



Contractors in Dane County will have another safety mandate for jobsites: masks

[Emergency Order #8](#) from Public Health Madison & Dane County (PHMDC), which goes into effect on Monday, July 13, will require everyone age 5 and older to wear a face covering in any indoor space within Dane County. The order, intended to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, includes individuals working on interior construction projects.

“Given the recent rapid increases in cases in our county—that happened even before school and university classes resume this fall—it’s imperative we take this step now to try and slow the march of COVID through our community,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi.

“Public health research now shows that face coverings are critical to slowing the spread of COVID-19,” Public Health Madison & Dane County Director Janel Heinrich said.

Some contractors’ employees are already wearing masks on sites most of the time, but this will require it within Dane County.

The order requires all employers to comply, according to the PHMDC Business Support Office, including interior construction work, but not exterior:

INTERIOR WORK

Masks are required when more than one person is in the work area or you could come into contact with another person in the work area. According to the PHMDC [website FAQ](#), a space must be completely open on all four sides to be considered outdoors and open windows does not establish outdoor space.

EXTERIOR WORK

No mask is required unless individuals are unable to maintain distancing of 6 feet. Masks are required for employees who work with each other within a 6-foot radius. According to the PHMDC [website FAQ](#), a space must be completely open on all four sides to be considered outdoors and open windows does not establish outdoor space.

“You have to protect the company and if you don’t have all the protection in place, how will you protect the company if you have an outbreak?” said Jared Weber, another ABC of Wisconsin safety manager.

Weber said masks are a worthwhile measure if it prevents an outbreak on a jobsite, something contractors should consider.

“There’s a big difference between 24 hours to shut down a site to clean for one case versus having an outbreak and a whole crew out for 14 days or more,” he said.

One contractor, who has employees working in and outside Dane County, said it may implement a company-wide policy for all employees, regardless of where they’re working.

Contractors in Dane County may not be the only ones who will be dealing with such an order. Milwaukee reportedly is close to implementing an order similar to Dane County.

According to the [PHMDC webpage on masks](#), enforcement will focus on businesses or individuals who consistently violate the order.

“If a citation is issued within the City of Madison, the ticket amount would be \$376, if it is issued outside of the City under the County ordinance the ticket amount is \$263.50,” according to the webpage.

Dane County officials have said they feel confident this order will hold up in court.