It’s the culture

There’s a saying about the four major powers of Europe:
In England, everything is allowed except what is forbidden.
In Germany, everything is forbidden except what is allowed.
In Russia, everything is forbidden, including what is allowed.
In France, everything is allowed, including what is forbidden.

The United States is a lot like France that way.
There is a substantial portion of the population that hates being told what to do, even if it’s for their own good.
The Covid-19 virus has killed about 140,000 Americans — close to a 20% increase over the normal death rate — and infections are going up, not down.
The pandemic has plunged the country into the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression with no end in sight.

Last week, the director of the Centers for Disease Control said America could get the coronavirus “under control” within four to six weeks if everyone wore a face mask.
Wearing masks also came up at last week’s Pottstown Council meeting, when Council member Lisa Vanni noted that few of the people attending the Red Horse Car Show on High Street were wearing masks, which is why she didn’t go.
Gov. Wolf has ordered everyone to wear masks indoors, and outdoors when people come within six feet of each other.
Mayor Stephanie Henrick said wearing masks should not be a choice.
“I’m 100 percent behind masks. I support the governor.”

But it’s not realistic to think wearing masks can be enforced, especially when the police don’t wear masks themselves.
Pottstown Police Chief Mick Markovich said all officers are issued masks and gloves, but it’s up to the individual officer’s discretion whether to wear them.
Markovich said police officers are officially exempt from the governor’s order.
And across the country, even when they are required to, many police officers don’t wear masks. At the height of the pandemic in New York City, when hospitals were overflowing with coronavirus victims, most police officers declined to wear masks despite directives from the governor and the mayor to do so.

It’s the culture.
In societies where most people have faith in government guidance, like Taiwan, South Korea, and Denmark, the pandemic was quickly brought under control.
In America, of course, there’s been no leadership from the top. Only name-calling and divisiveness.
So it’s up to each individual to set a good example for others.

NO MASKS — The vast majority of people attending the Red Horse Car Show on High Street earlier this month were not wearing masks.

CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY is a rare exception to the culture, where masked officers handed out 60,000 donated masks to residents.