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DATE: May 19, 2020

TO: NMSU Faculty and Staff

Handwritten signature of Dan E. Arvizu in blue ink.

FROM: Chancellor Dan E. Arvizu, Ph.D.

President John D. Floros, Ph.D.

Handwritten signature of John D. Floros in black ink.

SUBJECT: Wearing a face covering at work

If you have been tuning in to the frequent updates from New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, you are already aware that the May 15 Public Health Order, issued by the New Mexico Department of Health, directs that everyone wear face coverings in public, with exceptions for eating, drinking, or exercising and unless otherwise advised by a health care provider. According to the Governor's press release, a recent study found that if 80 percent of us adopt a simple homemade face covering, we could reduce deaths from COVID-19 by between 17 and 45 percent within two months.

In the workplace, New Mexico State University employees must comply with the Governor's order. As an NMSU employee, this means that you must wear at least a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth whenever you are around people on campus. While this type of face covering does not provide the same protection as a medical mask, this cloth "courtesy face covering" is a way to reduce transmission of the COVID-19 virus. You may provide your own face covering or ask your supervisor for one. More information may be found here: <https://safety.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/72/2020/05/NMSU-EHSRM-Pandemic-Face-Coverings-5-18-2020-.pdf>.

Courtesy face coverings are easy to make, and our Bernalillo County FCS 4-H Agent, Nicole Jacobs, has created a video tutorial on sewing your own cloth face covering: <https://youtu.be/bJMefH4mESc>. You can also find instructions online for creating a face covering with no sewing required, such as this tutorial available on the New Mexico Department of Health's COVID-19 website: <https://youtu.be/r1FLAYYzj9M>. The Center for Disease Control also has tips on how to make and use a face covering on its website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

Wearing an appropriate face covering is just one aspect of our multi-pronged approach to help protect the safety and health of our Aggie community, along with social distancing measures, cleaning and disinfecting protocols, and other tactics designed to reduce the risk of transmission on our campuses and facilities. Personal responsibility—stay home if you are feeling ill, wear your courtesy face covering, wash your hands often, and practice healthy hygiene at all times—is absolutely essential for the protection of our students and one another.

Remember, be courteous! My face covering protects you, and your face covering protects me. Together, we can greatly reduce the spread of the virus in our campus community as we prepare for our students' return in the fall.