

Resolution affirming that Franklin County will continue to follow public health guidance and deploy every available resource and strategy to stop the spread of COVID-19, and urging all local governments within Franklin County to institute mask mandates for employees and visitors in public buildings. (Commissioners)

WHEREAS, the President of the United States issued a Nationwide Emergency Declaration for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, nearly 140,000 Franklin County residents have contracted COVID-19, more than 4,100 have been hospitalized, and tragically just over 1,500 of our neighbors have succumbed to it; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus and its latest Delta variant continues to rage in our community, especially among the unvaccinated, and Franklin County is currently one of several Central Ohio counties categorized as an area of "high" transmission which is the highest level on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) measure of transmission; and

WHEREAS, as the number of new COVID-19 cases grows exponentially across Ohio and within Franklin County, Central Ohio hospitals and healthcare providers are reporting increasingly alarming strain on their capacity; and

WHEREAS, in order to stop the spread of the virus and maximize individuals' protection, the CDC advises individuals to get vaccinated and wear a mask indoors in public, especially in areas of "substantial" or "high" transmission; and

WHEREAS, Franklin County Public Health and Columbus Public Health have issued an advisory to heed the CDC guidance to wear masks indoors and in crowded areas regardless of vaccine status; and

WHEREAS, since the COVID-19 public health emergency began in March 2020, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners has followed the advice of public health professionals and taken significant action to support and safeguard the well-being of its 1.3 million residents; and

WHEREAS, the individual and collective actions of local governments in Franklin County continue to be powerful weapons in the fight against COVID-19, and mandating masks for employees and visitors in public

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buildings will help stop the spread of COVID-19 and help ensure public buildings are safe for all; and

WHEREAS, it is within the legal authority of the county and local governments within Franklin County to manage public buildings as well as provide a safe and healthy environment therein; and

WHEREAS, mask mandates in community spaces and inside of buildings across the county would curb the spread of COVID-19 and save lives; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

1. That this Board of Commissioners has, to the extent of its authority, mandated masks for all those who work or do business in County-owned public facilities.
2. That this Board of Commissioners urges all local governments within Franklin County to enact mask mandates in public buildings to the extent of their authority.
3. That a certified copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to each county office holder and county agency, leadership of each local jurisdiction in Franklin County, and to the Office of Governor Mike DeWine.