On June 23, 2020 the Mayor of New Braunfels issued an order requiring the use of face coverings in public and at commercial entities when maintaining 6 feet of social distance is not possible. Read the full order at NBTEXAS.ORG/COVID-19.

ARE MASKS MANDATORY?
Face coverings are mandatory in businesses that provide goods or services directly to the public only when social distancing is not feasible.

By June 28, 2020 businesses must adopt and implement a health and safety policy that requires people to social distance and when that’s not feasible, they must wear a face covering. A face covering is a secondary measure to social distancing. Face coverings may include homemade masks, scarfs, bandanas, or a handkerchief.

ACCORDING TO THE MAYOR’S ORDERS FACE COVERINGS ARE ONLY REQUIRED WHEN SOCIAL DISTANCING CANNOT BE MAINTAINED SO WHY DOES THE EXAMPLE EXHIBIT A IN THE ORDER REFLECT FACE COVERINGS ARE MANDATORY BEFORE ENTERING THE ESTABLISHMENT?
Exhibit A is only a sample and serves as an option for businesses to use if they would like to. It is slightly stricter than the order but businesses may choose to enforce stronger restrictions in their establishments.

IS THE CITY GOING TO PROVIDE POSTERS, OR POST FLYERS ON THE WEBSITE, WITH THE OFFICIAL CITY LOGO MANDATING MASKS SO BUSINESSES CAN POST THEM IN THEIR STORES?
The City is utilizing resources provided by the CDC and has created some signs unique to New Braunfels. A sample health and safety policy and flyers that can be posted in a business are available at https://www.nbtexas.org/businessresources. Businesses may create their own signs if they choose not to use the ones provided by the City.

ARE THE RIVERS OPEN?
Yes, access to the river through private property is allowed. All public entrances and exits to the rivers are closed at this time. In light of the Governor’s Executive Order GA-28, released on June 26, 2020, that suspends commercial river rafting and tubing rental businesses, river parks in the City have been closed.

HOW IS THE CITY GOING TO ENFORCE THE MASK ON SHUTTLE BUSES AND AT RIVER OUTFITTERS?
GA-28 has ordered the closure of river outfitters and related shuttle transportation services. Once these businesses are allowed to resume by Governor Abbott, the local face covering order does not apply to river shuttle transportation services. Businesses are encouraged to follow applicable state health protocols.

The order applies at the business premises of the outfitter. Customers waiting in line for rafts, tubes, or transportation while on the business premises should keep 6 feet apart. If that isn’t possible, the business should require that customers wear a face covering. Customers with a physical or mental condition that prevents the use of a face covering are not be required to comply.
HOW WILL THIS BE ENFORCED?
The enforcement for this order is shared between the City and the business. While the order does allow for a $1,000 fine for businesses who refuse to comply, the goal is compliance through education. It cannot be enforced against individuals under any circumstances. We are focusing on compliance and education. Fines will only be used as an absolute last means necessary. If a customer has an exemption, it is not a violation.

WHAT IF SOMEONE REFUSES TO WEAR A MASK FOR MEDICAL REASONS?
If the customer says they have a physical or mental reason that prohibits them from being able to wear a mask, then that person is exempt. It’s an exception that will be abused as a loophole, but the City will not put businesses in the position of violating ADA rights.

The City is aware of the circulation of fraudulent ADA exemption cards. The U.S. Department of Justice-Civil Rights Division has issued a COVID-19 ALERT: Fraudulent Facemask Flyers. For more information go to: https://www.ada.gov/covid-19_flyer_alert.html. Businesses should contact their own attorney on the best ways to address this issue.

HOW WILL THIS WORK IN RESTAURANTS AND BARS?
If you are within 6 feet of other people not in your group, you should wear a face covering and it can be removed when you take a drink and/or during your meal. A way to avoid the mask requirement is to keep 6 ft. between yourself and others.

It’s important to note that Governor Abbott’s Executive Order GA-28, released June 26, 2020, closes bars and limits capacity in restaurants to 50% until further notice.

CAN SERVICES BE RENDERED THAT REQUIRE A MASK BE TAKEN OFF (FACIALS, BEARD SHAVE, ETC.)?
The customer can temporarily remove the face covering while the cosmetologist or barber is completing the service that requires removal of the mask. The employee must keep the mask on while within 6 feet of the customer.

DO I HAVE TO WEAR A MASK IN THE GYM?
Yes. Gyms provide services to the public so they are subject to the requirements of developing a health and safety policy that is posted where employees and customers can see it. If people cannot keep 6 ft. apart, then the business must require that customers wear a face covering. Das Rec, the City’s recreation center, is requiring customers to wear masks except for while working out, in compliance with the order.

DOES THIS APPLY TO CHILD CARE CENTERS?
Teachers, counselors, and staff at child care centers must wear face coverings if they are not able to keep at least 6 feet of separation from one another or from the children. Children who are at least 10 years of age must wear face coverings if they cannot keep 6 feet of distance between themselves and other individuals. The face covering requirement does not apply when children are engaged in outside exercise or outdoor physical activities, especially when they are in bodies of water or engaged in any type of water play such as a small pool or splash pad.

WHERE CAN I GET TESTED?
You can speak with your Primary Care Physician about options for testing. You may also call the Comal County Drive Thru Appointment Hotline at 830-221-1120. For antibody testing, call the Comal County Office of Public Health at 830-221-1150 for an appointment. Bot CVS Pharmacy locations in New Braunfels offer free drive thru testing. Visit www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing for more information.

For additional questions, contact the City’s COVID-19 hotline at 830-221-4222.