

CLIENT ALERT: Massachusetts Department of Public Health Revises State Indoor Mask Guidance

On February 15, 2022, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) issued an [advisory](#) relaxing its mask guidance for fully vaccinated individuals in most indoor settings, citing recent positive progress on COVID-19 indicators. DPH’s updated mask guidance replaces its December 2021 advisory recommending that all Massachusetts residents wear masks while indoors, regardless of vaccination status.

DPH now advises that fully vaccinated individuals need only wear a face covering while indoors (and not in their own home) if:

- They have a weakened immune system;
- Are at an increased risk for severe disease because of their age or underlying medical condition; or
- Someone in their household is unvaccinated, has a weakened immune system or is otherwise at increased risk for severe disease.

DPH continues to recommend that unvaccinated individuals wear a face covering or mask indoors to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to other people.

DPH’s face covering guidance has been and remains a recommendation. Many cities and towns in Massachusetts, including [Boston](#), have implemented indoor mask mandates for all residents, regardless of their vaccination status. Local face covering requirements implemented by cities and towns will remain in effect, despite DPH’s updated guidance. Residents and businesses in Massachusetts should continue to monitor the mask requirements in their municipalities to ensure continued compliance with local orders.

Masks Remain Required in Certain Settings

Individuals within Massachusetts, regardless of their vaccination status, are still required to comply with DPH’s [May 28, 2021 order](#) requiring masks to be worn in certain settings and professions, including:

- While riding public and private transportation, including on the MBTA, commuter rail, buses, ferries, and airplanes, and while in rideshares (Uber and Lyft), taxis, and livery vehicles. Face coverings are also required at all times in transportation hubs, including train stations, bus stops and airports;
- In healthcare facilities and provider offices operated by the Commonwealth and healthcare practices licensed by a professional board which sits within the DPH or Division of Professional Licensure;
- In congregate care facilities operated, licensed, certified, regulated, authorized, or funded by the Commonwealth;
- In healthcare and day services and programs operated, licensed, certified, regulated, or funded by the Commonwealth;
- In emergency shelter program facilities;
- In houses of correction and Department of Correction prisons, jails, and other correctional facilities; and
- Home health care workers.

MBJ will continue to monitor any updated guidance from the DPH regarding mask recommendations and requirements. In the meantime, please contact your MJB attorney with any questions you may

have.

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This alert was prepared on February 17, 2022.

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