

## **SÜDWESTRUNDFUNK, 22 April 2020 --**

<https://www.swr.de/swraktuell/rheinland-pfalz/maskenpflicht-dreyer-pk-100.html> -- translation by Sandra Archer, 86 AW/PA

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### Face coverings mandatory in Rhineland-Palatinate

Rhineland-Palatinate is also introducing mandatory face coverings due to the coronavirus pandemic. Starting Monday, this rule will apply while using public transportation and shopping in stores.

Rhineland-Palatinate Minister President Malu Dreyer explained that it is very important that government levels act as united as possible during the corona crisis.

Therefore, the heads of government of the states of Rhineland-Palatinate, North Rhine Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Saarland and Bremen agreed to change the strong recommendation to wear face coverings while on public transportation and shopping to a mandatory requirement starting April 27.

“Face coverings can be a contribution to further reduce the risk of infection according to the motto: I protect you, you protect me,” said Dreyer. How long wearing face coverings will be mandatory has not been determined.

### **Necessary preparation time**

Citizens and commercial businesses are given the necessary time to prepare for the new regulation, with enforcement starting on Monday, according to a statement by the State Chancellery.

Until then, the urgent request to cover your mouth and nose on public transportation and while shopping in stores will continue to apply.

### **Face coverings on public transportation and in stores**

Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Berlin, Hesse, Baden-Württemberg and Saxony-Anhalt had introduced mandatory face cover wear or simple mouth-nose protection wear on public transportation and in stores this past Tuesday. Thuringia, Bavaria and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern also announced mandatory face cover wear.

In Saxony, mandatory face cover wear has been in effect since this past Monday. In most other states, mandatory wear of face coverings will be start Monday, April 27.

### **Variations allowed**

The requirement to cover mouth and nose with fabric is intended to minimize the risk of unintentionally infecting the community with the novel coronavirus disease 2019.

In addition to surgical masks, self-sewn fabric masks or scarves and cloths pulled over the face are also permitted as a protective barrier.

### **Rhineland-Palatinate will provide face covering to students**

Malu Dreyer announced on Tuesday at the Frauenlob-Gymnasium [school] in Mainz that the state will give reusable everyday face covers to all students for the gradual school start at the end of April/beginning of May.

"This is an important contribution to more hygiene-safety at school," said the SPD politician when presenting a hygiene plan by state and local authorities for the resumption of school operations.