

**ATTENTION: This Order is not effective until midnight on May 28, 2021.**



*Commonwealth of Virginia  
Office of the Governor*

## *Executive Order*

**NUMBER SEVENTY-NINE (2021)**

**AND**

**ORDER OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY TEN**

**ENDING OF COMMONSENSE PUBLIC HEALTH RESTRICTIONS  
DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

### **Importance of the Issue**

Since March 2020, Virginians have fought against the spread of COVID-19. We have witnessed service and sacrifice across the Commonwealth from our frontline workers, our students and teachers, our business owners, essential employees, and our families and neighbors. We have lost an astounding number of Virginians to this pandemic, and everyone has lost something. Commonsense public health restrictions have kept many Virginians safe during the last year, and with vaccines now widely available – over three millions Virginians are fully vaccinated and safe from serious illness or death caused by COVID-19 – it is time to begin our new normal. COVID-19 remains a serious risk to unvaccinated people, and I encourage all Virginians to get their shot as soon as possible. Masks are a critical tool in protecting yourself and others until you are fully vaccinated.

### **Directive**

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Virginia, by § 44-146.17 of the *Code of Virginia*, by any other applicable law, and in furtherance of Amended Executive Order 51 (2020), and by virtue of the authority vested in the State Health Commissioner pursuant to §§ 32.1-13, 32.1-20, and 35.1-10 of the *Code of Virginia*, the following is ordered:

## **CONTINUED GUIDANCE ON MASK WEARING**

### **A. Masks – Indoors and Outdoors**

All individuals in the Commonwealth aged five and older should cover their mouth and nose with a mask in accordance with the Center for Disease Control and Protection guidance linked [here](#). If there is a conflict between the sector-specific guidelines and this section, the sector-specific guidelines governs.

### **B. Masks – Enforcement**

1. The Virginia Department of Health shall have authority to enforce this Order. The State Health Commissioner may also seek injunctive relief in circuit court for violation of this Order, pursuant to § 32.1-27 of the *Code of Virginia*.
2. The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry, pursuant to § 40.1-51.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, pursuant to 18 Va. Admin. Code § 41-20-280, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, pursuant to § 3.2-5106 of the *Code of Virginia* or any other law applicable to these agencies, shall have authority to enforce section I of this Order.
3. Medical-grade masks and personal protective equipment should be reserved for medical personnel. The use of cloth masks does not replace the need to maintain the appropriate physical distancing, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces routinely in all public settings, stay home when sick, and practice frequent handwashing.

### **C. Masks – Exceptions**

1. Where required to wear a mask, the requirement does not apply to the following:
  - a. While eating or drinking;
  - b. Individuals exercising or using exercise equipment;
  - c. Any person who is playing a musical instrument when wearing a mask would inhibit the playing of the instrument (e.g. wind or brass instrument) so long as at least ten feet of physical distance can be maintained from other persons, whether the rehearsal or performance is indoors or outdoors;
  - d. Any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance;
  - e. Any person seeking to communicate with people who are deaf or hard of hearing and for

which the mouth needs to be visible;

- f. When temporary removal of the mask is necessary to secure government or medical services;
  - g. When necessary to participate in a religious ritual; and
  - h. Persons with health conditions or disabilities that prohibit wearing a mask. Nothing in this Order shall require the use of a mask by any person for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition. Adaptations and alternatives for individuals with health conditions or disabilities should be considered whenever possible to increase the feasibility of wearing a mask to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading if it is not possible to wear one.
2. Any person who declines to wear a mask because of a medical condition shall not be required to produce or carry medical documentation verifying the stated condition nor shall the person be required to identify the precise underlying medical condition.

#### **D. Masks – Public and Private K-12 Schools**

All students, teachers, staff, and visitors must wear a mask over their nose and mouth while on school property subject to **section C**.

