

DeKalb County Passes Mask Ordinance to Stop the Spread of COVID-19



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DeKalb County

G E O R G I A

DECATUR, Ga. –Today, the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners approved CEO Michael Thurmond’s amendments to the mask ordinance commissioners passed July 14. The original mask ordinance was authored by Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson.

“I would like to recognize and thank Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson for her advocacy and leadership in encouraging DeKalb residents to wear masks to protect the community,” CEO Thurmond said.

The amended ordinance, which CEO Thurmond asserts is “consistent” with Gov. Brian Kemp’s executive order, requires DeKalb residents over age eight “to utilize a face covering or mask which covers the nose and mouth when in any public place.”

“We must do everything within our authority to stop the spread of this deadly virus,” CEO Thurmond said. “According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, wearing face coverings or masks, maintaining social distance and washing our hands frequently are the best ways to protect ourselves and the general public.”

The ordinance emphasizes the importance of community education and outreach. A written warning will be given for first violations. Those who violate the ordinance a second time will be required to attend a virtual or in-person COVID-19 prevention class “to understand the public health ramifications of this crisis and appropriate public health responses to mitigate the spread of this disease.”

Anyone who fails to attend the class will be fined \$250.

Additionally, the DeKalb mask ordinance contains a unique “conscientious objector” clause that exempts any person from penalty who swears in a written affidavit to be presented in court, that they will not wear a mask for health-related, religious or ethical reasons.

The county will also distribute 20,000 masks to local brick-and-mortar small businesses which agree to implement a “No Mask, No Service” policy.