

COMMUNITY UPDATE

COVID-19



24/07/2020



Today 'face covering Friday' sees new regulations introduced making the wearing of coverings compulsory in shops and supermarkets.

Coverings must be worn in enclosed spaces such as shops, transport hubs, banks and post offices. They should also be worn when buying food and drink to take away from cafes and shops, although you can remove them in venues with table seating to eat and drink.

I'm aware there's been much commentary and debate about this new legislation over the last couple of weeks, not least about our role in enforcing them.

So in response to this, I want to reassure you that our approach to these new laws will be consistent with all previous public health regulations, in that we will engage, explain and encourage, using enforcement only as last resort.

Experience has shown us that the overwhelming majority of people in Norfolk take their responsibilities in controlling the virus seriously. We've seen this through strong compliance with previous regulations and we see the new laws being no different. People want to protect themselves and others around them...why wouldn't you?

Our resources only stretch so far and we will not be patrolling stores or supermarkets checking for levels of compliance. We simply don't have the time to do that. Our priority is always those incidents where levels of harm and risk are highest. If a criminal offence is being committed or likely to be, or where there is a breach of the peace, we will of course deploy officers who will deal with this as they would normally.

Retailers will be doing their bit as part of the regulations to help keep premises safe and I would ask you listen and respect their instructions...after all they are simply trying to do their job in difficult circumstances.

We all have a part to play in this and it's up to our communities and retailers to make the right decision and follow the regulations. This is particularly important as our day-to-day demand returns to more normal levels as lockdown eases and we hit the busy summer period.

Many thanks

Julie Wwendth
Temporary Assistant Chief Constable



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