

# City of Racine: Mayor Mason signs order to end enforcement of mask ordinance, full sunset of ordinance headed for vote at Common Council on Tuesday

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*Following a decline in the case rate, Public Health Department supports this recommendation*

**City of Racine** – Today, City of Racine Mayor Cory Mason announced that he signed an executive order suspending enforcement of the City’s facemask ordinance effective Noon today. A full sunset of the ordinance will be sent to the Common Council for a vote at their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm.

“I have been in discussion with the Public Health Department for several weeks, monitoring the trend of the case rate of COVID-19 in our community. With the decline in cases, the Public Health Department is comfortable suspending enforcement on the City’s mask ordinance and recommend the ordinance be permitted to expire at next week’s meeting of the Common Council,” **said Mayor Cory Mason.**

“This does not mean that the pandemic is over. We hope it is in serious decline, but that does not mean it does not still present a serious threat to health, especially if you are not vaccinated. Getting vaccinated and wearing a mask are still two highly

recommended ways to mitigate your risk of getting sick from Covid. And while the ordinance may get repealed next Tuesday, that does not prevent individual businesses, schools, or organizations from requiring masks and I encourage everyone to continue to take precautions they feel are best to protect themselves and their loved ones,” **continued Mayor Mason.**

“Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Racine Public Health Department has been determined to follow science and data to implement protective public health measures. Over the last few months, the Delta and Omicron COVID variants dominated much of the country with case counts rapidly increasing to levels not previously experienced. For example, the City of Racine case rate in the early part of January was nearing 1,800 cases per 100,000 individuals and now is fewer than 100 cases per 100,000 individuals. In addition, hospitalizations associated with COVID-19 have followed a similar downward trend. Coupled with the increasing availability and easy of at-home testing as well as the withdrawal from mandatory universal contact tracing are considerations to retiring the current facemask ordinance,” **said Dottie-Kay Bowersox, Public Health Administrator for the City of Racine.**

While the ordinance is proposed to sunset on March 1, 2022, at 11:59pm, the use of fundamental public health precautions remain valuable tools. Tools and best practices include:

- Wear a mask that fits (sits snugly over both your nose and mouth) and is made of two or three layers of material.
- Get vaccinated from COVID-19, including a booster dose when eligible.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, you must isolate at home for at least 5 days, until you feel well. Following isolation, you should wear a mask in public for up to 5 additional days (through day 10). See [www.racinecoronavirus.org/positive](http://www.racinecoronavirus.org/positive) for more information.
- If you get exposed to COVID-19, you should quarantine at home for 5 days. Following quarantine, you should wear a mask in public for 5 additional days. See [www.racinecoronavirus.org/contact](http://www.racinecoronavirus.org/contact) for more information.
- Continue to follow workplace and/or school requirements for mask usage as well as quarantine and isolation timelines.
- If you or someone in your household is sick or was exposed to COVID-19, consider wearing a mask at home to prevent the spread of disease to others in

the household.

- Masks continue to be required by federal law when using public transportation, including buses, taxis, and ride sharing apps such as Uber or Lyft.
- Posted mask requirements by businesses and other facilities (such as hospitals and clinics) must be followed.

Members of the public will not be required to wear masks in City buildings starting at Noon today. However, City employees will still be required to follow employee policies including masks and testing requirements. Internal staff policies are expected to be reviewed in coming weeks.

Members of the public who want to watch the meeting of the Common Council next Tuesday can go to the City's Facebook page at 7:00pm here: <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfRacineWI>