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MASKING ADVISORY

April 3, 2020

Dear Public Health Staff Supporting COVID-19 task assignments:

I want to start by offering my sincere thanks and gratitude for those of you who are supporting activities directly related to COVID-19. Many of you are working as part of our extended disease investigation team and others are fulfilling tasks ranging from COVID-19 testing to data support and from supporting sheltering to being asked to support the potential for opening Alternate Care Sites at multiple locations across the County.

As the number of COVID-19 cases in our county continues to grow (currently over 300) it is critically important that we leverage progressive actions to reduce viral transmission. To that end, we will initiate masking for staff who continue to be required to work on-site in a manner that places them in proximity to other staff. This action is directed by our Health Officer, Dr. Chris Farnitano.

Beginning Friday April 3rd, mask will be made available to staff who are working on-site at 597 Center Avenue, Martinez or at Bates Avenue in Concord in support of COVID-19 or in support of continuity of operations for other Public Health services. Please note that masking is intended for those staff and for those times when you are working in group settings in proximity to other staff, such as work together at the same table or having a group meeting in a conference room or office. Evolving information suggest that upwards of 20-25% of persons with COVID-19 may be asymptomatic or experience very mild symptoms. Hence, out of an abundance of caution we will provide mask as a means to help prevent the inadvertent transmission of virus from person to person.

We understand that some persons may not tolerate masking and that others may wish to provide their own mask, including cloth masks of your own making. The purpose is to help reduce the droplet spread of the virus by inadvertent sneezing and coughing, and even a cloth mask will help to do that. Ideally a "surgical mask" would be used in this situation. To the extent surgical mask are not available we have a small cache of N-95 mask that we will substitute until our request for surgical mask is filled.



Each person who wishes to have a mask will be provided 1 (one) a day to use while working on-site. The mask should be worn, when you are working in a group setting in proximity to other staff, even while maintaining a safe social distance of 6 feet or more.

For those staff who decline to mask it is especially important that you self-monitor for even mild symptoms and remove yourself from the on-site work environment out of an abundance of caution. In this situation we will support technology that helps you work from home. For those staff who decline to wear a mask, even a home made cloth mask, you may not congregate with other colleagues in the work place.

In light of the Health Officer Order for social distancing some of you are currently or working towards being able to perform some of these tasks from your home, such to decompress the number of staff that are needed physically here at 597 Center Ave, Martinez. We will continue to work toward acquiring technology and organizing work flows that supports this strategy.

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