

Debra Thompson

From: Liz Bacom <ebacom@PMC-HEALTH.ORG>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 5:34 PM
To: Assembly
Cc: Karl Hagerman; Phillip Hofstetter
Subject: Masking in public Ordinance

Importance: High

To the Mayor and Assembly Members,

I am writing in support of a general masking mandate in Petersburg. I understand this is not truly an enforceable mandate, our police officers have more important things to do than writing tickets for people not wearing masks. I do feel that a mandate elevates the importance of this issue to our community as one small way each individual can prevent the spread of COVID-19 to vulnerable friends, family and neighbors. A mask serves to minimize the spray of saliva. People standing within 6 feet and surfaces that are frequently touched by many individuals allows the spread of this virus. The symptoms appear AFTER viral shedding (sharing) begins.

It has been well documented in the literature, in cases around the world, in our own state and even in this community, that the virus is very difficult to fully understand. The more people become infected with COVID-19, the more we learn. From the time the virus first appeared in the United States (Washington State) the end of January to now, there have been over 40,000 deaths. In the United States alone. And likely 20% more people died than were counted in this number because of the unavailability of diagnostic testing. Likely, before the end of this week, we will see more than 50,000 recorded deaths. A very significant number of health care workers have lost their lives because the spread of the disease brought a surge of patients into hospitals in a very short period of time, overwhelmed health care supply chains. A lack of personal protective equipment for health care workers in these overwhelmed hospitals contributed to their deaths.

Yes, wearing a mask, is a big inconvenience certainly. You likely know someone who works at the hospital, you may have been a patient there at one time. Our staff are caring for your friends, your family and your neighbors. With only 12 beds, there are obvious limitations for caring for a surge of patients. We have a very limited number of nurses and physicians and lab techs. If 10 percent of Petersburg become infected, that calculates to about 300 people. If 20% of those people require hospitalization that calculates to 60 people. If 10% of those are seriously ill and require higher level of care that equates to at least 6 people being shipped out to a higher level of care. We do not yet know for certain if the current active case was community acquired or associated to someone who traveled. If it is community acquired, just remember, there is someone else out there. Perhaps a silent spreader. No symptoms. Perhaps not masked.

Please send the strongest message with the strongest tool you have. Tell your community to stay home. Don't work if you are sick. And pass this ordinance mandating masks. The only Monday Morning Quarterback I want to hear is why did you do all that preparation when nothing serious happened, not why didn't you take care of our community when you could before we had so many cases?

Thank you for your time to read my letter.

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