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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Facemask Ordinance Adopted in Enfield, NH Local Officials Cite Science and CDC Guidance

Enfield, NH – August 4, 2020 – The Enfield Selectboard has adopted a new ordinance requiring the use of facemasks in public places. This new ordinance went into effect August 3, 2020.

During a well-attended public hearing on Monday (August 3), the Board heard public input on the necessity for the use of facemasks to help control the spread of COVID-19. In the absence of a statewide facemask order, such as is in place in all other New England states, NH municipalities must make their own decisions on the use of protective face coverings. Clear scientific evidence, coupled with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance and strong public support expressed for such an ordinance helped to inform the Board's final decision. An emergency order issued by the Governor has been in effect for some months that requires business employees that interact with the public to wear facemasks. It was determined that local action was needed to address the general public.

The new facemask ordinance will be in effect only during a public health pandemic/state of emergency as declared by the Governor of the State of New Hampshire. There are some exclusions for people with documented health problems who cannot safely wear a mask as well as children under the age of 10. The details of the ordinance also include enforcement power granted to the Enfield Police Department and Town Health Officer. Initial infractions will result in a written warning followed by a \$50 fine for a second offense and a \$100 fine for third and subsequent offenses. The full text of the ordinance can be found at www.enfield.nh.us/facemasks

“The Enfield Board of Selectmen and other town officials feel strongly that everyone has a role to play in getting this disease under control,” said Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth. “We recognize that wearing a facemask can be somewhat cumbersome, but the inconvenience of wearing a mask in a variety of settings will help us minimize exposure, avoid sickness and deaths, and lessen economic disruption associated with COVID-19,” he added.

A recent court ruling cleared the way for municipalities in NH to make these ordinances effective to coincide with the state of emergency declaration by the Governor. Citing “common sense,” a Hillsborough County Superior Court Judge denied a motion to overturn a similar ordinance in another municipality. The ruling has resulted in facemask ordinances being proposed and adopted in NH including several other Upper Valley towns and cities.

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