

# Louisiana and Orleans Lift Their Mask Mandates, Except for Students Subject to Opt-Out Procedures

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Mask mandates, with certain exceptions, are ending in Louisiana. This week, Louisiana's governor lifted the statewide mandate, which allowed cities to impose their own mandates. New Orleans' mandate, which has been in effect since July 2021, is also now ending.

## Louisiana's Statewide Mask Mandate

On October 26, 2021, Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards issued [Proclamation No. 203 JBE 2021](#), lifting the statewide mask mandate, effective October 27, 2021, except for certain K-12 schools. This [mask mandate](#) had been in place since August 4, 2021, due to the Delta variant surge in Louisiana. The order states that the mandate was revised due to "the reduction in the number of cases, test percent positivity, and hospitalizations" and "based on the current level of transmission of COVID-19 in Louisiana." The order also notes that 57 of Louisiana's 64 parishes "are still in the category of high community risk."

The lifting of the mandate is a departure from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines, which advise that everyone two years of age or older who is not fully vaccinated should wear a mask in indoor public places. The mandate remains in place for students in K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. However, the mandate does not appear to apply equally to teachers or staff members. In addition, schools may opt out of the mandate. The governor's revised order provides that school districts may opt out of the mask mandate as long as they continue to follow the existing [isolation and quarantine guidelines](#) recommended by the CDC. The order allows local governments and private businesses to "issue more restrictive measures" with respect to face coverings. The City of New Orleans had a mask mandate in place, but it too has been lifted subject to exceptions.

## New Orleans's Mask Mandate

Effective October 29, 2021, New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell is also lifting the city's mask mandate, in place since July 30, 2021, with respect to most public spaces. The remaining mask mandate covers only public transportation; health care facilities; and early childhood, elementary, and

secondary educational institutions. Businesses are still free to set their own policies on masks.

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