

Public Health Madison and Dane County: Extends face covering Emergency Order

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Effective Friday, October 8, 2021 at 12:01am, Public Health Madison & Dane County is issuing [Face Covering Emergency Order #3](#). No changes were made to the existing face covering order, which requires that everyone age 2 and older wear a face covering or mask when in any enclosed building, where other people, except for members of the person's own household or living unit, could be present.

The rate of cases in Dane County has risen rapidly since the Delta variant became dominant. On July 19, our weekly case rate per 100,000 was 22, and on September 19, our weekly case rate per 100,000 was 209. On September 27, our weekly case rate per 100,000 was 157. While lower than in early September, Dane County remains in CDC's high level of community transmission.

"Vaccination is our top intervention, and we're seeing an impact from our high rates," said Janel Heinrich, Director of Public Health Madison & Dane County. "As we've done all along with our layered mitigation approach, we'll keep masks as an extra layer of protection as we navigate our way to lower levels of CDC's community transmission thresholds."

Recently, a large, randomized [trial](#) led by researchers at Stanford Medicine and Yale University added more evidence to the effectiveness of masking. The trial found that wearing a [surgical mask](#) over the mouth and nose is an effective way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in community settings.

Additionally, [two recent studies](#) released by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) shows that mask requirements in schools during the 2021-2022 school year have

been associated with [less pediatric COVID cases](#) and [less outbreaks](#) in schools.

“Children under 12 are still unable to get vaccinated, which means it is just as important now as it has ever been, to get vaccinated if you can, wear a mask when you should, and wash your hands often,” said City of Madison Mayor, Satya Rhodes-Conway. “It is our responsibility to do everything we can to protect our most vulnerable population until they are eligible to be vaccinated.”

84.9% of the eligible population (ages 12+) in Dane County have received at least one dose of vaccine, 73.6% of the total population.

“We know that vaccination remains our best pathway out of this pandemic and currently tens of thousands of our residents are still unvaccinated and unprotected from severe outcomes of COVID-19,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “As the fast-spreading delta variant continues to impact case rates, now is not the time to delay any longer.”

The order will be in effect until Friday, November 5, 2021 at 12:01 a.m. View [Face Covering Emergency Order #3](#) for additional information.

“When you compare our county to the rest of the state and the country, we have consistently maintained lower infection rates and lower hospitalization rates,” said Jerry Halverson, MD, Chair of the Board of Health. “We have done this by following the science and implementing layered prevention, including masking up indoors and getting vaccinated.”

For more information about the COVID-19 in Dane County and the latest public health order, visit publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus. You can also follow @publichealthmdc on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).