



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on April 12, 2022

## Philadelphia Reimposes Mask Mandate, Sparks Outrage

With Covid-19 cases rising to 142 per day, Philadelphia, a city of 1.6 million people, is bringing back its indoor mask mandate for public places, schools, and daycare facilities.

In a Monday [statement](#) on Twitter, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health announced that masks will be mandatory in all indoor public spaces starting Monday, April 18. The city decided to not impose the rule immediately in order to “provide a one-week education period for businesses.” Residents “are asked” by the department to report any non-compliant businesses to the city government.

The businesses must put signs back up and notify their staff and patrons that masks are required.

“Given the increasing cases, there’s no reason not to start wearing them [masks] today,” the city [posted](#) on its official website.

Explaining the reasons for reinstating the mandate, the city noted that Covid cases were rising at a speed that the health department felt was not “safe”:

As of today, April 11, Philadelphia is averaging 142 new cases of COVID-19 each day. This number is more than 50% higher than the 84 average new cases that were reported ten days ago, on April 1. This means that not only are cases getting higher, they’re going up more quickly than the Health Department feels is safe.

The city noted that hospitalizations have stayed steady “around 50 for the last two weeks.” On the day of the announcement, there were 44 people hospitalized in Philadelphia “who [had] COVID-19.” It is unclear whether they were hospitalized *because of Covid* or *with Covid*.

The city allowed businesses and public institutions to ignore the rule if they require everyone on-site to be fully vaccinated and check vaccine status upon entry. According to [city data](#), more than 1.25 million residents are fully vaccinated. Nonetheless, Philly officials must have missed the news that vaccines do not prevent Covid infection and transmission, as admitted by federal health authorities and vaccine manufacturers themselves.

“We know that masks work to protect us and our communities, so the sooner that Philadelphians start wearing them, the safer we all may be,” say the city officials who, again, must have overlooked the official studies showing that masks do little to nothing to stop Covid transmission ([here](#) and [here](#)), and in some cases are even connected to higher Covid rates. Back in January, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [implied](#) that the most effective face mask is, in fact, a respirator, such as N95, and the commonly used cloth and surgical masks are not particularly effective.



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In February 2022, Philadelphia implemented its own “[COVID Response Levels](#),” a series of metrics intended to tie the city’s pandemic restrictions to Covid rates.

“When cases go up, the City will implement mitigation measures intended to protect our communities. When cases go down and things become safer, the City will lift those measures,” say the officials. While the city moved to “Level 2: Mask Precautions,” the CDC [classifies](#) Philadelphia County’s Covid community level as “low.”

The city expressed “hope” that it would return to the “All Clear” level “soon,” and in the meantime, it did not wish to “leave our most vulnerable residents to navigate this pandemic on their own.” Evidently, the officials did not trust these “vulnerable” residents to make their own health choices, and, as it did throughout the pandemic, forced the healthy to follow intrusive and ineffective policies.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney [tweeted](#) Monday that “our city remains open; we can still go about our daily lives and visit the people and places we love while masking in indoor public spaces.”

The city [dropped](#) its indoor mask mandate on March 2, but has now brought it back only 40 days later. Mandatory masking in schools ended on March 9.

“The move could be a setback for small businesses in the city that were hoping to resume normal operations after two years of Covid restrictions, according to [The Daily Mail](#).

Among others, the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association said in a [statement](#) that it was “extremely disappointed” in the decision.

“This announcement is a major blow to thousands of small businesses hoping this spring would be the start of recovery,” adding that the city failed to even consult with the businesses on the approaches and timing.

Twitter users on both the left and right blasted the mandate as well. Some users, such as [this one](#), said that they, being vaccinated and boosted, were “done with protecting people who don’t protect themselves.”

[Some](#) pointed out that the city must stop counting the cases and look at hospitalizations and deaths, the way the CDC now does.

Many suggested that the city with the highest [murder rate](#) in the nation should focus on keeping crime at bay instead of imposing useless health mandates.

Many people posted that they “will not comply” with the reinstated rule.

“Case numbers in Philadelphia and across the country are only a fraction of what they were during the omicron peak,” [reported](#) *Philadelphia Business Journal*. “In late December and early January, the city was seeing a positivity rate close to 45% and a weekly average new case count over 27,000.”

The report added that the new wave will be smaller than the one seen in the winter, according to Philadelphia Health Commissioner Dr. Cheryl Bettigole.



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