STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HER EXCELLENCY

SUSAN BYSIEWICZ

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 7NNN

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC – MASKS AND FACE COVERINGS

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, Governor Lamont issued a declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies, proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the State of Connecticut as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak in the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to such declaration, Governor Lamont has issued sixty-five (65) executive orders to suspend or modify statutes and to take other actions necessary to protect public health and safety and to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommend implementation of community mitigation strategies to slow transmission of COVID-19, including cancellation of gatherings of ten people or more and social distancing in smaller gatherings; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have determined that it is possible to transmit COVID-19 even before a person shows symptoms and through aerosol transmission; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the effectiveness of usings masks or face coverings in preventing the transmission of COVID-19, Executive Order No. 7BB, Section 2 required the use of a mask or face covering by anyone in a public place who does not maintain a safe distance of six feet from other people, but did not require documentation of any kind if a person claimed a medical condition prevented them from wearing a mask or face covering; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Connecticut have been shown perseverance and diligence in using protective measures such as face coverings, distancing, and adherence to size limits on social and recreational gatherings; and

WHEREAS, despite Connecticut's resulting success in reducing and limiting the prevalence of COVID-19 infections, state and local public health officials, as well as other municipal officials, have reported incidents of non-compliance with mask requirements and disregard of restrictions imposed on social and recreational gatherings; and

WHEREAS, public health officials have reported that a number of COVID-19 infection clusters, which pose the risk of leading to widespread community transmission of the disease, have occurred as the result of attendance of people at parties in excess of the social gathering limits or in violation of requirements to wear face coverings or masks; and

WHEREAS, public health and municipal officials have reported that some people who refuse to wear a mask have done have falsely claimed a medical reason for doing so, and that some organizations philosophically opposed to these scientifically proven health public health protections have urged their members or those attending protests to claim a medical exemption because Executive Order No. 7BB does not require documentation; and

WHEREAS, upon a proclamation that a public health or civil preparedness emergency exists, Section 28-9(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes the modification or suspension in whole or in part by executive order of any statute or regulation or requirement or part thereof that conflicts with the efficient and expeditious execution of civil preparedness functions or the protection of public health; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, SUSAN BYSIEWICZ, Acting Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Connecticut, do hereby **ORDER AND DIRECT:**

1. Executive Order No. 7BB, Section 2, issued on April 17, 2020, is repealed. Effective immediately, any person in a public place in Connecticut, whether indoors or outdoors, who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service, or any means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area.

    a. Nothing in this order shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, a child in a child care setting, or anyone under the age of 2 years. Any person who declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition shall be exempt from this order and any requirement to wear masks in Sector Rules or other rules issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), but only if such person provides written documentation that the person is qualified for the exemption from a licensed medical provider, the Department of Developmental Services or other state agency that provides or supports

services for people with emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities, or a person authorized by any such agency. Such documentation need not name or describe the condition that qualifies the person for the exemption.

b. The Commissioner of DECD shall issue updated versions of Sector Rules, Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers, or other rules issued pursuant to previous executive orders, which updated versions shall set forth updated requirements for face coverings within those settings, and which, when complied with, shall constitute compliance with this order.

c. This order shall supersede and preempt any current or future municipal order whenever such order conflicts with this order.

2. The Commissioner of DECD may issue or amend Sector Rules to establish size limits for private gatherings of people who do not live in the same household, regardless of whether such gathering has been organized by a business.

This order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect for six months.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 14th day of August, 2020.

Susan Bysiewicz
Acting Governor

By Her Excellency's Command

Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State