

# New CDC Face Covering Guidance & What It Means for California Workplaces

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On May 13th, the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) updated its guidance for fully vaccinated individuals](#). The new guidance identified circumstances in which fully vaccinated individuals do not have to wear face coverings, including indoors. However, fully vaccinated individuals must still comply with federal, state, local, or workplace guidance for face coverings. Earlier in the month, the CDC also issued guidance easing outdoor mask requirements in non-crowded gatherings or when gathering with other vaccinated individuals.

In response to the most recent update to CDC guidance, Governor Newsom stated in a press briefing that subject to certain conditions being met, California expects to eliminate its outdoor mask mandates on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Governor also indicated there may be modification of indoor mask mandates at that time, but certain mask guidelines and mandates are expected to continue beyond June 15<sup>th</sup> for indoor activities.

At the time the CDC relaxed its outdoor mask requirements, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) cautioned that employers must still comply with [Cal OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards](#). Those standards include ensuring that workers are provided and properly wear face coverings. [The guidance from the CDPH](#) also specifies individuals who are working alone in a closed office or room do not have to wear a face covering. Workers who wear respiratory protection also are exempted from face-covering requirements. Further, individuals with a medical condition who are employed in a job involving regular contact with others must wear a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape on the bottom, as long as their condition permits it.

In light of Governor Newsom's comments, the CDPH's guidance, and the Cal OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards, employers with employees in California must continue to follow all state and any applicable local mask mandates, until such time as those mandates are modified.

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