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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aiken City Council Passes Emergency Ordinance Requiring Face Coverings

Aiken, SC – The City of Aiken issued an emergency ordinance requiring individuals to wear face coverings in certain situations and locations to protect, preserve, and promote the general health, safety and welfare and the peace and order of the community related to the potential exposure of City residents, employees, and visitors to COVID-19. The emergency ordinance passed with a vote of 5-2 in favor.

**The ordinance will take effect Friday, July 17, 2020, and will end 61 days later (September 16, 2020).**

- All customers are required to wear Face Coverings while inside the enclosed area of any Retail Establishment or Foodservice Establishment;
- All Retail Establishments shall require staff to wear, and those staff shall wear, Face Coverings while working in areas open to the general public and areas in which interactions with other staff are likely in which social distancing of at least six feet cannot be observed; and
- All Foodservice Establishments shall require staff who interact with customers (including, without limitation, delivery personnel) to wear, and those staff shall wear, Face Coverings while working.
- Businesses subject to this ordinance are required to post appropriate signage at each public entrance to the building informing anyone entering the building of these requirements, and the operator of the business shall ensure that all people entering the building are in compliance.
- Failure by customers to comply with this ordinance could result in a charge of misdemeanor trespassing as defined in South Carolina Code Section 16-11-520 if they refuse to leave the premises.

**Exemptions. Face Coverings Shall Not Be Required:**

- In outdoor or unenclosed areas appurtenant to Retail Establishments or Foodservice Establishments in which social distancing of at least six feet is possible and observed;
- For people whose religious beliefs prevent them from wearing a Face Covering;
- For those who cannot wear a Face Covering due to a medical or behavioral condition;

- For children under the age of five years old;
- For patrons of Foodservice Establishments while they are dining;
- In private, individual offices;
- When complying with directions of law enforcement officers;
- In settings where it is not practical or feasible to wear a Face Covering, including when obtaining goods or services such as the receipt of: a. dental services, b. barbering services, c. beautician services; or while swimming;
- While doing outdoor physical activity;
- Police officers, firefighters or other first responders when not practical or engaged in a public safety matter of an emergency nature, or persons engaged in the repair or maintenance of infrastructure;
- While exclusively with members of a family or the same household, and no person other than such family or household is within the same enclosed area.