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PUBLIC HEALTH
Advancing Health for All



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LDCPH to propose removing local health order after updated CDC guidelines

Health officers recommend shift to guidelines including still wearing a mask in indoor public settings

LAWRENCE – Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health through the local health officers will recommend the Douglas County Commission remove a [current local public health order](#) that includes a mask mandate, but LDCPH still recommends residents take steps to limit the spread of COVID-19. Douglas County Commissioners will consider the recommendation as part of their 5:30 p.m. [business meeting](#) Wednesday available [via Zoom link](#).

The CDC last week [updated its guidance](#) — also adopted by Gov. Laura Kelly — for fully vaccinated individuals, who are no longer required to wear masks indoors or outdoors or physically distance, except in circumstances such as those required by businesses, public transportation or health care facilities.

“We are excited that our number of new cases and hospitalizations have come down significantly right now, and we are proud so many Douglas County residents 12 and older have come forward to get vaccinated,” said Dr. Thomas Marcellino, Douglas County’s Local Health Officer. “Even though we believe a health order is not currently necessary, we recognize the complexities of implementing the CDC guidance, including challenges of telling if someone is fully vaccinated. We strongly recommend people continue to wear masks in indoor public spaces and that businesses and organizations continue to utilize spacing and distancing between parties because these measures have been working well in our community.”

The [current local public health order](#) includes a mask mandate for anyone older than 5 in indoor public spaces or outdoor spaces where social distancing is not possible. It also includes a 50 percent capacity restriction on indoor businesses and most public venues, though it allows businesses and venues to opt out of the occupancy restrictions with written notice and by posting signage at the entrance.

The health officers continue to [recommend Smart & Safe guidelines](#) for businesses and organizations, and they encourage individuals and businesses to join the [Lawrence Promise](#) as a way to utilize signage to show their commitment to smart and safe practices to prevent COVID-19.

“With the updated CDC guidance, we also encourage anyone 12 or older to get vaccinated by finding an appointment at [LDCHealth.org/COVIDVaccine](https://ldchealth.org/COVIDVaccine),” Marcellino said.

More information about Douglas County’s COVID-19 response and recovery efforts is available at douglascountyks.org/coronavirus.