

City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County to Issue Mask Mandate Effective 5pm Today

Charlotte Mask Mandate

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 Charlotte Mask Mandate

Face Coverings will be Required in Indoor Public Places, Regardless of Vaccination Status

Mecklenburg County, NC – The third amended joint proclamation of the Chairman and Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners and the Mayor of the City of Charlotte in consultation with Mecklenburg County Public Health and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management goes into effect today, Wednesday, August 18, 2021. The proclamation mandates that Face Coverings be worn in any indoor public place, business, or establishment within the City of Charlotte and the unincorporated areas of Mecklenburg County, regardless of vaccination status. This requirement applies to all individuals who are at least five years of age.

There are exceptions to the face covering mandate. Face Coverings do not need to be worn by someone who:

- Should not wear a Face Covering due to any medical or behavioral condition or disability (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the Face Covering without assistance);
- Is actively eating or drinking;
- Is seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible;
- Is giving a speech or performance for a broadcast, or to an audience, where they maintain a distance of at least 20 feet from the audience (the audience is still required to wear a Face Covering if indoors);
- Is temporarily removing their Face Coverings at work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulations or workplace safety guidelines;
- Has found their Face Covering is impeding visibility to operate equipment or a vehicle.

Anyone who declines to wear a Face Covering for any of these exemptions will not be required to produce documentation or any other proof of a condition. Everyone is asked to tell the truth – and if they are healthy and able to wear a Face Covering – to wear a Face Covering so that they do not put other people at risk of serious illness and death.

Wearing a Face Covering does not mean that getting the COVID-19 vaccination is not important. While it is possible for vaccinated persons to become infected, and pass the virus to others, the vast majority of infected persons, and the most severe cases of the illness are those who have not been vaccinated. The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County urge everyone who is eligible to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to reduce infection rates and not require additional restrictions.

The proclamation goes into effect at 5 p.m. on Wednesday and will be in effect through September 1, 2021 unless sooner rescinded or terminated. The Mecklenburg County Board of Health will be holding a special meeting today at 3 p.m. to discuss and vote on an additional Public Health Rule requiring Face Coverings for all of Mecklenburg County. If passed, the Public Health Rule would go into effect in 10 days. More information on the outcome of the meeting and the Public Health Rule will be made available at a later time.

Frequently Asked Questions

- If I am indoors but am socially distanced or not close to others, do I still have to wear a mask?
 - Yes. If you are in a public indoor space, you are required to wear a mask regardless of social distancing and/or your vaccination status.

- If I own a business, do I have to require customers to wear a mask?
 - Yes. You must require customers who do not fit in to one of the exemptions to wear a mask while at your establishment.
- As a business owner, what should I do if I have customers who refuse to comply **AND refuse to leave the premises?**
 - Call 9-1-1 to request Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police to respond for trespassing.
- How long will this mask mandate be in effect?
 - This mandate goes into effect at 5 p.m. today and will remain in effect until at least September 1, 2021. The Public Health Rule that will be voted on today will go into effect in 10 days, if passed. Both mandates are based on the current COVID-19 metrics and the duration of the Public Health Rule will be dependent on the metrics improving.
- If I live in one of the towns in Mecklenburg County, do I have to follow the current mask mandate?
 - If the mask mandate is not in effect in your town, you are not required to wear a mask indoors at public places in that town. However, if you travel into the City of Charlotte or an unincorporated area of Mecklenburg County, you will need to have a mask if you plan to visit a public indoor space.
- Do I have to wear mask at Panthers games?
 - The Carolina Panthers have issued protocols at Bank of America requiring that all guests and staff must wear a mask in indoor spaces, including the indoor concourses on the 300 and 400 levels. Face Coverings are not required outdoors. Masks will be available at stadium entrance points as well as at guest relations and security booths. Guests who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask in all areas.
- I'm unvaccinated – should I still consider getting the vaccine?
 - Yes. The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County urge all eligible people who are unvaccinated to get the vaccine to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and avoid further restrictions.
- Who should I call for questions about the mask mandate?
 - You can direct further questions to the Mecklenburg County Public Health COVID-19 hotline at 980.314.9400. The hotline is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information about the mask mandate, the vaccine and COVID-19, please visit [mecknc.gov/covid-19](https://www.mecknc.gov/covid-19) (<https://www.mecknc.gov/covid-19/Pages/Home.aspx>).