



City Commission will vote on ordinance making masks mandatory in public spaces

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On Wednesday, Sept. 15, the Dayton City Commission will vote on an ordinance requiring that face coverings be worn in indoor public spaces, regardless of vaccination status.

This comes after a recommendation by Public Health–Dayton & Montgomery County asking that municipal governments enact mask requirements after the recent increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations.

“Case levels in Montgomery County are reaching peaks not seen since January. While we know that vaccinations are incredibly effective in preventing hospitalizations and deaths, children under twelve are still unable to receive the vaccine,” said Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley. “I appreciate my colleagues on the Commission being willing to take this step to protect those unable to be vaccinated, to protect hospital capacity, and to keep businesses open even as we see new spikes in COVID-19 cases.”

“No one likes wearing masks—myself included. But this is a necessary step to keep people in Dayton safe,” Whaley continued. “The last thing any of us want is a return to shutdowns, and masks in public spaces is another way to prevent that.”

The ordinance will require face coverings for anyone 6 years of age or older in indoor spaces that are open to the public. The new ordinance allows exemptions similar to Dayton’s previous mask requirement, including while eating or drinking or while exercising. People with medical conditions, mental health conditions, or development disabilities which restrict or limit their ability to wear a mask, are also not required to wear a face covering.

“Public Health is encouraged that the City of Dayton, local businesses and school districts are taking the protection of their citizens, customers and students seriously,” said Montgomery County Health Commissioner Jeff Cooper. “Due to the lagging vaccination rates in our county, mask wearing indoors is our best defense to stop the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the number of people being hospitalized.”

Enforcement will be conducted on a complaint basis by business owners or employees who are concerned about a member of the public not complying with the mask requirement while inside their location.

Owners or employees should first encourage the member of the public to wear a mask or leave the premises, and if they do not, then call 937-333-COPS to report the concern. Dayton Police will follow up to investigate the complaint and potentially issue a citation. Anyone not wearing a face covering in one of the required situations is subject to a fine of \$85.

Members of the public should not confront or report one another. If a member of the public witnesses a person not wearing a mask inside a business, they should report that to a manager for a response.

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