



## JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

# ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**DATE:** May 26, 2021  
**EVENT:** Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus  
**LOCATION:** County of Kenosha

In light of the recent change in CDC guidance and the upcoming May 27 expiration of the City of Kenosha's mask requirement, Kenosha County Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit today issued a series of recommendations on the wearing of face coverings.

"The main point is that people who are not yet fully vaccinated against COVID-19 should continue to wear a mask while in indoor public places or where physical distancing is not possible, just as the CDC recommended for many months prior to last week's guidance," Freiheit said. "Furthermore, there are still settings where masks should be worn regardless of a person's vaccination status."

"Ultimately," Freiheit said, "eliminating all mask recommendations will be incumbent on getting more of our population vaccinated, including the under-12 age group that is not yet eligible for vaccination."

Kenosha County Public Health's current guidance on mask wearing is as follows:

- Kenosha County Public Health still recommends the wearing of masks where people are gathered when vaccination status is unknown.
  - 36.2 percent of Kenosha County's population is fully vaccinated as of May 24.
- The May 13 CDC guidance update, stating that fully vaccinated people may participate in indoor and outdoor activities — large and small — without wearing a mask or physically distancing, is a reflection of the fact that the vaccines are working. *Those who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear a mask while in public, as stated in previous CDC guidance.*
- There are important exceptions to the new CDC guidance where everyone, including those who are fully vaccinated, should continue to wear a mask. This includes:
  - Health care settings
  - K-12 schools
  - Correctional and detention facilities
  - Homeless shelters
  - Public transportation
  - Other places where masks are required by local or tribal health laws, rules and regulations, including local businesses and workplaces



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- Our children and unvaccinated populations are still vulnerable.
  - Vaccination is still not available for children under age 12 and was only recently made available for those 12-15, so vaccination rates in that group remain very low, at 12.2 percent as of May 25.
- Those with immunocompromised conditions are still vulnerable.
- Public Health and healthcare vaccinators need more time with our vulnerable populations to bring vaccination and education to the community.

Freiheit said Kenosha County Public Health has the responsibility to advise people on what activities are safe for them and how to conduct themselves in a safe manner, continuing to protect our children and vulnerable populations

People who are unsure about vaccination are encouraged to consult with their health care providers for further guidance.

For those seeking vaccination, many opportunities are now available in the community. A list of local providers is available on the Kenosha County COVID-19 Response Hub website at <http://bit.ly/KCCOVIDHub>, or by clicking the flashing red button at the top of the homepage at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/>.

**Together, we can and will slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.**

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