



**CITY OF WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**Department of Health & Human Services**  
**Division of Public Health**

Matilde Castiel, MD  
Health & Human Services  
Commissioner

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Public Health  
Director

**EMERGENCY REGULATION REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS IN**  
**ALL INDOOR PRIVATE COMMON SPACES IN THE WORKPLACE AND**  
**INDOOR PRIVATE SPACES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
**(Revised 09/27/21)**

WHEREAS, the city of Worcester has had 26,704 positive cases of COVID-19 as of September 14, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the first documented sequence for B.1.6172 India [Delta variant] of a Worcester resident was first recorded on May 3, 2021 at UMass Memorial; and

WHEREAS, the Delta variant is more contagious than the original COVID-19 virus, and has been proven to infect fully vaccinated individuals, predominantly asymptotically, which results in vaccinated individuals being “silent spreaders,” greatly contributing to the increase in COVID-19 cases; and

WHEREAS, month-over-month case counts increased by 202% from June to July, and 206% from July to August; and

WHEREAS; in July, Worcester positive cases were three times the number of positive cases in June, and in August, Worcester positive cases were almost three times the number of positive cases in July; and

WHEREAS, as of September 14, 2021 Worcester has an average daily infection rate of 29.5 per 100,000; and

WHEREAS; local hospitals are at maximum capacity, there are currently no regional medical hospital beds available and the one pediatric ICU in Worcester County is full; and

WHEREAS, indoor settings create an environment for the highly transmissible Delta variant to be spread; and

WHEREAS, wearing a face covering reduces the emission of virus-laden droplets (“source control”) and reduces the inhalation of virus-laden droplets (“filtration for wearer protection”), which has proven to be highly effective to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and provide protection for vaccinated individuals as well as unvaccinated individuals; and



WHEREAS; The Centers for Disease Control and Massachusetts Department of Public Health strongly recommend wearing masks indoors;

**NOW THEREFORE**, to preserve, promote and protect the well-being of residents of the city of Worcester, I, Michael P. Hirsh, M.D., duly appointed medical director for the city of Worcester Division of Public Health, acting under the authority of Chapter 120 of the Acts of 2014, Section 2; Article 10, Section 10(e) of the Worcester Revised Ordinances 2015, Part Two; and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, § 31; do hereby issue the following as an emergency public health regulation, effective immediately:

A. Effective September 20, 2021, all individuals aged five years and older shall wear a face covering in all indoor private common spaces in the workplace and indoor private spaces open to the public, including but not limited to the premises of a business, club, place of assembly or other place that is open to members of the public, including but not limited to retail establishments, restaurants, bars, performance venues, social clubs, houses of worship, personal care and fitness establishments and event spaces, except when an individual is alone in a workspace or alone in a room at a workplace with a closed door or socially distanced from other individuals.

B. A face covering, for the purpose of this regulation may include, but is not limited to, cloth masks, scarves, bandanas, or other coverings so long as the person's nose and mouth are covered.

C. The following individuals are exempt from this face covering requirement:

- Individuals for whom a face covering creates a health risk or is not safe because of any of the following conditions or circumstances:
  - the face covering affects the individual's ability to breathe safely;
  - the individual has a mental health or other medical diagnosis and produces a written note from a physician that advises against the individual wearing a face covering;
  - the individual depends on supplemental oxygen to breathe.

D. Face coverings may be removed indoors when an individual is actively eating or drinking.

E. The face covering requirement shall not apply to performers, while performing, provided that they are at least six feet away from any customers.

F. All entry doors of businesses open to the public must post notice advising customers that face masks must be worn upon entering the establishment. If a customer refuses to wear a face covering, absent a qualifying exemption in Section C, a business may refuse admittance.

G. Supplemental guidance may be issued by the medical director or the director of public health, as necessary, to clarify and implement this regulation.

H. This revised regulation replaces the regulation of the same name issued on September 17, 2021 and shall remain in effect until rescinded by the Worcester Board of Health.

Originally issued the 17th day of September 2021. Ratified, as revised, by vote of the Worcester Board of Health on September 27, 2021.



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Michael P. Hirsh, M.D.  
Medical Director  
Worcester Division of Public Health

Rescinded by vote of the Worcester Board  
of Health on \_\_\_\_\_.