

Somerville to fine people \$300 for not wearing a mask

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State House News Service

People who “willfully refuse to comply” with a new Somerville order requiring face coverings in public could be subject to a \$300 fine, though Mayor Joe Curtatone said his city’s police, who will enforce the order, “are committed to compassionate policing” and will first aim to educate violators and issue warnings.

The face-covering order will take effect on Wednesday, with a one-week grace period. In an advisory to residents, Curtatone said appropriate face coverings cover the nose and mouth, and can include a scarf, bandana or “any clean cloth.” The order applies to indoor and outdoor public spaces, including stores, shared entrances of multi-unit homes, sidewalks, streets, and paths. Joggers and cyclists must comply. Children under age 2 are exempt.

“Exceptions will be made for persons with certain medical conditions, and we certainly understand that some may struggle to comply, such as persons living with a mental illness or parents trying to keep masks on young children,” the advisory said. “Understanding will be shown in such cases.”

Other municipalities have also adopted policies on face-coverings, including Holyoke, Holbrook, Braintree and Whitman, which require them in essential businesses, and Brookline, which requires them in public places.

Somerville Mayor Joe Curtatone posted the following on Facebook:

“Starting Wednesday, we’re requiring everyone age 2 and up to

wear face coverings in public. If you to make a run to the market, wear a face covering. If you're out for a walk/run/bike ride, wear a face covering. It can be a medical mask or a piece of cloth, just wear a face covering. If you own clothing, you own something that can be used as a face covering.

Our police will be out over the next week making sure the public is educated about the requirement. We understand some people will be unable to wear one or have difficulties with a face mask. We're not looking to issue tickets. We'd rather not. So don't make it an issue and just wear a face covering.

Full details here: <https://www.somervillema.gov/facecoverings>
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