

St. Louis City and County to Require Masks to Limit Spread of COVID-19 Delta Variant

July 23 2021 2:35 PM



ST. LOUIS - As COVID-19 hospitalizations rise and the Delta variant spreads, the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County will require masks to be worn in indoor public places and on public transportation beginning Monday.

The new rule will require everyone age five and over, including those who are vaccinated, to wear a mask. Wearing masks outdoors, especially in group settings, will be strongly encouraged.

Mayor Tishaura O. Jones and County Executive Dr. Sam Page will hold a media briefing at 9:30 a.m. Monday at St. Louis City Hall to take questions about this needed step to limit the spread of COVID-19.

“We’ve lost more than 500 St. Louisans to COVID-19, and if our region doesn’t work together to protect one another, we could see spikes that overwhelm our hospital and public health systems,” said Dr. Fredrick Echols, acting director of health for the City of St. Louis. “The City and County health departments are taking this joint step to save lives, make sure hospitals can provide the care residents rely on, and protect our children so they can enjoy a full range of educational opportunities this year. Wear a mask, wash your hands, watch your distance when possible, and most importantly, get vaccinated. Vaccines remain one of the best methods to prevent severe complications and death from the virus.”

Dr. Faisal Khan, acting director of the St. Louis County Department of Public Health, emphasized the importance of vaccinations and masks.

“Vaccinations are the best way to stop the fast-spreading Delta variant of COVID-19, but so far, not enough people have been vaccinated,” Dr. Khan said. “We are relentlessly committed to making vaccinations more accessible and convenient. In the meantime, we need everyone, vaccinated or not, to wear masks in crowded indoor settings. We must protect our most vulnerable residents as well as children under 12, who are not yet eligible for vaccinations.”

Exceptions in the orders will include people who are seated in a restaurant or bar eating and drinking and individuals with disabilities that prevent them from putting on or removing face coverings.

The City and County health departments continue to stress the importance of getting a COVID-19 vaccine. It is the safest and best way for both protecting against SARS-CoV-2 and limiting the spread of the virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, vaccines have been shown to reduce hospitalizations due to COVID-19 by 87% percent. A list of where to find a vaccine near you can be found on the City COVID-19 Vaccine Information website and County’s stlcorona.com website.