

Masking Requirements for Fully Vaccinated People in Limited Indoor Settings

(Effective Date: November 1, 2021)



Do indoor masking requirements still apply?

Yes. With [limited exceptions](#), Alameda County's [indoor face mask requirement \(Health Officer Order No. 21-03\)](#) for public settings remains in effect for everyone two years of age and over. The State continues to require face coverings for all unvaccinated persons in public settings and for everyone—regardless of vaccination status—in health care facilities, public transit, K-12 school settings, and adult and senior care facilities. Masking exemptions under this Order permit the removal of masks in **spaces** with controlled access where individuals meet regularly and where **everyone is fully vaccinated**.

What has changed under the indoor masking exemptions?

Alameda County's [Health Officer Order No. 21-04](#) allows face coverings to be removed in spaces with controlled access, such as indoor offices, gyms and other fitness facilities, employee commuter vehicles, religious gatherings, and all other organized gatherings of individuals who meet regularly where **all** of the following conditions exist:

- There are no more than 100 individuals present;
- The employer or host is able to control access to the space, and the space is not open to the general public;
- The employer or host confirms that every individual entering the indoor space is fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine;
- The employer or host prevents entry to the indoor space for any individual exhibiting or admitting to symptoms associated with COVID-19, such as a cough or fever, and posts signs promoting self-assessment for symptoms around the exterior of the space; and
- The employer or host maintains a list identifying all individuals who enter the indoor space.

How will businesses and hosts verify if customers and attendees are fully vaccinated?

An employer or host may accept one of the following four options as proof of vaccination:

1. A vaccination card issued by the CDC or a foreign governmental jurisdiction that includes the name of the vaccinated person, the type of vaccine received, and the date(s) the dose(s) were administered;
2. A photo or copy of a vaccination card either as a hardcopy or stored on a phone or other electronic device;
3. Documentation of vaccination from a health care provider, either as a hardcopy or stored on a phone or other electronic device
4. A personal digital COVID-19 vaccine record issued by the State of California (available by going to <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>) or similar documentation issued by another state, local, or foreign governmental jurisdiction

Note: Everyone's identity must be confirmed using government-issued photographic identification (ID), such as a State ID, driver's license, or passport.

Who is considered “fully vaccinated”?

An individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series, such as Pfizer or Moderna, or two weeks after a single-dose series, such as the Johnson & Johnson/J&J vaccine. Booster vaccinations are not required to be considered “fully vaccinated” at this time.

For a comprehensive list of vaccine sites near you, visit <https://linktr.ee/AlamedaCountyOHE> and for assistance scheduling a free vaccine appointment, call 510-208-4VAX (510-208-4829).

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What if a minor doesn't have a photo ID to cross-check against their proof of vaccination?

Businesses should use best efforts to cross-check minors' proof of vaccination against some form of identification. For example, if the minor does not have a government issued ID, a school ID or verification from a parent is sufficient.

What information should the employer or host collect of everyone who enters the indoor space, how long should the employer or host retain that information, and does it need to be submitted to the Alameda County Public Health Department?

The list should include first and last name, contact information (phone number and/or email), and whether the individual is fully vaccinated. The employer or host should retain the identifying information for **60 days**. The list does not need to be submitted to the Alameda County Public Health Department. If there is an COVID-19 outbreak at the gathering, the Alameda County Public Health Department's COVID-19 investigators will reach out for the list.

What about persons who are not yet eligible for or have a valid exemption from vaccination?

If an employer or host admits individuals who cannot be vaccinated for reasons such as age, pre-existing medical condition, or sincerely held religious beliefs, everyone present at the indoor gathering must wear a face covering for the duration of the event.

Can an individual who had a prior COVID-19 infection or a negative COVID-19 test be allowed to remove their masks in a controlled space?

For the purposes of this Order, neither a history of prior COVID-19 infection nor a negative COVID-19 test may be used in place of documented vaccination.

What safety precautions must businesses or other entities take to allow removal of masks indoors?

