

City of Racine: To require masks of employees and public in city buildings

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City of Racine - Today, Dottie-Kay Bowersox, the City of Racine Public Health Administrator, following yesterday's updated guidance from the CDC announced that the City will require city staff and members of the public to wear facemasks appropriately while they are in City owned buildings regardless of their vaccination status starting Thursday July, 29th.

The mask requirement includes but is not limited to:

- City employees while at work, indoors, if they are not alone in an individual office with the door closed
- City employees while traveling for work in City vehicles with more than one passenger
- Members of public when entering City facilities including City Hall, City Hall Annex, Fire and Police facilities, Community Centers, and other City building
- Members of the public engaged in programming and sports inside of City owned Community Centers

In issuing these new requirements for City buildings, Dottie-Kay Bowersox released the following statement:

“Based on the CDC facial mask recommendations released yesterday and the spike in the number of COVID-19 positive cases, the City of Racine Public Health Department is requiring all City employees and visitors to City buildings to don facial masks. This is to deter the potential spread of the highly infectious Delta variant strain of the virus. Due to the recent increase in the number of COVID-19

positive cases, the CDC has placed the City of Racine in the “Substantial Transmission Category” defined by case rate over the last seven days. Currently, the City’s COVID-19 case rate is 73 per 100,000, which is a 900% increase over the last two weeks. There has been a steady increase in the number of COVID-19 positive cases within the City of Racine jurisdictions over the last month and we currently have a 16% positivity rate of those individuals being tested – that is up from 3% just over two weeks ago.

The City’s COVID-19 vaccination rate is only at 38.5% and 39.3% when including Wind Point and Elmwood Park. Therefore, it is imperative that eligible individuals receive the COVID-19 vaccination in order to curb this latest spike of positive cases. The COVID-19 vaccine protects not only the individual who is vaccinated, but also those who are not eligible to be vaccinated such as children under the age of twelve. Of the tools that have been proven effective against the virus, the donning of facial masks, has been one standard that has made a difference. The CDC recommendation also includes donning a facial mask in all indoor public settings in areas experiencing substantial and/or high transmission rates. Regardless of local COVID-19 case activity, all individuals engaged in K-12 schools are recommended to utilize facial masks including students, facility, and personnel.

City buildings will remain open for business and community members are invited to continue visiting them knowing that we require masks because their safety and that of City employees remain our number one priority.

More information about how to get tested or vaccinated from COVID-19 can be found at www.racinecoronavirus.org. Questions can be directed to the City of Racine Public Health Department at publichealth@cityofracine.org or 262-636-9201.