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AUG 13 2021

HUMBERTO BERT GONZALEZ, JR., COUNTY CLERK STARR CO. TX
BY: [Signature] DEPUTY

Eloy Vera
Starr County Judge

Starr County Courthouse Annex
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**STARR COUNTY LOCAL AUTHORITY ORDER
FOR ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS RELATED TO
FACIAL COVERINGS
21-001**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Starr County Judge Eloy Vera issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency on March 17, 2020, due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), the Commissioners Court of Starr County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Starr County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster; and

WHEREAS, the State of Texas and the County of Starr must protect lives while restoring livelihoods, both of which can be achieved with the expert advice of medical leaders: and,

WHEREAS, the County Judge has determined that extraordinary emergency measures are necessary to be taken to continue the mitigation of this public health emergency, facilitate a cooperative response amongst the citizens of Starr County,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 121 of the Texas Health and Safety Code local officials have the authority to administer state and local laws relating to public health within the jurisdiction of the County of Starr, Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Starr County Local Officials continue to evaluate, with health care officials, the circumstances regarding the Public Health Emergency related to COVID-19, and the ongoing high and substantial spread of the disease in the community, with a persistent number of active positive cases, hospitalizations, and deaths; and

WHEREAS, the more highly contagious strains of the COVID-19 virus has led to an increase in hospitalizations of school-aged children, including children younger than 12 years that are not able to receive vaccination, and requiring facial covering is necessary to reduce the spread and transmission of COVID-19 among the unvaccinated and vaccinated;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Eloy Vera, Starr County Judge, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the constitution and law of the State of Texas, after consultation with local and regional medical experts do hereby impose the following health and safety measures on all

public and non-parochial private schools offering instruction to students in any and all grades kindergarten through grade twelve (12) as follows:

(1) All public and non-parochial private school systems in the County of Starr, Texas offering in-class instruction and/or other indoor activities to students in grades kindergarten through grade twelve (12) shall **REQUIRE** universal indoor facial coverings for all students, visitors, faculty, and staff regardless of vaccination status, in an effort to continue mitigation of the spread of COVID-19.

(2) A public and/or non-parochial school system may **NOT REQUIRE** the wearing of facial coverings inside all school buildings, provided however that: a. The school system's governing body, by majority vote, decides to **OPT OUT** of this Local Public Health Order.

(3) It is further recommended that schools maintain at least three (3) feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

(4) The following persons are not required to wear facial coverings:

- a. Any person younger than 4 years old;
- b. Any person with a medical condition or disability that prevents wearing a face covering;
- c. Any person while the person is consuming food or drink, or is seated at a cafeteria or classroom to eat or drink;
- d. Any person while the person is (i) exercising outdoors or engaging in physical activity outdoors, and (ii) maintaining a safe distance from other people not in the same household;
- e. Any person obtaining screening obtaining services that require temporary removal of the face covering for security, surveillance, screening, or a need for specific access to the face, but only to the extent necessary for the services obtained;
- f. Any person while the person is in a swimming pool or shower.

(5) It is highly recommended and encouraged that facial coverings be required at all school-sponsored events and activities, including but not limited to clubs, sports, fairs, exhibitions, and academic or athletic competitions, as well as during transportation to and from schools.

(6) Each school must notify the Starr County Judge's Office if any individual (student, teacher, or staff) who has been on a school campus is test-confirmed to have COVID-19, in accordance

with applicable local, state, and federal laws, including confidentiality requirements. It is recommended that schools notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a test-confirmed positive case is identified consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases.

(7) It is recommended that if there has been an individual that is test-confirmed positive, schools shall close off any area that was heavily used by the individual, until such time as those areas are cleaned and disinfected. Pursuant to Title 25, Section 97.6, the Starr County Local Authority reserves the right to take such action and measures as may be necessary to conform with applicable control measures, upon the identification of a confirmed-positive COVID-19 case or cases on any campus within a school system, including but not limited to imposing quarantine and closing a school campus.

This Order shall remain in full force and effect for a period no less than nine (9) weeks, unless it is extended, modified, rescinded, superseded, or amended by applicable law; the ongoing evaluation of circumstances regarding the Public Health Emergency related to COVID-19 in the County of Starr, Texas; or preempted by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

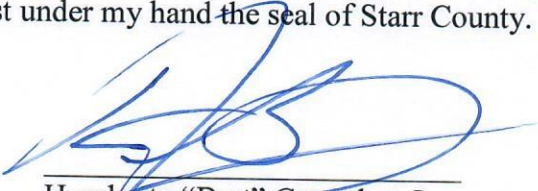
If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order, or any application of it to any school system, or circumstance related to this Order is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.

This Order is issued under my authority as the County Judge for the County of Starr, Texas on this the 13th day of August, 2021.



Eloy Vera, Starr County Judge

Filed with me, the County Clerk of Starr County, this the 13th day of August, 2021, by Judge Eloy Vera, whose signature I hereby attest under my hand and the seal of Starr County.



Humberto "Bert" Gonzalez, Jr.
Starr County Clerk