

## MEMO

TO: PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITIZEN RESPONSE TASK FORCE (CRTF) and HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: 12AUG2020 pending approval by CRTF

RE: STATEMENT RELATING TO PROPOSED "CITY OF PORTSMOUTH MASK ORDINANCE"

The Citizen Response Task Force writes in support of the proposed City Mask Ordinance, as previously expressed by the July 21<sup>st</sup> memo from the Task Force's Health Subcommittee members to the Council.

Based upon emerging data and guidance, we recommend additional language, as seen in italics, to section 3.1102 (PERMISSABLE FACE COVERING) of the proposed ordinance, that section to read as follows:

"A required face covering pursuant to this ordinance shall be made of cloth fabric, or other soft material, that covers the nose and mouth of the person wearing the face covering. ***The face covering shall be constructed without exhalation valves or vents.*** The face covering may be commercially manufactured or individually manufactured.

This language reflects updated guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), updated on August 7<sup>th</sup> and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>. These guidelines state in part that "Masks with exhalation valves or vents should NOT be worn to help prevent the person wearing the mask from spreading COVID-19 to others (source control)".

The rationale behind this caveat lies in increasing understanding of how the virus spreads, and the purpose behind placement of valves or vents on face masks. To quote the CDC again:

"Masks with Exhalation Valves or Vents

The purpose of masks is to keep respiratory droplets from reaching others to aid with source control. However, masks with one-way valves or vents allow air to be exhaled through a hole in the material, which can result in expelled respiratory droplets that can reach others. This type of mask does not prevent the person wearing the mask from transmitting COVID-19 to others. Therefore, CDC **does not recommend** using masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent".

Thank you for your consideration and your continued efforts to protect the citizens of and visitors to our city.

Signatures per protocol on letterhead