For businesses or entities that want to offer an indoor area where masks can be removed, the following minimum safety precautions are required:

1. Everyone must be fully vaccinated in the area where masks can be removed. There are no exceptions to this requirement (i.e., this includes children who are not yet eligible for vaccination and people who have medical or religious vaccination exemptions);
2. There can be no more than 100 individuals present at these facilities. The people who are allowed to enter the area where masks can be removed must be in a group who participate in the work or activity on a regular basis. No guests or other visitors are allowed in that area, even if they are masked or fully vaccinated, with the limited exception that visitors may enter the space for a brief period only (less than 15 minutes) and do not need to show evidence of vaccination but must wear a mask for the duration of their visit;
3. Review the [State's Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#) and consider implementing strategies where appropriate;
4. Those present must not have COVID-19 symptoms. Employees are still required to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and should remain home if they are sick with new or unexplained symptoms until they test and otherwise follow the rules on isolation and quarantine, if applicable (go to <https://covid-19.acgov.org/isolation-quarantine> for more information); and
5. People are still allowed to wear a mask at any time, even in an area where masks can be removed, if they feel more comfortable doing so

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What happens if there is an outbreak or on-site COVID-19 transmission?

If the business or entity has an **on-site COVID-19 transmission**, the Health Officer may suspend or revoke authorization for an employer or host to continue unmasked indoor activities.

What if there is only one unvaccinated individual in the stable group who is unvaccinated due to a medical or religious exemption? Can everyone but the unvaccinated individual remove their mask?

This [Order](#) does not permit persons to remove masks if there is anyone present who is unvaccinated, even if they have a religious or medical exemption.

Would this indoor masking exemption apply to a religious institution that is open to the public so long as all attendees are vaccinated?

Yes, and the religious institution (e.g., church, synagogue, mosque, temple, etc.) will need to take the following three measures:

- Control all entrances to the facility
- Prevent entry to anyone who exhibits or admits to experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- Maintain a list to identify all individuals who enter the space

In terms of the 100-person capacity limit, what if an office has 150 employees, but they work as teams smaller than 100? Can an office with over 100 employees divide onto separate floors so each floor is not over 100?

Yes. An office or other workplace with over 100 employees may divide staff into floors or other physically separate workspaces with 100 or fewer employees to allow masks to be removed in these spaces, provided other requirements of the order are met. However, masks must be worn in all common areas, including hallways and conference rooms, if employees who work in separate workspace groups of 100 or fewer individuals are to ever be in the same physical place at the same time—regardless of vaccination status.

In addition, masks must be worn by everyone in a workspace if an employee from another workspace enters and is present for greater than 15 minutes, regardless of vaccination status of the visitor. This will limit the possibility of COVID-19 spreading from one group of unmasked employees to another.

If someone whose vaccination status is unknown enters a workspace, does everyone in the workspace have to put on a face covering? If we verify the vaccination status of the visitor, can we remove masks?

No. If a visitor enters a controlled space where individuals are not wearing face coverings under the terms of this order, all persons who are present must wear a face covering regardless of the vaccination status of the visitor, with the limited exception that face coverings do not need to be worn if a visitor enters the space for a brief period only (less than 15 minutes). Under this limited exception, the visitor does not need to show evidence of vaccination but must wear a mask for the duration of their visit.

Do all persons entering a controlled space have to be screened for COVID-19 symptoms before entering? Can people entering use self-assessment or verbally attest to being COVID-19 symptom free?

The business or host must prevent entry to the indoor space for any individual exhibiting or admitting to COVID-19 symptoms. A system can be put in place to screen all persons entering for COVID-19 symptoms. Self-assessment and/or verbal attestation are acceptable methods for screening COVID-19 symptoms. Signs must be posted around the exterior of the space promoting self-assessment of symptoms.



When will indoor masking requirements (Health Officer Order No. 21-03) be lifted?

Indoor-masking requirements remain in effect in public settings, such as bars, restaurants, and retail stores until [criteria for lifting the indoor masking order](#) are met.

As an employer, am I required to continue to follow the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS)?

Yes. Employers must continue to comply with [Cal/OSHA's employer requirements](#). Local guidance can be more protective and more restrictive than the State's requirements. The [Alameda County Health Officer's Indoor Face Covering Order](#) is more restrictive than [Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention ETS](#) face covering provision, therefore employers are required to comply with the County's face covering requirement and continue to comply with the other provisions within the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention ETS.

If you have any questions, please email
CovidRecovery@acgov.org



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