

# NEWS BRIEF

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## **CDC Updates Guidance, Says Fully Vaccinated Individuals Should Wear Masks in Some Indoor Settings**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced updates to its mask guidelines as an emerging variant of COVID-19 known as Delta spreads across the country.

The CDC's updated guidance now recommends that fully vaccinated individuals wear masks in public indoor settings when in areas with high or substantial transmission of COVID-19. Over 60% of U.S. counties have high or substantial transmission of COVID-19, according to CDC data. The guidelines also recommend masks be worn by all individuals in K-12 schools regardless of vaccination status.

In addition, the CDC encourages community leaders to promote vaccination and mask-wearing as preventive measures against COVID-19.

This update from the CDC is, in part, a reversal from previous agency guidance, which allowed fully vaccinated individuals to stop wearing a mask in most settings.

### **Delta Variant**

Delta is a highly infectious form of COVID-19. According to [CDC data](#), it is currently the most common variant of the coronavirus in the United States by a significant margin, accounting for over 80% of COVID-19 cases. Although COVID-19 vaccines are largely effective at preventing the spread of the coronavirus, some cases of Delta have been found to be contagious, even for fully vaccinated individuals.

The CDC has expressed that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at protecting against the Delta variant, and they have been found to reduce the likelihood of severe illness, hospitalization and death.

### **Next Steps**

This guidance from the CDC is not legally binding. As such, it is up to states and local officials to establish their own mask rules.

Employers should continue to monitor updates from local and state health officials. In addition, employers may need to update their own policies to comply with new guidelines.

We will keep you updated on noteworthy developments.

