



## News Release

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### City Lets Face Mask Ordinance Expire but Encourages Continued Use

Citing a significant drop in active positive COVID cases in Phelps County the Rolla City Council did not pass an ordinance to extend the City's facial covering ordinance ("face mask mandate") during its regular Council Meeting on Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. Ordinance No. 4596 would have extended all COVID mandates including facial coverings, occupancy limits on enhanced-risk activities, and 6' separation in all businesses until March 17<sup>th</sup>.

It takes seven (7) affirmative votes to pass an ordinance in the City of Rolla. Council Members Schneider, Murphey, Schott, Eberly, Allen and Ruder voted to extend the ordinance while Council Members Higgins, Crowell, Florence, Meusch and Bolin voted not to extend. Councilperson Lyons was not able to attend the meeting due to a family emergency. The effect of the City's ordinance expiration coupled with Phelps County's related order essentially means there are no mandatory activities related to COVID.

Missouri Governor Mike Parson has extended Missouri's emergency declaration until March 31<sup>st</sup> which encourages all Missourians and business to operate with CDC guidelines of facial mask coverings, frequent hand washing, limited public and private events and safe-distancing. The City of Rolla strongly encourages these important practices while access to vaccinations expand throughout the County over the next several weeks. Governor Parson continues to rely on the cooperation and concern of Missourians to protect themselves, their families and the public – a sentiment shared by Mayor Lou Magdits.

Private businesses and public institutions still have the right to impose COVID protocols and practices to ensure the safety of their employees, patrons, customers and students.

The City of Rolla will continue to cooperate with Phelps Health, Phelps County Health Department, and primary institutions to monitor COVID cases and health impacts. To monitor Missouri and Phelps County trends please go to the MO Show Me Strong Recovery Plan at <https://showmestrong.mo.gov/data/public-health/>.