

Public Health Madison and Dane County: Face Covering Emergency Order extension

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Effective at 12:01am on November 5, 2021, [Face Covering Emergency Order #4](#) will take effect. The Order requires face coverings among people ages two and older when in any enclosed space open to the public where other people, except for members of the person's own household or living unit are present. Following 22 days, this order will expire and at this point in time, Public Health Madison & Dane County does not plan to replace it with any other mask requirements.

"This decision comes as a result of decreasing case rates, increasing vaccination rates and the expansion of eligibility for booster doses which will only help strengthen our collective immunity," said Janel Heinrich, Director of Public Health Madison & Dane County. "It is no coincidence that transmission is dropping; it reflects the result of intentional, effective public health interventions and another incredible effort by the people of Dane County."

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are currently in the process of approving Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for children 5-11 years old. Public Health strongly recommends that schools continue to require masks among students, teachers, and staff based on [evidence](#) that masking is an effective tool in school settings. One [study](#) showed that schools without mask requirements were 3.5 times more likely to have COVID outbreaks than schools with mask requirements.

"Our main goal with masking guidelines continues to be protecting those most

vulnerable to the virus, including unvaccinated children,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “We know wearing masks helps keep kids from getting sick in school settings and keeps kids in school. As soon as the Wisconsin Department of Health Services authorizes us to do so, we have the capacity to vaccinate many people quickly and are [prepared](#) to get our kids vaccinated as soon as possible.”

Dane County has the highest vaccination rate in the state, with over 85% of eligible residents having at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine protection. Vaccines are still highly effective in preventing severe outcomes from COVID-19.

“With the expansion of eligibility for vaccines, the protection in our County is only going to continue to grow,” said Satya Rhodes-Conway, City of Madison Mayor. “Get your booster dose if you can, get your children vaccinated if you can, and we can continue moving this city and this county forward.”

Face coverings remain an [effective tool](#) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially for those who are not yet vaccinated. The [case rate](#) in Dane County jumped when the Delta variant became dominant, but is now on a downward trend. On October 4, an average of 147 people were testing positive per day. On October 28, an average of 88 people were testing positive per day.

“We are the only community in the state to add the extra layer of protection of masks during this crucial time in the pandemic, and we are seeing fewer people getting sick from COVID-19,” said Jerry Halverson, MD, Chair of the Board of Health. “We believe the steps we have taken as a community worked; by getting vaccinated, wearing a mask indoors, and taking as many steps as possible to protect ourselves and each other, we have made a real impact.”

The order will be in effect until Saturday, November 27, 2021 at 12:01 a.m. View [Face Covering Emergency Order #4](#) for additional information.

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