



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on May 4, 2022

## CDC Reiterates Its Travel Mask Advice Despite Court Ruling and Its Own Medical Data

Seemingly trying to reaffirm its authority to dictate how Americans live their lives “safely,” the country’s top healthcare agency has restated its recommendation that Americans aged two and older wear masks when using public transportation, despite its own data on Covid trends. The federal court nullifying the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s requirement to wear a mask when traveling was arguably a major blow to the agency’s unprecedented level of domination in social and political domains that it reached during the past two years of the pandemic.



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On Monday, the CDC issued a [statement](#) calling on Americans to wear a mask, or better yet, a respirator, to “protect” themselves and others from Covid when traveling:

At this time, the CDC recommends that everyone aged 2 and older — including passengers and workers — properly wear a well-fitting [mask or respirator](#) over the nose and mouth in indoor areas of public transportation (such as airplanes, trains, etc.) and transportation hubs (such as airports, stations, etc.).

The agency explained that this advice is “based on the currently available data,” which includes an “understanding of domestic and global epidemiology” as well as knowledge of currently circulating Covid variants and “their impact on disease severity and vaccine effectiveness.”

Judging from the outcomes of the pandemic response, the CDC’s level of “understanding of domestic and global epidemiology” is poor, to put it mildly. The quality of data, too, has lots of room for improvement (see [here](#) and [here](#)).

The recommendation for people to still wear masks seems to be in line with the agency’s twisted logic, yet makes no sense from the perspective of the data cited by the CDC itself. For example, [the CDC admits](#) that the currently circulating omicron variant and its lineages are associated with “less severe disease than infection with prior variants.”

The effectiveness of the vaccines that were formulated against the now nonexistent and long-gone original Wuhan strain is not just zero — it is negative, as suggested by a couple of studies published in April (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). The CDC is aware that vaccines don’t prevent infection and transmission, hence the advice to wear a mask or a respirator. But if the vaccines don’t prevent infection, then the agency should alter its advice to get vaccinated.

In its own fashion, the CDC does so by recommending that folks stay “up-to-date” with their shots, meaning getting a first, a second, and, in some cases, a third booster when “eligible,” which is reiterated in the Monday statement.



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How effective are those additional doses? It looks like the CDC does not put a lot of trust in them, since it does not exempt those who are “up-to-date” with their shots from wearing a mask.

In its statement, the agency also refers to “current trends in COVID-19 Community Levels within the United States, and projections of COVID-19 trends in the coming months.”

Based on the [current CDC estimates](#), 98.57 percent of Americans live in areas with “low” Covid rates. While the rate of [Covid cases](#) is slightly rising, the [deaths](#) and [hospitalizations](#) remain steadily low (and even slightly declining).

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky added that it is important to wear masks “in these high volume, mixed population settings,” such as indoor public transportation conveyances and transportation hubs, to protect those who are at increased risk for severe Covid and those who are not yet able to be vaccinated.

Again, this makes little sense from a medical point of view. Those at “increased risk from COVID”—such as people with compromised immune systems, the elderly, and those with multiple comorbidities—are supposedly already protected with the vaccines and boosters. And it is up to them and their doctors to decide on the best practices to avoid Covid, not other travelers.

Then, there are those who are “not yet able” to get shots, i.e., children under the age of five. That population, however, is statistically at zero risk from severe Covid and does not require everyone around them to wear masks.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) did not issue any statements on the enforcement of the CDC’s advice. [The latest update](#) from the TSA states that the masks will not be enforced on public transportation and transportation hubs due to the April 18 court ruling.

In other words, the CDC appears to be merely doing damage control and reaffirming its already [crumbling authority](#), which was further undermined by Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle of the Middle District of Florida, who struck down its travel mask diktat.

As [reported](#) by *The New American* on the matter, the judge ruled that the CDC overstepped its authority and did not justify its mask mandate for public transportation systems. Therefore, the travelers were free to ditch their masks — and many did, as seen in numerous video clips showing airline passengers and workers celebrating the removal of the mask mandate. Private businesses in the transportation industry, including public-transit systems such as railroad operator Amtrak, major airlines, ride-sharing companies Uber and Lyft, as well as many airports, swiftly dropped their masking rules for customers and employees.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) waited two days before filing an appeal. [It argued](#) an appeal was contingent on whether the CDC considered that the mandate “remains necessary for public health.” The next day, the CDC [confirmed](#) that, in its view, its order did remain “necessary,” and formally asked the DOJ to appeal Mizelle’s decision.

Confusingly, though, the DOJ did not seek a stay that would allow the CDC to reinstate this supposedly “necessary” mandate immediately while the case is pending. The goal of the appeal was [interpreted](#) by the legal experts as being to “ensure that the CDC has strong public health powers to fight COVID and to fight future pandemics.”

President Joe Biden’s chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci went so far as to [proclaim](#) that the federal health agencies are above the law, and that their “health” edicts and authority are not subject to



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legal scrutiny.

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