Message from OU Chief COVID Officer- University-wide Masking Policy

June 25, 2020

Dear OU Community,

In these final weeks before the fall semester begins, we are entering a new phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. As OU’s Chief COVID Officer, I am writing to you today with an important update on our university-wide campus masking efforts.

Our return to in-person operations as a university community does not mean a return to normal. It does mean adjusting our practices. In Oklahoma in recent days, we have seen a substantial increase in new cases, and as such, we are introducing a new policy that aims to mitigate spread of the virus. Please note that with every new policy and practice, we are keeping the safety, health, and welfare of each one of our community members in mind.

Effective immediately, and until further notice, OU will subscribe to a university-wide masking policy, which applies to faculty, staff, students, and campus visitors across all three campuses. The masking policies can be found here.

Mask-wearing alone is shown to reduce the spread of the virus by 85%. We have a tremendous opportunity to take personal responsibility to do those things that we know to be highly effective at preventing person-to-person transmission of the virus – wearing a mask, observing physical distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals, and practicing good hand hygiene.
All of us should take pride in knowing that we are helping reduce transmission through this practice. Please encourage all those you see not wearing masks to wear a mask for others so that together, we can slow the spread.

Sincerely,
Dale W. Bratzler, DO, MPH, MACOI, FIDSA
University Chief COVID Officer
Professor, College of Medicine and Hudson College of Public Health
Enterprise Chief Quality Officer – OU Medicine