



PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GREG FISCHER
MAYOR

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

SARAH MOYER, MD, MPH
DIRECTOR

Guidance for Continued Use of Face Coverings August 2021

Overall Context

Currently authorized vaccines in the United States are highly effective at protecting fully vaccinated people against symptomatic and severe COVID-19. A growing body of evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection or transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others. Therefore, CDC guidance has been updated indicating that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

The purpose of this document is to provide information about when face coverings are recommended for the general public. Louisville Metro Public Health Department maintains the responsibility to enact public health mitigation measures as is warranted for the control of communicable disease in our community.

Definitions

For the purposes of this guidance, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson [J&J]/Janssen); there is currently no post-vaccination time limit on fully vaccinated status. Unvaccinated people of all ages, including children, that have not completed a vaccination series or received a single-dose vaccine, or are within < 2 weeks of completion of a vaccination series.

Executive Order

Per the Governor's Executive Order (2021-386, 6/11/2021), universal compliance with face coverings is required for both fully vaccinated and unvaccinated persons (aged 5 years or older) who are not otherwise exempt in the following areas:

- Public transit and transportation hubs
- Healthcare settings
- Long term care settings

Guidance for Continued Use of Face Coverings in Additional Settings and Circumstances

Persons who are not fully immunized should continue to follow CDC prevention measures, including wearing a face covering in public indoor and outdoor settings, maintaining physical distancing of 6 feet or more, and avoiding crowded and poorly ventilated spaces. Determining vaccination status among patrons or visitors in public or retail settings is frequently not feasible. Currently our community is in red (high community spread) level of COVID cases, and only half of our population is vaccinated. As such, this document is our recommendation for universal use of face coverings for **vaccinated and unvaccinated** individuals in indoor settings where risk of SARS-CoV-2 is increased, particularly where it is likely that unvaccinated persons may be present and physical distancing is not possible. This includes settings such as:

- Correctional facilities
- Homeless shelters
- Non-healthcare congregate living (ex. dormitories)
- Indoor gathering places (ex. gyms, places of worship)
- Indoor retail establishments (ex. grocery, department stores, salons)
- Indoor music, sports, and entertainment venues
- Large numbers of unvaccinated persons including children < 12 years (ex. school, camp, childcare). [The CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students and visitors to schools regardless of vaccination status.](#)

Although the risk of infection and transmission for vaccinated persons is low, Louisville Metro Public Health Department is recommending the use of face coverings due to the following factors:

- Vaccination coverage for the entire Jefferson County population is approximately 50.5%
- Vaccination rate for ages 12 to 18 in Jefferson County is at 7.2%

- Pockets of Jefferson County remain lower at 20% to 30% fully vaccinated
- Case counts in Red Zone (more than 25 positive cases/100,000 people per day), signifying high community spread is happening.
- High level of individuals with immunocompromising conditions (HIV, inherited immune disorders, undergoing treatment with radiation or drugs that suppress the immune system, etc.)

Additional Resources

- [Guidance for Wearing Mask- CDC](#)
- [Team Kentucky](#)