



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on July 28, 2022

Four Cities in Los Angeles County Won't Comply With Mask Mandate Should It Be Reimposed

Los Angeles County is expected to reimpose a universal indoor mask mandate on Thursday, according to media reports. Yet the cities of Long Beach, Pasadena, Beverly Hills, and El Segundo said they will not be enforcing it if the county decides on the mandate, as a major business association warns the measure would hurt the local economy.

The largest county in the nation, Los Angeles introduced, dropped, and then reintroduced mandatory masks at least several times during the pandemic. Currently, it [“strongly recommends”](#) every person the age of two and older wear a well-fitted mask that provides “good filtration,” e.g., a multi-layered mask, in all indoor settings, including K-12 schools and day care facilities.

The masks remain mandatory on public transportation in the county, as well as in all indoor transportation hubs; healthcare settings, long-term care settings, and adult and senior care facilities; state and local prisons and detention centers; homeless shelters; and “any other location where it is the policy of the business or venue.” People are “allowed” to remove them for eating and drinking, receiving cosmetic or dental procedures, showering or swimming, when alone in a separate room, and when receiving or providing language therapy.

The talks about the reintroduction of the mask mandate have been ongoing for the past several weeks and were triggered by the rapid proliferation of the new and contagious BA.5 sub-lineage of the omicron strain.

According to the [local ABC affiliate](#), Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer provided a glimmer of hope that the unscientific intervention would not be reimposed on residents, saying twice over the past week that the decision could be put on hold due to recent stabilizing hospitalization rates and a drop in average daily infections.

“She [Ferrer] said earlier the mandate would be imposed if the county remains in the ‘high’ virus activity level as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for two consecutive weeks,” added the outlet.

The county entered the “high” Covid category some two weeks ago, when the average daily rate of Covid-related hospital admissions rose above 10 per 100,000 residents. [According to the CDC](#), as of last Thursday, the rate had reached 11.7 admissions per 100,000 residents.

When that happens, the agency recommends wearing a mask indoors in public and on public



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transportation, among other “precautionary” measures.

According to [official county data](#), the seven-day average of Covid-related deaths stands at 20 in a county of nearly 10 million people. The “Current Hospitalizations” metric showed that there were 1,280 people hospitalized with or because of Covid, but that the positivity rate — a number of “cases” — seems to have passed its peak and started gradually declining.

According to an [analysis](#) done by local media, the county “saw a sharp drop in the number of COVID-positive patients hospitalized in the county, with the figure dropping by about 80 people to reach 1,247. The number fell again on Saturday to an even 1,200.”

As county officials are debating the move, some cities have announced they will not be policing those who refuse to wear masks indoors.

Pasadena health officials [said](#) that the measure was unnecessary because Covid infection rates were decreasing. The city leaders, however, noted that it was up to the businesses, schools, and event organizers to decide if they wanted their customers, students, and attendees masked.

Long Beach, which is now in the “medium” Covid category, also said it was each person’s responsibility to wear or not to wear a mask.

“The Health Department strongly encourages people to practice personal responsibility and common-sense measures to protect themselves, their loved ones and the greater community from COVID-19,” reads the city [announcement](#) on the matter. The statement also mentions that even though the number of Covid cases is currently increasing, hospitalizations remain stable.

Another city that said it wouldn’t be enforcing the mandate is Beverly Hills, whose city council [agreed unanimously](#) on that on Monday. On the same day, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger issued a statement saying that “masking mandates are polarizing and unenforceable,” and seem to not make “a difference in decreasing or stopping COVID-19 transmission rates,” according to [CBS Los Angeles](#). Supervisor Janice Hahn supported her colleague and [raised concerns](#) that the renewed mandate would “be very divisive for L.A. County.”

“I very much believe in the power of choice,” Beverly Hills Mayor Lili Bosse [told Fox News](#). She added, “We have more important issues to enforce,” and urged people to decide for themselves on whether to mask.

El Segundo Mayor Drew Boyles echoed Bosse’s sentiments. “Individuals should review the data available and consider their own circumstances and make their own decisions about wearing a mask,” he said in a [statement](#).

Businesses are not looking forward to becoming “mask police” for their customers once more.

The Los Angeles County Business Federation, or BizFed, representing 410,000 local businesses and more than 5 million employees, [issued a statement](#) opposing a mask mandate, saying it will put an undue burden on businesses that will have to enforce the unpopular requirement. The federation urged health officials to opt for more “compliance-friendly alternatives” than universal indoor masking.

Despite the dubious efficacy in preventing Covid transmission and proven harms to the health and development of children, mask-wearing by anyone older than two is still promoted by federal health authorities as a tool to curb Covid.

During his latest public appearance, President Joe Biden’s chief medical advisor, Dr. Anthony Fauci,



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called mask-wearing a “doable” against Covid, and urged Americans to return to wearing masks, at least in places where transmission rates are high.

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