

# *Alabama's Republican governor mandates masks after record COVID-19 death toll*

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Birmingham, July 17 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of Alabama, Governor Kay Ivey has issued a statewide mask order until the end of July, reversing months of opposition to a mask mandate. Alabama hospitals reported 47 deaths on Wednesday — another single-day record.

The governor's order came after the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Robert Redfield, said a nationwide mask mandate could save tens of thousands of lives.

Dr. Robert Redfield said: "I think if we can get everybody to wear a mask right now, I really do think that over the next four, six, eight weeks, we could bring this epidemic under control."

In other news, in the U.S. state of Georgia -- where the official COVID-19 death toll passed 3,000 this week -- Governor Brian Kemp issued an executive order Wednesday voiding local mask ordinances. Savannah Mayor Van Johnson, who was the first mayor in Georgia to mandate masks, tweeted in response, "It is officially official. Governor Kemp does not give a damn about us."

Earlier Wednesday, Governor Kemp greeted Donald Trump on the tarmac as the president arrived at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta. Both Trump and Kemp wore no masks as they met,

though the Georgia governor quickly put his back on. Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, who's in self-isolation with COVID-19, said Trump broke the law by violating her executive order requiring facial coverings in public.

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