



CITY OF LAWRENCE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Brian A. DePeña
Mayor of Lawrence

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

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MASK MANDATE RESCISSION

March 1, 2022, Lawrence MA – **Mayor Brian A. DePena** and the Local Board of Health report that the City of Lawrence is on track to lift the City’s Executive Order mandating indoor masks beginning on **Friday, March 4, 2022**. The City of Lawrence’s case count and positivity rate metrics has sharply declined since the devastating spike of positive cases and Covid-19 related deaths in December 2021 and January 2022.

The Executive Order is suspended when the City falls below a level of four percent (4%) “percent positivity” of molecular tests among City of Lawrence residents AND when the “incident rate” of new COVID-19 cases among City of Lawrence residents falls below a level of an average of ten (10) or more cases per day over a 14-day period using a per-capita calculation of 100,000 population. The data used to trigger a suspension of the Order is published by the Department of Public Health on Thursday evenings.

According to the City’s data, during the February 13th to February 26th reporting period, approximately 90 new confirmed Covid-19 cases were reported. This is an average of 6.4 daily cases per day (7.3 using a per-capita calculation of 100,000 population). With this news, the City anticipates that is will officially move out of the “higher risk” level this Thursday, March 3, 2022.

“Over the past few months, we boosted testing and vaccinations in an effort to save the lives of our vulnerable population, protect our school children, and keep our economy open and growing,” explained **Mayor Brian A. DePena**. “We went from over one thousand cases in one day in early January to an average of four cases a day this past week,” DePena added. “Although the risk is not over, the suspension of the mask Order will allow individuals and businesses to choose the health mitigation that is best for them and their families.”

Mike Armano, Director for the Local Board of Health, pointed out “Vaccination remains the most effective protection against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. We urge all eligible residents to get vaccinated and stay up to date on COVID vaccinations including when eligible for booster doses.”



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Armano added, "Even though the City of Lawrence continues to lead the Merrimack Valley in vaccination rates of residents 30 years old and older, the youth vaccination rate is still trailing behind. It's important that residents remain vigilant when around unvaccinated and vulnerable populations."

While masks will no longer be required per the City's Executive Order, all people in Massachusetts, regardless of vaccination status, are required to continue wearing face coverings in certain settings, including some transportation and health care facilities. Please visit the following link for a complete list of venues where face coverings have remained mandatory since May 29, 2021: www.mass.gov/maskrules.

Please also note, with the suspension of the City's Executive Order, the Local Board of Health issues the following advisories and recommendations:

Advisory for individuals fully vaccinated

The Local Board of Health advises that a fully vaccinated person should wear a mask or face covering when indoors, and not in your own home, (1) if you have a weakened immune system, (2) if you are at increased risk for severe disease because of your age, (3) if you have an underlying medical condition, (4) if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, (5) if someone in your household is at increased risk for severe disease, or (6) if someone in your household is unvaccinated.

Advisory for individuals not fully vaccinated

The Local Board of Health advises that individuals not fully vaccinated should wear a mask when indoors with others to help prevent spreading COVID-19.

Individuals who have tested positive or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 must follow the isolation and quarantine guidance, which includes wearing a mask in public for 5 more days after leaving isolation or quarantine on Day 5, regardless of vaccination status.

When you wear a face covering or cloth mask, it should:

- Be the highest quality mask that is comfortable and that you will wear consistently,
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
- Be secured with ties or ear loops,



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- Include multiple layers of fabric,
- Allow for breathing without restriction, and
- Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Please visit the following link for updated CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Please visit the following link for updated Department of Public Health guidance regarding the use of face coverings: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements>.

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