

ORIGINAL
STAMPED IN RED

ORDINANCE NO: 2021-012

An Emergency Ordinance Extending and Amending Certain Emergency Ordinances Related to COVID-19

WHEREAS, SARS-CoV-2 (the Coronavirus) the virus that causes the disease COVID-19 continues to be a serious public health concern; and,

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and SCDHEC advise the use of cloth face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, in Executive Order No. 2020-63, Governor Henry McMaster urged municipalities to enact measures requiring individuals to wear a face covering; and,

WHEREAS, it is vitally important that we continue to work together to decrease the widespread proliferation of COVID-19 among us; and,

WHEREAS, City Council finds that it is still in the public interest to protect public health and the general welfare of the public to extend the temporary suspension of normal operating procedures of City Council and City Boards and Commissions meetings as set forth in Ordinance No.: 2020-044 and to extend and amend the requirement that face coverings or masks be worn in public in the City of Columbia as set out forth in Ordinance No.: 2020-059; and,

WHEREAS, the requirements under both ordinances were further extended and amended by Ordinance 2020-093 through January 5, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Sec. 2-86 of the Ordinances of the City of Columbia allows for the adoption of emergency ordinances on one reading without notice or hearing by affirmative two-thirds of the members present, and shall expire automatically on the 61st day following enactment; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council this 16th day of March, 2021, that the City of Columbia extends the temporary suspension of the normal operating procedures of City Council and City Boards and Commissions meetings and allows for the Mayor, Council Members, Board Members and Commission Members to remotely participate in voting and operational procedures by telephone or other means of electronic communication.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia, South Carolina this 16th day of March, 2021 that facial coverings shall be required in all public places within the City to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus disease, known as COVID-19 as follows:

1. Face coverings which cover the nose and mouth shall be required in all public places within the City. All persons entering a commercial establishment in the City must wear a face covering while inside the establishment. A face covering must also be worn in situations where distances between people change frequently such as a busy sidewalk, waiting area, or popular outdoor area where it is impractical or impossible to maintain six feet of distance at all times. This paragraph does not apply to religious establishments. However, the use of face coverings is recommended during religious activities as well.

2. All restaurants, bars, retail stores, barbershops, salons, grocery stores, and pharmacies in the City must require their employees to wear a face covering which covers the nose and mouth at all times while having face to face interaction with the public. Each individual employee violation of this ordinance will be considered a separate and distinct offense.

3. Any person who is unable to safely wear a face covering due to age, an underlying health condition, or is unable to remove the face covering without the assistance of others is exempt from this Ordinance.

4. Face coverings are not required in the following circumstances:

- a. In personal vehicles;
- b. When a person is alone in enclosed spaces; during outdoor physical activity, provided the active person maintains a minimum of six (6) feet from other people at all times;
- c. When a person is alone or only with other household members;
- d. While drinking, eating or smoking;
- e. When wearing a face covering causes or aggravates a health condition.
- f. When wearing a face covering would prevent the receipt of personal services.
- g. When a person is 10 years of age or younger.

5. A person who fails to comply with Paragraph 1 of this Ordinance shall be guilty of a civil infraction, punishable by a fine of not more than \$100.00.

6. A person who fails to comply with Paragraph 2 of this Ordinance shall be guilty of a civil infraction, punishable by a fine of not more than \$100.00. Each violation of this Ordinance shall be considered a separate and distinct offense. In addition to the fines established by this paragraph, repeated violations of this Ordinance by a person who owns, manages, operates or otherwise controls a business subject to this Ordinance may, subject to all procedural protections set forth in the City Code, result in the suspension or revocation of any occupancy permit or business license issued to a business where the repeated violations occurred. Repeated violations of this Ordinance are additionally hereby declared to be a public nuisance, which may be abated by the City by restraining order, preliminary and permanent injunction, or other means provided for by the laws of this State. The foregoing notwithstanding, every effort shall be made to bring the business into voluntary compliance with the terms of this Ordinance prior to the issuance of any citation. For the purposes of Paragraph 2 of this Ordinance, "person" shall be defined as any individual associated with the business who has the control or authority and ability to enforce the social distancing requirements of the Ordinance within the business, such as an owner, manager or supervisor. "Person" may also include an employee or other designee that is present at the business but does not have the title of manager, supervisor, etc., but has the authority and ability to ensure that the requirements of this Ordinance are met while the business is open to the public.

7. Should any provision, paragraph, sentence or word of this Ordinance be rendered or declared invalid by any final court action in a court of competent jurisdiction or by reason of any preemptive legislation, the remaining provisions, paragraphs, sentences, or words of this Ordinance as hereby adopted shall remain in full force and effect.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this emergency ordinance shall be terminated by the issuance of another ordinance or shall automatically expire on the 61st day after enactment of this ordinance.

This ordinance shall take effect immediately.

Requested by:

Mayor and City Council

Mayor

Approved by:

City Manager

Approved as to form:

ATTEST:

City Attorney
Introduced: 3/16/2021
Final Reading: 3/16/2021

City Clerk