#### **E. Masks – Waiver**

The waiver of § 18.2-422 of the *Code of Virginia* is continued, so as to allow the wearing of a medical mask, respirator, or any other protective face covering for the purpose of facilitating the protection of one's personal health in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency declared by the State Health Commissioner on February 7, 2020, and reflected in Amended Executive Order 51 (2020) declaring a state of emergency in the Commonwealth. Amended Executive Order 51 (2020) remains so amended. This waiver is effective as of March 12, 2020 and will remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 2021, unless amended or rescinded by further executive order.

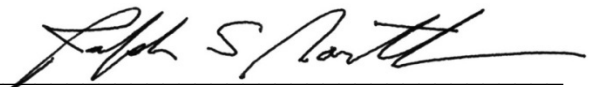
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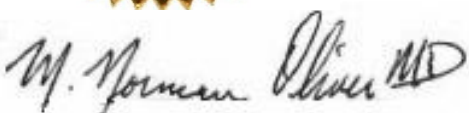
**Effective Date of this Executive Order**

This Order is in furtherance of Amended Executive Order 51 (2020). Further, this Order terminates Seventh Amended Number Seventy-Two (2021) and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine, shall be effective **midnight on May 28, 2021**, and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded by further executive order.

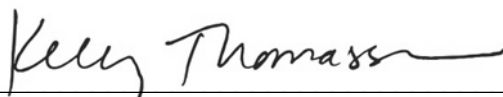
Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Seal of the Office of the State Health Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Virginia, **this 14th day of May, 2021.**



  
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Ralph S. Northam, Governor

  
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M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA  
State Health Commissioner

Attest:

  
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Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth




## COVID-19

# Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People

Updated May 13, 2021

## Summary of Recent Changes

Updates as of May 13, 2021 

- Update that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance
- Update that fully vaccinated people can refrain from testing following a known exposure unless they are residents or employees of a correctional or detention facility or a homeless shelter

# Choosing Safer Activities

Accessible link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/participate-in-activities.html>

	Unvaccinated People	Examples of Activities	Fully Vaccinated People
		<b>Outdoor</b>	
Safest		Walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people	
Less Safe		Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households	
Least Safe		Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event	
		<b>Indoor</b>	
Less Safe		Visit a barber or hair salon	
		Go to an uncrowded, indoor shopping center or museum	
		Ride public transport with limited occupancy	
		Attend a small, indoor gathering of fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people from multiple households	
Least Safe		Go to an indoor movie theater	
		Attend a full-capacity worship service	
		Sing in an indoor chorus	
		Eat at an indoor restaurant or bar	
		Participate in an indoor, high intensity exercise class	

## Get a COVID-19 vaccine



**Prevention measures not needed**



**Take prevention measures**

Wear a mask, stay 6 feet apart, and wash your hands.

- Safety levels assume the recommended prevention measures are followed, both by the individual and the venue (if applicable).
- CDC cannot provide the specific risk level for every activity in every community. It is important to consider your own personal situation and the risk to you, your family, and your community before venturing out.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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INFOGRAPHIC

If you are fully vaccinated you can start doing many things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic.

## Key Points

The following recommendations apply to non-healthcare settings. For related information for healthcare settings, visit [Updated Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination](#).

Fully vaccinated people can:

- Resume activities without wearing masks or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance

- Resume domestic travel and refrain from testing before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel

- Refrain from testing before leaving the United States for international travel (unless required by the destination) and refrain from self-quarantine after arriving back in the United States

- Refrain from testing following a known exposure, if asymptomatic, with some exceptions for specific settings

- Refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic

- Refrain from routine screening testing if feasible

For now, fully vaccinated people should continue to:

- Get tested if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#)

- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations

## Overview

Currently authorized vaccines in the United States are highly effective at protecting vaccinated people against symptomatic and severe COVID-19. Additionally, a [growing body of evidence](#) suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection or transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others. How long vaccine protection lasts and how much vaccines protect against emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants are still under investigation.

For the purposes of this guidance, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19  $\geq 2$  weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or  $\geq 2$  weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson [J&J]/Janssen)\*; there is currently no post-vaccination time limit on fully vaccinated status. Unvaccinated people refers to individuals of all ages, including children, that have not completed a vaccination series or received a single-dose vaccine.

