

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH RESOLUTION

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

WHEREAS, the novel coronavirus disease-2019 (COVID-19) is a disease which has spread across the globe infecting millions of people with a significantly high rate of death, particularly among those who are elderly or medically vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, recently, the COVID-19 virus has developed a variant, the Delta variant, which is far more contagious than others and is the dominant form of the disease currently in the State and Wilkes County; and

WHEREAS, while vaccinated persons are far less likely to contract COVID-19, the Delta variant has infected vaccinated persons as well and can be retransmitted to others by them as determined by the CDC; and

WHEREAS, after initial restrictive measures were implemented, there was a significant decline in positivity rate, hospitalizations, and deaths; however, after a relaxing of the restrictions and resulting from the COVID-19 Delta variant, which has proven to be more easily spread, the number of laboratory-confirmed positive cases and hospitalizations in the State and in Wilkes County have grown exponentially and continue to climb; and

WHEREAS, since the end of June, the positive rate of infections in Wilkes County has increased significantly, from 2% to 20%, hospitalization rates are as high as they were at the end of December, and the number of cases is rising, including cases for those under the age of 18; the positive rate of infections in the State of North Carolina is currently 16%; and

WHEREAS, the percentage of Wilkes County residents who are fully vaccinated is approximately 35% of the entire population, leaving approximately 65% who are not vaccinated; the percentage of North Carolinians who are fully vaccinated is 59%, leaving over one third of the State's population unvaccinated; there is no currently approved vaccine for children under the age of 12; and people travel into Wilkes County on a daily basis to work, shop, recreate, and seek medical care; and

WHEREAS, the CDC and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued guidance calling for all people, including those who are vaccinated, to wear a face covering while in indoor spaces when they are around people they do not live with, in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Wilkes County's Public Health Director and operators of Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist and Novant Health confirm that the rate of infections in Wilkes County is at a level requiring immediate and prompt action to slow the spread of COVID-19 within the County in

order to preserve medical supplies and hospital capacity to treat those with COVID-19 as well as prevent imminent harm and other serious illnesses and injuries; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to slow viral transmission and community spread as much as possible to protect the most vulnerable and children under 12 years old, and to prevent the health care system from being overwhelmed; and

WHEREAS, prompt action now in cooperation with the public can reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and prevent the need for greater restrictions in the future; and

WHEREAS, this resolution provides recommendations that will help promote public health and prevent imminent harm by supporting guidance issued by the State to combat the further spread of COVID-19 in the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Wilkes County Board of Health does hereby express its support for all mitigation measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 such as:

- Urging all Wilkes County residents to stay at home when exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms (new cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, headache, congestion, sore throat, or diarrhea),
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to get tested for COVID-19 if they are exhibiting symptoms,
- Urging all Wilkes County residents aged 12 and older to get vaccinated if eligible,
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to continue following physical distancing measures in all public places,
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to wear a mask while in public indoor spaces regardless of vaccination status,
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to only seek emergency medical attention if needed,
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to follow local health department isolation and quarantine measures related to COVID-19, and
- Urging all Wilkes County residents to practice patience, understanding, and grace to all public servants.

BE ITS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wilkes County Board of Health does hereby express its support for local businesses and organizations to practice mitigation strategies such as:

- Encouraging the use of masks while indoors on the property or business,
- Encouraging the use of NC DHHS COVID-19 signage,
- Encouraging physical distancing measures for employees and patrons,
- Encouraging employees to get vaccinated for COVID-19,
- Encouraging proper disinfection practices for COVID-19,



**Wilkes County Health Department &
Wilkes Community Health Center**

Promoting health and preventing disease in our community

- Encouraging employees to remain at home and get tested if they are sick and showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19,
- Encouraging employees to follow isolation and quarantine measures issued by the local health department, and
- Encouraging businesses and organizations to develop and implement COVID-19 prevention policies and procedures

BE ITS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wilkes County Board of Health affirms its collective support for the work of the Health Director, Rachel Willard, and the Wilkes County Health Department staff continuing to bravely respond to the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our communities.

This the 31st day of August, 2021.

Wilkes County Board of Health Chair
Susan Bachmeier