**NEWS RELEASE**

For immediate release: July, 13, 2020

**HEALTH UNIT WILL MANDATE FACE COVERINGS**

NORTH BAY, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) will be mandating the use of face coverings while in certain enclosed public spaces and public transit, effective Friday Jul. 24, 2020. The directive falls under the province’s Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

“Our communities have been following public health recommendations for COVID-19, helping to keep the number of cases in our district low,” said Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. “The recommendations we’ve had in place have been effective during stage 1 and 2 of phase 2, however, as we enter into stage 3 more businesses are opening and social gatherings are growing, resulting in the need to change our public health measures for COVID-19. We have to adapt to the current climate.”

Detailed information regarding the mandate, including information for businesses, the community, exemptions and frequently asked questions, is to be shared publically on Friday, Jul. 17, 2020. This allows businesses a week to prepare for the face covering mandate.

A face covering does not replace physical distancing and other protective health measures such as hand washing, and isolating yourself when you have symptoms or have come in close contact with someone with COVID-19 or suspected to have COVID-19.

Currently, there is no specific treatment for COVID-19. It is important to remember that most people with COVID-19 have no symptoms or mild symptoms. People who are mildly ill should isolate and care for themselves at home. Most will recover in one to two weeks by simply treating the symptoms. For more information on COVID-19 visit [**myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19.**](http://www.myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19)