

Archived - (8/21/21) Summit County Issues Public Health Order for Elementary Schools



Spotlight *Posted on August 21, 2021*

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[\(8/21/21\) DECLARATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC
HEALTH EMERGENCY PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER](#)

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Summit County Health Director Dr. Phil Bondurant has issued a Public Health Order outlining metrics for requiring face-coverings in Summit County elementary schools. Under the order, face-coverings would be required if any individual elementary school campus reaches a two-percent 14-day COVID-19 positivity rate among the total number of students, staff and faculty. The order goes into effect at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, August 25.

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“We recognize there are very strong opinions on both sides of the mask discussion,” Summit County Health Director, Dr. Phil Bondurant said. “Ultimately, I want to provide the safest, healthiest learning environment in Summit County schools for the upcoming school year while allowing for parental choice. Masks are not a failproof solution to eliminate COVID-19. However, it is well documented that masks are an effective strategy to minimize illness. This approach allows us to actively monitor the situation and provide interventions before an outbreak occurs. In the end, our goal is to help keep kids in school and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission until vaccines become available for children.”

Each of the county’s six elementary schools (four in the Park City School District, one in North Summit, and one in South Summit) will be evaluated as separate campuses. The order will not apply to middle or high schools. These metrics were determined using the “Test to Stay” program outlined in Utah Senate Bill 107, which would require Summit County schools with 30 active COVID-19 cases over 14 days to implement COVID-19 testing among students for them to return to campus. Summit County’s Public Health Order was created as an intermediary measure to keep children in classrooms and prevent significant outbreaks of COVID-19.

“The Summit County Council is committed to taking any necessary action available to us within the confines of the law to proactively protect students this school year,” Summit County Council Chair Glenn Wright said. “We support Dr. Bondurant’s approach and do not currently intend to consider termination of this Public Health Order. This course of action was taken after careful consideration of the county’s legal authorities and recent public input.”

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The order comes after the Summit County Council, the County Manager, and the County Health Director consulted with the State Board of Education over the past week to determine



legal power and authority. The Summit County Attorney's Office approved the order of constraint as to form which is its certification that it is a lawful and legally enforceable document.

"Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Summit County has sought to work in concert with our local and state partners," Summit County Manager Tom Fisher said. "The Manager's Office supports the Health Director's efforts to enact these measures."

As school resumes, parents and students of all ages are strongly encouraged to follow CDC and state guidelines regarding mask usage, proper sanitization practices and social interactions both in and out of school. These can be found at <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/education>.

Per Utah legislation, this Order will be reviewed in thirty days.

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