

POLICY: MASKING REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID PREVENTION

Intent: Masks have been used as a tool in Covid-prevention along with vaccines, physical distancing, capacity restrictions, health screenings, increased ventilation, and hand hygiene.

1. The province of Ontario has announced that it will be lifting masking requirements in most places effective March 21, 2022. However, support for the lifting of masking requirements has not been consistent, given the timing of provincial re-opening initiatives and March Break.
 - Children’s Health Coalition argues that “masks [be] kept in place for two weeks following March Break to gauge the impact of reopening on the overall status of COVID-19 in Ontario.”.
 - Dr. Peter Juni, head of Ontario's Science Table, told CBC news that it would take at least two more weeks to assess whether it's safe to move into the next stage of reopening.
 - Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has stated that the lifting of masking requirement is premature and may negatively impact the health of staff, students and their families.
 - Medical Officer of Health for the Eastern Health Unit, Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, says March 21 is too soon to lift the provincial rule requiring people to mask up in many public places as cases typically surge following March Break.
 - Ontario Principals’ Council has called for a pause on lifting mask mandates.
 - Dr. Vera Etches, Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health hopes people keep wearing masks to protect themselves and others.
 - Even Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, who announced the lifting of masks stated during his announcement press conference that he will continue to wear a mask.
 - Under federal travel requirements, individuals returning from international travel must wear a mask in public spaces at all times, for their first 14 days in Canada.

The provincial directives of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, provides for organizations to have the authority to keep requirements in place. Therefore, **the Manor Park Community Council (MPCC) has taken the following decisions:**

- The MPCC will maintain existing masking requirements for staff and volunteers until April 4, 2022, at which time requirements will be re-examined.
 - Update is effective immediately. Masks shall be worn if the staff or volunteer exhibits any symptoms of illness with continued use until symptoms are clear. For individuals without symptoms of illness, mask use is discretionary but encouraged especially indoors and in busy public spaces.
- The MPCC will require mask use by children in-program for a period of 2 weeks following March Break (March 21-April 4 2022), at which time the requirement will be re-examined.
 - Update effective immediately. Mask use is discretionary but encouraged.
- The MPCC will encourage voluntary mask wearing for all adult program participants after March 21, 2022.

<https://www.ontario.ca/self-assessment/r3b>

Children’s Health Coalition: Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO); Children’s Hospital / London Health Sciences Centre; CMHO; Empowered Kids Ontario (EKO); McMaster Children’s Hospital; Sick Kids Hospital; Kids Health Alliance; Holland Bloorview / Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/masks-schools-ontario-1.6378511>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-eastern-ontario-mask-mandate-lifted-march-21-reaction-1.6377391>

<https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-s-largest-school-board-looking-at-instituting-mask-mandate-1.5813967>

<https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/exemptions>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEySFbT1Vbg> (note at 17:00)