

MITCH INGRAM

MONROE COUNTY MAYOR

Monroe County Government

July 7, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

After much consideration, prayer, and consultation with the Local Emergency-Preparedness Committee, community members, educators, and elected officials regarding the mandating of masks for residents and visitors in the public areas of Monroe County, the Monroe County Mayor's Office has made the decision not to act on the authority granted by Governor Bill Lee in Executive Order 54. We feel wearing a mask in public is a decision and choice to be made by each individual, just as the owners and managers of businesses within the county have the choice to require masks to receive service in their establishment, if they see fit.

However, for the safety and health of our loved ones, neighbors and visitors, it is necessary for each citizen and visitor to do their part to stop the spread of COVID-19. During the month of June, positive COVID-19 results in Monroe County increased by 67 cases. This is a 103 percent increase in cases in just 30 days. We feel a significant increase, such as this, is cause for concern and should serve as a reminder to take this pandemic seriously.

Due to the rapid transmission throughout the country, state, and county, it is of the utmost importance that we, as citizens of Monroe County, become unified in the fight to protect ourselves, our families, and our most vulnerable population against COVID-19. This includes the continuation of social distancing, proper hand washing, and the use of masks when in public. Free masks are available at the Monroe County Health Department.

According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, 24,171 deaths could be avoided in the United States by October 1, 2020, if 95 percent of people wore masks in public. With knowledge such as this, it is strongly encouraged that those who can wear a mask do so. If you have an underlying condition that makes you more susceptible, please take the necessary precautions to keep yourself as safe as possible.

As more businesses begin to reopen and with schools starting back soon, we have a responsibility to protect one another. Wearing a mask protects the people we may come in contact with. Wearing a mask is caring for your community and your loved ones. As your County Mayor, I pledge to lead by example moving forward by wearing my mask when social distancing cannot be accomplished. I challenge each of you to do the same. We can slow the spread of COVID-19 together.

Respectfully,

