

Mask Update FAQ (as of March 11, 2022)

Did the masks/face coverings orders end?

The statewide mask requirement for public indoor spaces is lifted as of midnight on March 11, 2022, but certain settings or circumstances will still require masks thereafter.

Snohomish Health District still strongly recommends that:

- all people continue to wear masks in high-risk settings
- people whose vaccination status is not up-to-date or who are immunocompromised continue to wear them in public indoor and crowded outdoor settings
- people remain vigilant and flexible for future times when it may become advisable to resume universal use to protect ourselves, others, the healthcare system and other essential societal functions.

Anyone who feels more comfortable wearing a mask should also continue doing so.

When will masks still be required?

While there will no longer be a statewide requirement for masks in all public settings, there will still be places and times when masks are required. Some of those include:

- Public transportation vehicles and stations (a federal order—see below)
- Outpatient clinics
- Hospitals
- Long-term care facilities
- Jails and correctional facilities
- Private businesses and organizations can also require or request patrons and staff to mask up. Please respect the rules of the space you're in.
- Separate federal requirements around travel and transportation. Be sure to [check the latest guidance for travel](#) by air, train or other modes.
- If someone who was COVID-positive is returning to work, school or other public settings after a 5-day isolation period, they must wear a well-fitting mask for days 6-10 after their symptom onset or positive test result.
- Anyone who has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 must continue to wear a mask when around others for the full 10 days after exposure.

What about in schools, child cares, day camps and sports settings?

Mask usage will be recommended but not required in most circumstances. However, they will continue to be required during the full isolation or quarantine periods, regardless of vaccination status. Students, staff, volunteers and athletes that are positive or symptomatic will still be required to test, mask up, and isolate or quarantine as appropriate.

Why are people still wearing masks?

People may continue to wear masks in public spaces of their own choice. Comfort levels are different, and you cannot tell by looking at someone what risk factors they may have. Please be respectful of others' choices.

The Health District recommends that immunocompromised people, [people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#), and people whose vaccination status is not up-to-date continue to wear masks in public indoor settings as well as in outdoor settings where they cannot maintain distancing from others.

Who makes the masking rules?

The masking requirements were established at the state level by the [Secretary of Health's order for masking in public indoor settings](#) and the Governor's proclamation with [requirements for worker health and safety](#). Local health jurisdictions may make requirements that are more strict than federal or state rules, but they cannot be less strict.

The Health District anticipates that Labor & Industries will require employers to permit their staff to wear masks if they wish to do so, even in settings where masking is not required.

Is there a local mask order in Snohomish County?

The local mask order was rescinded January 11, 2022, but the state's mask order remained in effect through March 11 and subsequent versions or modifications of it remain effective in Snohomish County and throughout the state. Though local health jurisdictions have the authority to put in place mask requirements at the county level, the Snohomish Health District is aligning with the statewide rules and is not currently putting more strict masking requirements in place for Snohomish County. Local health jurisdictions may not establish any orders that are *less* restrictive than the state's.

Could masks be required again in the future?

Yes. Like other COVID-19 related mandates, the mask mandates are also subject to change as circumstances change. There also may be times or settings where masks are strongly recommended, such as during future surges in COVID cases.

Where can I get updates?

Information continues to change and more details from the state may be shared for specific settings in the near future. Check back at www.snohd.org/masks for more information. You can also find more info from the Washington State Department of Health at www.doh.wa.gov/masks.

Where can I get free masks?

Free KN90s are available at Sno-Isle Libraries and Everett Public Libraries locations in Snohomish County while supplies last. More information is available at www.snohd.org/masks. Upgraded masks, like KN90, KF94 or N95, offer a higher level of protection compared to cloth or disposable procedure masks.