



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2021

Contact: press@michigan.gov

Gov. Whitmer Lifts Mask Requirement for Fully Vaccinated Michiganders

Fully vaccinated Michiganders no longer required to wear a mask or face covering indoors or outdoors.

LANSING, Mich. – Governor Gretchen Whitmer today announced the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is updating the Gatherings and Mask Order to align with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's latest guidance on face coverings. The new order will effect on Saturday, May 15 at 9AM.

"For more than a year, we've been following the best data and science to slow the spread of COVID-19 and save lives," said **Governor Gretchen Whitmer**. "The vast majority of us have trusted the scientists and experts to keep us safe during the pandemic, and it has worked. With millions of Michiganders fully vaccinated, we can now safely and confidently take the next step to get back to normal. The message is clear: vaccines work to protect you and your loved ones. If you have not yet received your vaccine, now is the time to sign up. This pandemic has been one of the toughest challenges of our lifetimes, but we came together as a state to persevere. We have all been working incredibly hard toward getting back to some sense of normalcy, and today's news makes all of that work worthwhile."

On Thursday, the CDC released updated guidance recommending "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."

"It's critical that eligible Michigan residents who have not yet been vaccinated schedule their appointments as soon as they can," said **Dr. Joneigh Khaldun**, chief medical executive and MDHHS chief deputy director for health. "Getting shots in arms is the best way to end the pandemic. If you have not yet been vaccinated, it is important to continue to mask up to protect yourself and others from COVID-19."

"The safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine and all the hard work that Michiganders have done allows us to take a big step in returning to normal," said **MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel**. "This updated order keeps Michigan in alignment with CDC guidance that is based on the knowledge of health experts. I urge our residents to continue to be respectful of each other as we move forward."

Under the updated MDHHS Gatherings and Mask Order, Michiganders who are outdoors will no longer need to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. While indoors, fully vaccinated Michiganders will no longer need to wear a mask, but residents who are not vaccinated, or have not completed their vaccinations, must continue to wear a mask or face covering to protect themselves and others. After July 1, the broad indoor mask mandate will expire.

Today's news was welcomed with bipartisan support:

"The new guidance from the CDC and the state's loosening of the mask mandate in a safe way is very welcome to our communities - we are excited to get back to normal," **Mayor Don Gerrie (R - Sault Ste Marie)** said. "We appreciate the partnership efforts throughout our state and in our local communities in following the covid-safe guidelines and making sure vaccinations are readily accessible to residents in a fast and efficient manner. I am thankful every day for the amazing health care and public safety professionals we have in Michigan."

To date, Michigan has administered 7,875,785 vaccines. According to CDC data, 55.6% of Michiganders ages 16 and older have received at least one dose, with more than 43% percent of Michiganders ages 16 and older being fully vaccinated. The state has also administered the vaccine to 927 Michiganders between the ages of 12 to 15 years old.

###