



Town of East Greenwich

Town Manager

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TOWN OF EAST GREENWICH MASKING POLICY EFFECTIVE AUGUST 17, 2021

(New) Town Buildings: The wearing of a protective mask by employees and the public at-large for those vaccinated will continue to be **optional**, although recommended as we monitor transmission rates in the coming months. It will be required that any Town employee or member of the public that has not been fully vaccinated, to wear a mask in all public buildings or outdoor public spaces. We are strongly recommending that in spite of this change, that prudent actions be followed including a limited separation from others of approximately 3-ft. where possible and especially if unvaccinated, and a limiting of time with others when in close confines, should you be in a location for an extended period. It is also required that all employees and members of the public that are not feeling well, for any reason, to wear a mask out of courtesy and protection of others. This policy approach is of course **subject to change** at any time as we continue to monitor the states transmission rates with the variants that have recently made a resurgence in positive test cases in Rhode Island.

As noted in prior communications on this topic, it should be anticipated that masks in one form or another and in certain circumstances will be here for the foreseeable future. Town employees and individuals from the public should be encouraged to wear a mask in any of the above noted cases, should they have other underlying medical conditions warranting this type of increased protection or just if it adds to their overall comfort level when in a public space. This local municipal guidance is provided as a compliment to the RIDOH and other state agency guidance on this topic.

Town Meetings: In lieu of the above approach for employees that work indoors, with protective screening remaining in place, these individuals typically endure a very short-term protective exposure to members of the public, visitors or others that frequent a town building (Police, Fire, DPW, Planning, Parks, Recreation Town Hall, etc.). Those that endure an indoor, long-duration in-person meeting, are potentially facing very different challenges. Until the time that both East Greenwich as a community and Rhode Island as a small, very densely populated State see a stabilization in transmission rates, **mask wearing will be required of all parties at all indoor public meetings**. The Town will make a concerted effort to have masks available at all such meetings to support those members of the public body, staff or public at-large with a mask should they not have one available. This mandate will parallel the state system in place that is monitoring the, Low, Moderate, Substantial or a High transmission status of the state and its 39 communities.

Low Transmission

During periods of low transmission, in Rhode Island and East Greenwich all individuals who are not vaccinated or not feeling well will continue to be required to wear a face mask when entering, working or visiting an indoor Town building. All other individuals that are vaccinated will not be required to wear a mask. No outdoor event mandate will be implemented during periods of low transmission unless other extenuating circumstances demand additional policy action.

Moderate Transmission

During periods of moderate transmission, it will be strongly recommended that anyone who is vaccinated, wear a face mask when entering a town facility and when attending a public indoor meeting. Based on the moderate designation and where in Rhode Island the rates have increased, may in fact dictate a more or less restrictive approach in terms of this policies application. We will update the Town policy more frequently in the moderate designation, although all individual that are not feeling well or that are unvaccinated, will be required to wear a mask.

Substantial or High transmission

Regardless of vaccination status, with a Substantial or High transmission status, a mask mandate may be imposed for all individuals working or entering a town facility or for those attending a public indoor meeting. Local Administrative discretion may be used in this case based on an assessment of local information in determining a (recommended or mandated) status.

Face Coverings not required:

In addition, generally face coverings **are not required** for any person when:

- Outdoors (Note that unvaccinated individuals must still maintain three (3) feet of physical distance from others.)
- Working alone in an office or at a job site.
- Consuming food or drink. You should wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward. Individuals should maintain three (3) feet of physical distance while eating.