

# Curry County New Mexico

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## We Can Make A Difference

Curry County is known as a community of family. Our citizens are there to assist families, friends and neighbors, or anyone in need of assistance. We, as County residents, have always shown how to step up and fight to protect our families, friends and community.

Over the past several months, we, as a community, have endured many challenges due to COVID-19. With those challenges there has been much uncertainty. We have found ourselves wondering who to believe, what information is accurate; and through all of this uncertainty it has challenged and pushed our community. We see everyone struggling to adapt to what is being called "the new normal".

COVID-19 has no affiliation to a political party; it is not a Democrat, Republican or Independent. This virus preys on all of us. What makes matters worse is that this pandemic is happening during an election year with the national media using the mixture as its playground.

Practicing COVID-Safe practices, whether directed or encountered by the State or Federal Government, will make a difference in slowing the spread. Wearing facial coverings is not comfortable and sometimes it is inconvenient, but masks are not worn to protect ourselves, they are to protect the health and safety of those around us. With the rules that are in place, wearing masks will also help support our local businesses in staying open, our medical facilities in providing services and allow our schools to open. Wearing masks could even make it easier for those who are concerned or scared to leave their homes for groceries and other goods or medical appointments. Our community needs a layer of safety, or sense of safety, provided to ALL members that would in turn increase consumer activities. We need a healthy community in order to maintain a healthy economy.

If wearing face masks would ease restrictions and would again allow parents and grandparents to be present at the hospitals when loved ones are welcoming new born babies or allow family members to re-enter nursing homes to visit their loved ones; let's do it. Being forced to connect with our loved ones through glass windows is unbearable, and to know that the mere thought is actually our reality is heartbreaking.

Some first responders have moved out of their homes to prevent COVID-19 exposure to their high-risk family members, and senior citizens are being left to live day-to-day by themselves because their family members have to prioritize their life over comfort and support. Our seniors may not understand

what is occurring or why they haven't seen their sons and daughters for months now. To already be in position of feeling alone and now actually being alone is sad on so many levels. Even our children are having a hard time comprehending the measures taken that are preventing them from seeing their friends or being socially active. Kids are not meant to be isolated. They need room to grow; we all do.

Curry County, let's take the politics out of our community and wear facemasks simply for safety reasons. If wearing them makes even the smallest difference, then wear them to show respect for others in our community. Let's do it, not because we are being told to wear them, but because we are a community for family. Wear them to rejoin our co-workers, to visit our grandparents, loved ones in nursing homes, to play sports, to hold new born babies, to get our kids back in school, and to re-open our businesses and keep them open. We have a reputation for caring for our community members and our businesses. It is for these reasons that my family and I will be practicing COVID-Safe practices. I implore you to join me in doing so. We can make a difference.

Lance A. Pyle   
Curry County Manager