



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 1, 2020

## **EHLMANN EXPLAINS WHY MASKS ARE NOT BEING MANDATED IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY**

**ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO** – While medical experts initially questioned the benefit of masks at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann says that since the CDC began recommending usage, the County’s Department of Public Health has encouraged the use of masks.

“When it comes to masks, I have faith that the citizens of St. Charles County will do the right thing without government coercion,” Ehlmann said when learning that St. Louis City and St. Louis County are mandating the use of masks. Ehlmann added, “I will continue to do everything I can to remind our citizens that, along with the freedom to decide, they have a responsibility to protect the health of others by wearing a mask.”

This approach is consistent with earlier decisions by the County Executive. When other jurisdictions mandated the closure of businesses they deemed “nonessential,” Ehlmann chose to order residents to frequent only businesses they deemed essential. After they did that, nonessential businesses in St. Charles County closed voluntarily at the same rate they closed in other jurisdictions where government ordered them to.

When St. Charles County followed the governor’s plan to reopen in early May, Ehlmann again expressed faith that his constituents would be responsible with their new-found freedom, and local businesses would not open until they had done everything they could to ensure the safety of customers. That is what happened, and coronavirus case continued to decline throughout May. **(See chart 1)**

Ehlmann pointed out that the growth of cases in the region began changing in April, when St. Charles, Jefferson and Franklin counties began flattening the curve while cases continued to increase elsewhere. **(See chart 2)** That trend continued while the nature of the pandemic changed in June. While cases are up, deaths are down. **(See chart 3)** The number of cases in the 20 to 40 age group has nearly tripled and Ehlmann stressed this age group most needs reminding about the need for a mask. **(See chart 4)** “It is proven that wearing a mask helps stop the spread,” he says, “and that message has been repeated over and over again throughout the world. It’s time for everyone to step up and take personal responsibility.”

Public Health Department Director Demetrius Cianci-Chapman emphasized it is more important than ever for everyone to get on board with wearing a mask. “We are seeing a resurgence in some parts of the country, including in Missouri,” Cianci-Chapman says, “but it’s not too late to turn it around if everyone is cautious and mindful of others.”

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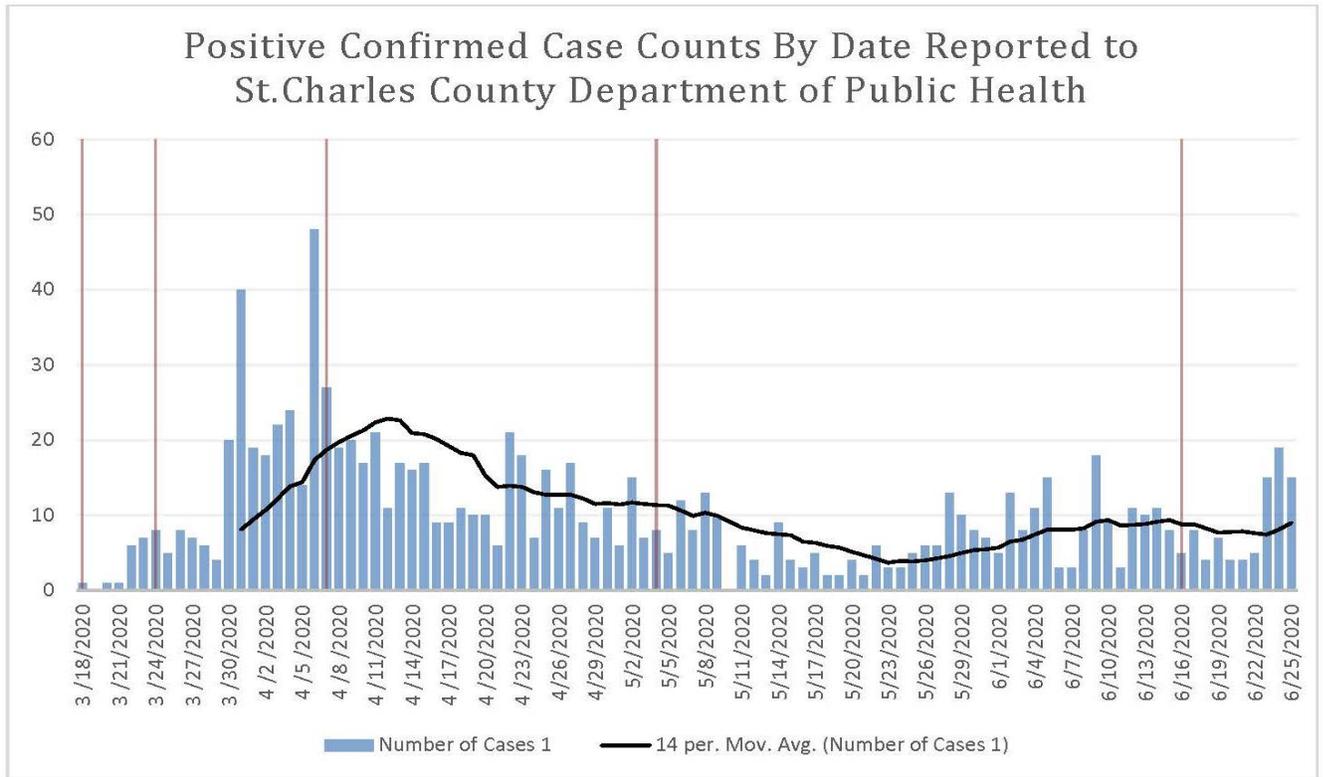
***About St. Charles County:***

*Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. It is home to 15 scenic county parks encompassing more than 3,643 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.*

*With a population of 395,504, St Charles County is home to large employers including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.*

*St. Charles County Government employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit [sccmo.org](http://sccmo.org).*

**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**

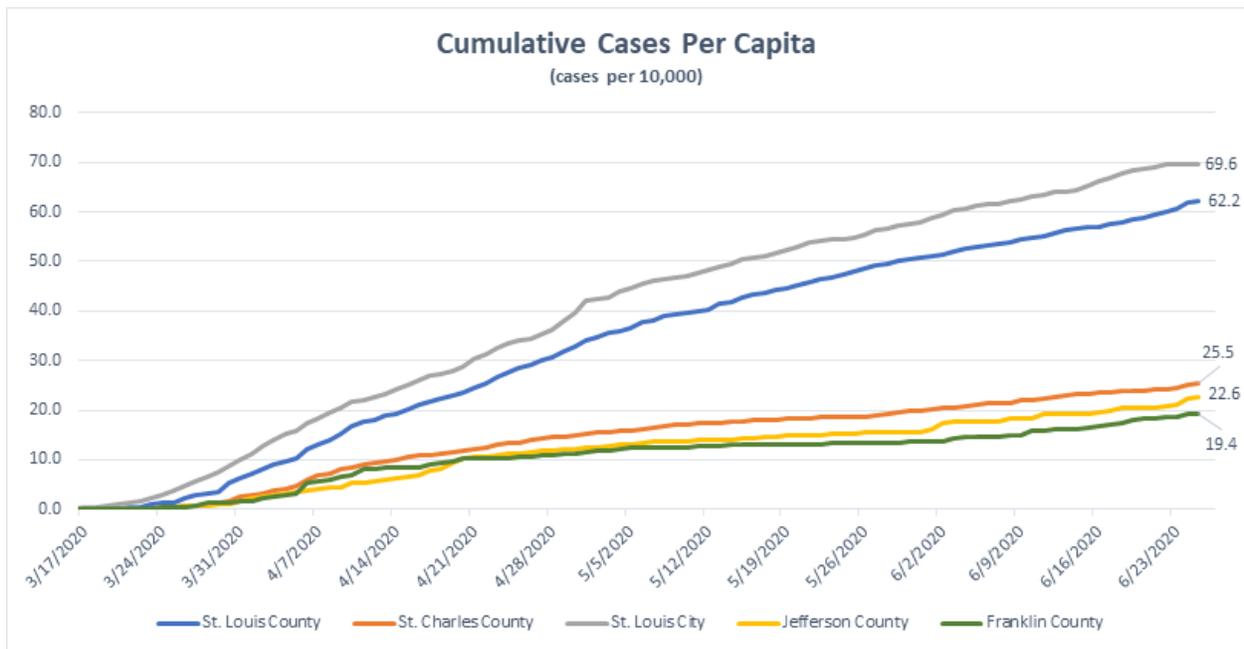


Chart 3

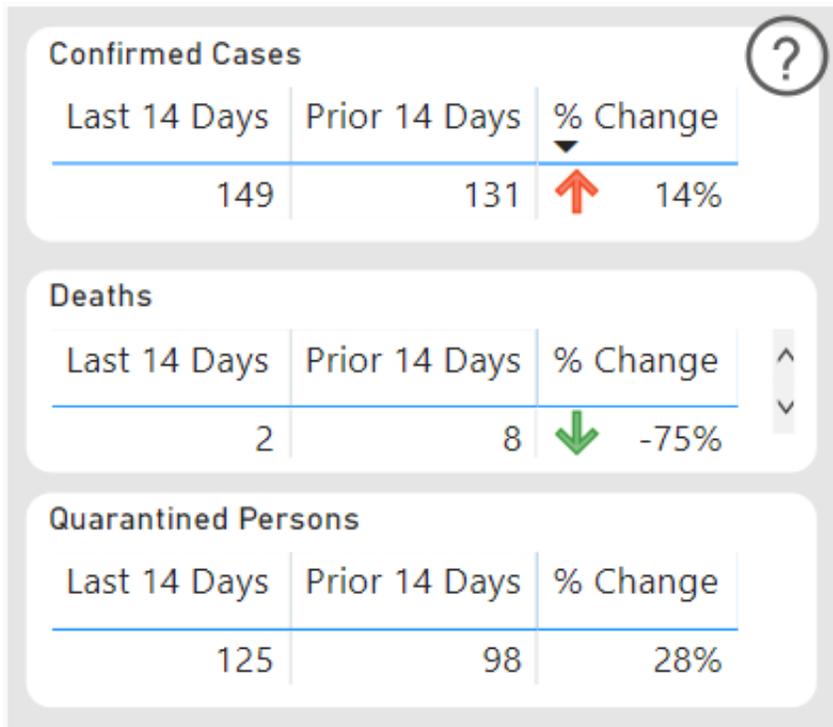
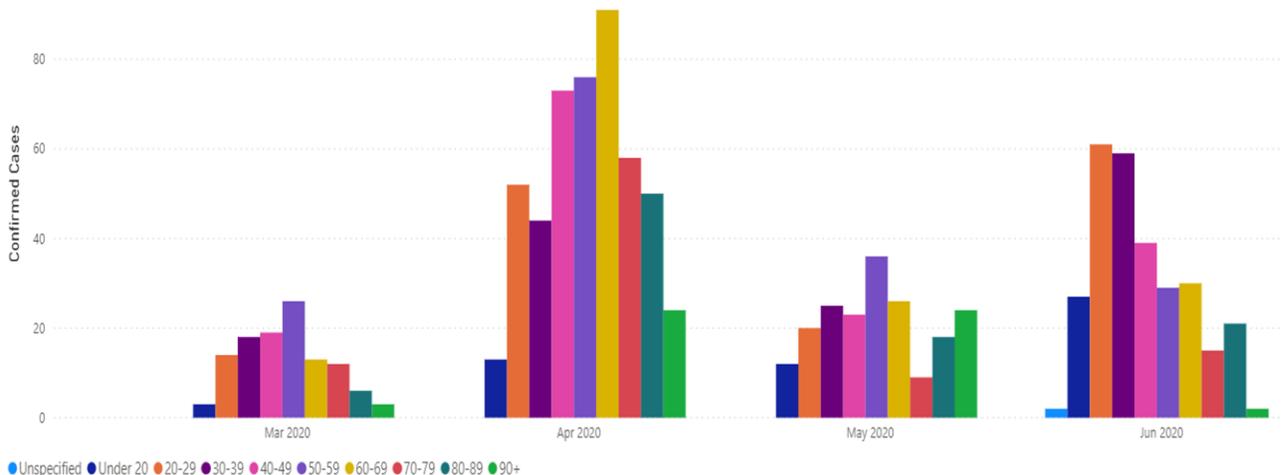


Chart 4

# St. Charles County Cases - by age



date_added_month_year	Unspecified	Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
Mar 2020	0	3	14	18	19	26	13	12	6	3
Apr 2020	0	13	52	44	73	76	91	58	50	24
May 2020	0	12	20	25	23	36	26	9	18	24
Jun 2020	2	27	61	59	39	29	30	15	21	2