this resolution. For the reasons set forth in those recitals, the City Council finds that this resolution is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by reducing the spread of COVID-19 within the City of River Falls and more broadly.

**Section 3. Face Coverings Strongly Recommended.** Every individual is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when in public.

- A. It is important that cloth face masks be worn properly in order to avoid contaminating the hands or face of the user. Before putting on a mask and after removing a mask, an individual should clean their hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water and change masks when moist, and wash after use. While in use, avoid touching the mask. Worn masks may be contaminated with infectious agents.
- B. Face covering use does not replace the need to practice physical distancing (staying away from ill people, staying home, and avoiding all non-essential activities and contact with others), frequent handwashing, and avoiding touching of the face.

**Section 4. Exceptions.** The face covering directive that is effectuated by this resolution shall not apply to the following individuals in the City of River Falls:

- A. Any child aged two (2) years or less.
- B. Any child aged 12 years or less unless parents or caregivers supervise the use of face coverings by such children to avoid misuse.
- C. Any individual who has a physical disability that prevents easily wearing or removing a face covering.
- D. Any individual who is deaf and uses facial and mouth movements as part of communication.
- E. Any individual who has been advised by a medical professional that wearing a face covering may pose a risk to that individual for health-related reasons.
- F. Any individual who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
- G. Any individuals in settings where it is not practical or feasible to wear face coverings when obtaining or rendering goods or services to the extent necessary to obtain or render such goods or services including but not limited to the receipt of dental services or medical treatments.
- H. Whenever federal, state, or local law otherwise prohibit wearing a face mask or where it is necessary to evaluate or verify an individual's identity.
- I. Any individuals exercising, while maintaining social distancing.
- J. Any individuals eating or drinking.
- K. Any individuals who religious beliefs prevent them from wearing a face covering.

**Section 5. Applicability.** The areas and establishments to which this directive applies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Every person living, working, visiting or doing business in the City of River Falls, including within government buildings under the jurisdiction of the City, is strongly encouraged, in the absence of social distancing, to wear a face covering in any indoor location other than inside a home or residence.

- B. All businesses should consider the importance of requiring business invitees to wear a face covering where social distancing is not available to minimize the spread of the COVID19 virus.

**Section 6. Compliance and Enforcement.**

- A. Violation of this resolution does not create grounds for residents or law enforcement to stop, detain, issue a citation, arrest, intimidate, or harass individuals who do not comply with it. This resolution should be used to educate, urge, persuade, and strongly encourage individuals to wear face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- B. The City Council strongly encourages all people in the City of River Falls to support the health and well-being of the community by complying with this resolution without delay.
- C. The City Council authorizes its staff to initiate, lead, participate and/or fund public education and promotional campaigns intended to accomplish wide-spread utilization of mask and face coverings.

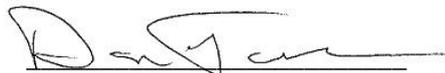
**Section 7. Effective Date; Expiration.** This resolution shall become effective upon adoption and will remain in effect so long as the City of River Falls' existing State of Emergency remains in effect, unless specifically amended or rescinded by an emergency proclamation or action of the City Council. Unless rescinded, this resolution will be reviewed by the City Council in light of data regarding the spread of COVID-19 in the City and St. Croix and Pierce Counties following the adoption of this resolution, at the Council's regularly scheduled meetings in August of 2020, and thereafter at least monthly.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that violation of this resolution is not a criminal offense, however;

- A. Any individual who fails to comply with this resolution may be asked to leave by an authorized representative of the business or organization. If the individual refuses to leave, this resolution authorizes the enforcement of trespassing statutes and any other ordinances and statutes the individual may violate.

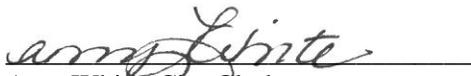
Passed and adopted by the Common Council of the City of River Falls.

*Dated this 28<sup>th</sup> day of July 2020.*



Dan Toland, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amy White, City Clerk