

FACE COVERINGS AT CHICAGO BUSINESSES – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

May 18, 2021

Are face coverings required at Chicago businesses?

- Effective Tuesday, May 18, 2021, fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear face coverings in most public and private settings. Face coverings are still required in health care settings, schools, correctional/congregate care settings, on public transportation (which includes taxis, ride-hail and liveries), and in City of Chicago buildings.
- The City continues to strongly advise – but not require – masking policies for all indoor settings until we reach Phase Five.

What does “fully vaccinated” mean?

- Individuals are considered fully vaccinated 14 days after their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The final dose is defined as the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (i.e. Pfizer or Moderna), or the first dose of a one-dose vaccine (i.e. Johnson & Johnson).
- To be fully vaccinated, an individual must have received a vaccine that has been approved by the World Health Organization for emergency use. As of May 13, 2021, the following vaccines are acceptable: Pfizer/BioNTech, Janssen (Johnson & Johnson), Moderna, Astrazeneca-SK Bio, Serum Institute of India, and Sinopharm.

Are businesses required to verify that individuals are fully vaccinated to allow for them not to wear face coverings?

- Businesses are strongly advised to verify vaccination status before allowing customers and/or employees to not wear face coverings.
- At this point, there is no uniform proof of vaccine. Businesses can verify that individuals are fully vaccinated by checking vaccination card, photo/photocopy of vaccination card, or other printout/photo/electronic proof of vaccine records with the patron’s name. Businesses may develop methods to evaluate authenticity of the documentation provided.
- If a business does not have the capacity to verify vaccination status, the City strongly advises that businesses continue to require face coverings for all customers and employees.

Are businesses required to track individuals who received vaccinations in order to allow fully vaccinated individuals not to wear face coverings?

- Businesses are encouraged to verify vaccination status but are not required to maintain records in order to allow fully vaccinated individuals to not wear face coverings.

Can businesses choose to continue to require face coverings for customers and/or employees?

- Yes. Businesses can choose to continue to require face coverings for all customers, regardless of vaccination status. The City strongly advises that all businesses that do not have the capacity to verify vaccination status continue requiring face coverings.

What communication should businesses provide to customers about their masking policy?

- Businesses must indicate their current masking policy via signage or other communication to customers prior to entry.