



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 6, 2020

Sheriff's Office Requesting Donations of Homemade Masks for the Most Vulnerable Community Members

Saint Paul, Minnesota: the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office is requesting donations of homemade face masks for the most vulnerable in our community. Donated face masks will be distributed in high-density hi-rises and other multi-family dwellings where the potential for community spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) is extremely high.

"Narrow hallways, small elevators, and shared spaces—including mailrooms, laundry facilities, community rooms, and worship areas—all make social distancing in these confined living spaces very difficult if not impossible," said Sheriff Bob Fletcher. "These large buildings are home to our most vulnerable citizens, including elderly, disabled, and immigrant communities with limited English proficiency. Many residents do not have access to the internet and rely on person-to-person verbal exchanges for information."

Ramsey County is home to many high-density and multi-family buildings, including Skyline Tower and Mt. Airy. Skyline Tower is the largest single federally subsidized building in Minnesota and also the largest in the United States west of Chicago.

"Should the virus penetrate a high-density multi-family building, it will quickly become a super accelerator," added Sheriff Bob Fletcher. "We're asking for community donations of homemade masks to help prevent outbreaks in these confined living spaces to save lives, reduce treatment costs, free-up hospital beds, and protect medical personnel."

"Protecting the vulnerable will ultimately save our first responders and medical personnel from additional exposure," said Sheriff Bob Fletcher. "This helps 'flatten the curve' so that other patients have access to the necessary medical services."

How to Donate

To facilitate compliance with the Governor's Stay at Home Executive Order, the Sheriff's Help Team—made-up of first responders with appropriate safety equipment—can pick up donations of homemade masks outside of homes or businesses.

To schedule a pick-up:

- Email HelpTeam@co.ramsey.mn.us
- Call or text 651-448-3874

Pick-ups can be scheduled Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

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