



**ALBEMARLE REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Partners in Public Health**

**711 Roanoke Ave. Elizabeth City, NC 27909**

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ARHS PROVIDES EDUCATION ON THE USE OF CLOTH FACE MASK TO SLOW  
THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

**Continue to practice social distancing during the holiday weekend**

Elizabeth City, N.C. – Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS) is encouraging the community to wear cloth face masks to help slow the spread of COVID-19 especially in situations where social distancing measures are hard to maintain. The new guidelines from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) emphasizes the use of cloth face masks, not surgical masks or N-95 respirators, which should be reserved for healthcare workers and medical first responders.

“Social distancing is still the key preventive measure for slowing the spread of COVID-19 but we know a number of individuals with COVID-19 do not display any signs or symptoms therefore, the use of a cloth face mask could deter the spread of the virus,” states R. Battle Betts, JR., MPA, Health Director. “However it is important to remember the use of cloth face mask is not a

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replacement for social distancing, hand hygiene, and sanitation.”

Cloth face coverings should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
- should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use
- should be carefully removed, not touching eyes, nose, and mouth and washing hands immediately after removing

More information on cloth face coverings and how to make your own with household items can be found at this CDC site: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html?deliveryName=USCDC\\_2067-DM25135](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM25135)

While holidays are typically a time for family and friends to come together through larger gatherings and celebrations, it is important to continue social distancing during the Easter weekend. Families can still celebrate while following the Stay at Home order with these fun ideas:

- Dye Easter eggs at your own house
- Have a small-scale Easter egg hunt outside for your children
- Watch a virtual church service
- Prepare a special meal or if the weather is nice have a back yard picnic with your household members
- Do something kind for your neighbors, such as a porch delivery of handpicked flowers

“We know this has been a difficult time for everyone, but we cannot thank our communities enough for their perseverance and doing their part to slow the spread of COVID-19 across the ARHS region – we know you all are making a difference,” said Health Director R. Battle Betts, Jr., MPA.

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“Our Easter holiday will look different this year but continuing to practice social distancing and other preventive measures will ensure the health and safety of our loved ones so that we all have many more celebrations in the future.”

Once again, ARHS is asking our communities to practice preventive and safety measures that will help prevent the spread of the virus. These precautions include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Practice social distancing; avoid handshakes, hugs and other close contact.

Further information on COVID-19 can be found here:

Albemarle Regional Health Services - <http://www.arhs-nc.org/> or call 252-338-WELL

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services - <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/>

Center for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/>

*For more information, please contact Amy Underhill, ARHS Public Information Officer at 252-338-4448*

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*Albemarle Regional Health Services is dedicated to disease prevention and the promotion of a healthy environment to reduce morbidity, mortality, and disability through quality service, education, and advocacy.*

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