At this time, there are limited data on vaccine protection in people who are immunocompromised. People with immunocompromising conditions, including those taking immunosuppressive medications (for instance drugs, such as mycophenolate and rituximab, to suppress rejection of transplanted organs or to treat rheumatologic conditions), should discuss the need for personal protective measures with their healthcare provider after vaccination.

This guidance provides recommendations for fully vaccinated people, including:

- How fully vaccinated people can safely resume activities
- How fully vaccinated people should approach domestic and international travel
- How fully vaccinated people should approach isolation, quarantine, and testing

CDC will continue to evaluate and update public health recommendations for fully vaccinated people as more information, including on new variants, becomes available. Further information on evidence and considerations related to these recommendations is available in the [Science Brief](#).

## Guiding Principles for Fully Vaccinated People

Indoor and outdoor activities pose minimal risk to fully vaccinated people.

Fully vaccinated people have a reduced risk of transmitting SARS-CoV-2 to unvaccinated people.

Fully vaccinated people should still get tested if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#)

Fully vaccinated people should not visit private or public settings if they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days or are experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

Fully vaccinated people should continue to follow any applicable federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.

## Recommendations for Indoor and Outdoor Settings

Risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection is minimal for fully vaccinated people. The risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission from fully vaccinated people to unvaccinated people is also reduced. Therefore, fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. Fully vaccinated people should also continue to wear a well-fitted mask in correctional facilities and homeless shelters. [Prevention measures](#) are still recommended for unvaccinated people.

## Travel

Fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and spread SARS-CoV-2 and can now travel at low risk to themselves within the United States. International travelers need to pay close attention to the [situation at their international destinations](#) before traveling due to the spread of new variants and because the burden of COVID-19 varies globally.

CDC prevention measures continue to apply to all travelers, including those who are vaccinated. All travelers are [required to wear a mask](#) on all planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

### Domestic travel (within the United States or to a U.S. territory)

- Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to get a SARS-CoV-2 viral test before or after domestic travel, unless testing is required by local, state, or territorial health authorities.
- Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to self-quarantine following domestic travel.
- For more information, see [Domestic Travel During COVID-19](#).

### International travel

- Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to get tested before leaving the United States unless required by their destination.
- Fully vaccinated air travelers coming to the United States from abroad, including U.S. citizens, are still [required](#) to have a negative SARS-CoV-2 viral test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the United States.
- International travelers arriving in the United States are still recommended to get a SARS-CoV-2 viral test 3-5 days after



travel regardless of vaccination status.

Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to self-quarantine in the United States following international travel.

For more information, see [International Travel During COVID-19](#).

## Recommendations for Isolation, Quarantine and Testing

The following recommendations apply to non-healthcare settings. Guidance for residents and staff of healthcare settings can be found in the Updated Healthcare [Infection Prevention Control Recommendations in Response to COVID-19 Vaccination](#).

### Fully vaccinated people with COVID-19 symptoms

Although the risk that fully vaccinated people could become infected with COVID-19 is low, any fully vaccinated person who experiences [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) should [isolate themselves from others](#), be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2 if indicated. The symptomatic fully vaccinated person should inform their healthcare provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

### Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-like symptoms following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

Most fully vaccinated people with no COVID-like symptoms do not need to [quarantine](#), [be restricted from work](#), or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, as their risk of infection is low.

However, they should still monitor for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) for 14 days following an exposure.

Exceptions where testing (but not quarantine) is still recommended following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 include:

- Fully vaccinated residents and employees of correctional and detention facilities and homeless shelters.

### Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-19-like symptoms and no known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

It is recommended that fully vaccinated people with no COVID-19-like symptoms and no known exposure should be exempted from routine screening testing programs, if feasible.



For Healthcare Professionals

[COVID-19 Clinical Resources](#)

\*This guidance applies to COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for emergency use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration: Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen COVID-19 vaccines. This guidance can also be applied to COVID-19 vaccines that have been authorized for emergency use by the World Health Organization (e.g. AstraZeneca/Oxford).