

Report

Background

On July 23, 2020, Administration advised the Emergency Advisory Committee that it had moved to Level 2 of the Face Covering Decision-Making Model and face coverings were required on City transit and in City facilities as of August 1, 2020.

At that time, the Chief Medical Officer of Health had not issued a province-wide order requiring the use of face coverings and the Province signalled it was a municipality's choice to invoke any face covering legislation. On July 29, 2020, Council passed Bylaw 19408 making face coverings mandatory in indoor, public spaces effective August 1, 2020.

Bylaw 19408 requires individuals to wear a face covering in all indoor, publicly accessible spaces. This includes retail stores, entertainment venues, recreation centres, restaurants, and vehicles for hire. The bylaw set out several exemptions relating to age, specific activities and mental or physical concerns or limitations. The bylaw does not apply to schools, health care facilities and hospitals, child care facilities and employee-only spaces where physical barriers have been installed between the employee and patrons. Bylaw 19408 will be repealed on December 31, 2020, unless extended by Council.

Wearing face coverings in public is one action individuals can take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. When combined with measures such as physical distancing, proper hand hygiene and staying home when sick, face coverings are viewed as an effective means in preventing the transmission of COVID-19 by symptomatic and asymptomatic carriers as well as potentially offering some protection to the wearer.

Compliance Approach

Edmonton's regulatory approach has been to seek individual, community and industry voluntary compliance. Administration has been monitoring compliance levels within the transit system, recreational facilities, vehicle for hire industry, and public spaces and measures an overall Edmonton compliance rate. Since the bylaw first came into effect, overall compliance throughout Edmonton has been calculated as 97 percent (see Attachment 2).

From August 1 to October 15, City enforcement staff have received 1161 face covering complaints, issued 1638 warnings and 4 tickets.