

Resolution 2020-B

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the novel Coronavirus 2019 Disease (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, as of December 6, 2020, Tennessee was defined as a state in the Red Zone by the White House Coronavirus Task Force, indicating 101 or more new cases per 100,000 population, with the 18th highest rate in the country; and

WHEREAS, as of December 6, 2020, the White House Coronavirus Task Force further stated regarding Tennessee that "Mitigation efforts must increase, including the implementation of key state and local policies with an additional focus on uniform behavioral change including masking, physical distancing, hand hygiene, no indoor gatherings outside of immediate households, and aggressive testing to find the asymptomatic individuals responsible for the majority of infectious spread;" and

WHEREAS, as of December 16, 2020, Knox County new case rate and percent positivity are both above the Board of Health adopted metrics for escalation; and

WHEREAS, as of December 16, 2020, five of the five of the Knox County Health Department Benchmarks are rated as red; and

WHEREAS, a continuing public health emergency exists in Knox County, Tennessee, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and there is need for increased diligence among all citizens to practice the five core actions with fidelity in order to protect the public health and welfare; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that COVID-19 outbreaks are comparatively smaller in states where efforts to contain the virus have been stronger, as compared to those where there were fewer efforts to contain the virus; and

WHEREAS, the state of Tennessee COVID-19 website (insert link) on Dec. 16, 2020, shows mask use at 65% and social distancing at -20% from baseline. Additionally, daily predicted deaths are listed currently at 50 per day and the actual number on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December was 74; and

WHEREAS, the CDC and WHO recognize community use of masks, specifically non-valved multi-layered cloth masks, as an effective COVID-19 mitigation strategy; and

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Knox County Board of Health hereby requests Governor Bill Lee to initiate a statewide face covering/mask executive order in an attempt to further mitigate the spread of Covid-19, hospitalizations associated with Covid-19, and deaths attributed to Covid-19 infection in the State of Tennessee.