



8/5/2021 Indoor Mask Directive FAQ's

What is the difference between a directive and an order?

A *directive* is a guideline/recommendation that should be followed to achieve a particular goal – in this case, decreased COVID-19 infection and spread. This DIRECTIVE is voluntary – however, we do urge residents and local county businesses to follow this guideline to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of others in the community.

A health order is more specific- one or more actions that must be taken in response to a specific event or risk. Violating health orders is a misdemeanor - however, the goal of a local order is to encourage compliance for the sake of everyone's safety, not to penalize people. Violations to state and local orders can be reported to local law enforcement. Responses may vary according to the urgency of any given situation and the availability of law enforcement. First steps will always include education and engagement rather than penalties. Violating orders issued by the local health officer is a misdemeanor – but the goal is to gain compliance, not to charge people with crimes.

I'm vaccinated, do I still have to wear a mask?

We urge all people, vaccinated or unvaccinated, to wear a mask in any INDOOR public space, if the level of transmission in Genesee County is “Substantial” or “High”. While vaccinated individuals have excellent protection from COVID-19, the Delta variant is highly contagious compared with previous strains and people who are vaccinated can spread the virus to unvaccinated individuals. To follow the transmission level of COVID-19 in the county, you can see it at [MI Start Map Risk Calculator](#).

**This is a DIRECTIVE and therefore, wearing a mask is voluntarily but is strongly recommended*

Does this directive include restaurants?

This DIRECTIVE applies to indoor spaces that are open to the public, including retail, grocery stores, government buildings, and other businesses and places where members of the public can enter freely. Therefore, when transmission is substantial or high in Genesee County this DIRECTIVE would apply to restaurants.

Can I leave a complaint about a business not wearing masks?

No. This is a DIRECTIVE – we are asking that businesses and citizens voluntarily resume mask wearing when the levels of COVID increase in the community. There is no penalty for businesses that choose not to comply with local public health guidance at this time.

Does the GCHD plan to enforce the mask wearing directive?

No. We issued this directive to help inform people on how to best protect themselves and others in the community. It is based on the most recent studies on spread of COVID-19 in the community and the increased risk of the highly transmissible variant Delta that has been seen throughout the U.S.A.

Do my vaccinated/unvaccinated children have to wear a mask in school?

The health department strongly recommends that all children and staff in schools wear face covering within indoor spaces. There is currently not a vaccine that is available to children under 12. However, each school district will make its own decision on mask policy.

Does this directive require businesses to prohibit customers from entering without a mask?

No, each business can create their own policy regarding this.

Are capacity limits and social distancing required in restaurants again?

Restaurant capacity limits are set by the state department of health and human services. Businesses should follow safety requirements and guidelines issued by MIOSHA.

Are we required to social distance in public again?

This is a DIRECTIVE, and therefore wearing a mask and maintaining social distancing are voluntary. We urge all people to resume mask wearing and social distancing as these measures have and will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection.

How long will this directive last?

This DIRECTIVE will remain in effect until the Genesee County Health Department confirms that COVID-19 disease rates have declined to sustained low levels of transmission as defined by the CDC or is otherwise rescinded.

One or more of the following measures will be used:

- COVID-19 disease rates are declining and stabilize to low or moderate levels of community transmission for at least two weeks in a row as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and per the MI Start Map Risk Calculator;
- COVID-19 hospitalizations and death rates stabilize at low or moderate levels
- A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is authorized by the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for use in children 5 years through 11 years of age

I'm an employee who is vaccinated/unvaccinated, can my employer require me to wear a mask?

Yes. Employers should create their own workplace safety policies, compliant with MIOSHA requirements and guidelines. Employers may choose to require all employees to wear masks or that only those who are unvaccinated must wear masks; they may also choose to make no policy regarding mask wearing.