



**Press Release - 291/04/2020**

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## **North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Rhine- land Palatinate and the Saarland introduce mandatory mask wearing**

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**Covering of mouth and nose on public transport and in shops as of  
27 April – Laschet: We need to do everything that helps in cau-  
tiously finding a way back to living in normality**

**Statement from the spokespeople for the governments of North  
Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Rhineland Palatinate and the  
Saarland:**

In the view of the state governments of North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Rhineland Palatinate and the Saarland it is of key importance to public acceptance of political decisions that actions taken at state level in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic are, while taking into account specific regional factors, as uniform as possible. In the interest of proceeding in a uniform manner the minister presidents of North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Rhineland Palatinate and the Saarland have agreed that as of 27 April the previous strong recommendation that mouth and nose coverings or so-called everyday masks be worn on public transport and when shopping is to become a mandatory requirement. By bringing this into force from Monday, individuals and retailers are being given the necessary time to prepare for the new regulations. Until then the urgent request that everyone should cover their mouth and nose when on public transport or shopping continues to apply.

Minister President Armin Laschet explains: “North Rhine-Westphalia is sticking to its established line: returning to any responsible form of normality remains closely linked with rigorously pursued protection of health. We need regulations to be as similar as possible in all German states. What is still the most important thing is keeping your distance and rigorous adherence to hygiene rules. According to expert opinion the wearing of everyday masks can also contribute to reducing the risk of infection. We need to do everything that helps in cautiously finding a

way back to living in normality. The mandatory wearing of masks in a few areas of public life can sensibly assist with this.

North Rhine-Westphalia will coordinate its regulations in the retail sector with its neighbouring states of Lower Saxony, Hesse and Rhineland Palatinate and the large majority of other states to the effect that as of Monday it will also be possible, subject to conditions relating to hygiene, controlling entry and avoiding queues, to open those shops that are able to reduce their sales floor space to 800 square metres at most. This decision taken in step with virtually all other states is also in line with our culture of finding a balance, which gives priority to the protection of health and life while simultaneously taking into account the situation for businesses and jobs.”

*This press release is also available online on the state government website [www.land.nrw](http://www.land.nrw)*

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