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Office of the Governor

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Governor Northam Updates Mask Guidance to Align with CDC Changes

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today amended Executive Order Seventy-Two to adopt [new guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on mask use in outdoor settings. The CDC guidelines state that fully vaccinated individuals do not have to wear masks outdoors when alone or in small gatherings. Mask use is still required indoors and outdoors at large crowded events like concerts, sporting events, and graduation ceremonies. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the last required dose of vaccine.

“The CDC’s recommendations underscore what we have said all along—vaccinations are the way we will put this pandemic behind us and get back to normal life,” **said Governor Northam.** “Our increasing vaccination rate and decreasing number of new COVID-19 cases has made it possible to ease mitigation measures in a thoughtful and measured manner. I encourage all Virginians who have not yet received the vaccine to make an appointment today.”

The Governor also revised Executive Order Seventy-Two to allow up to 1,000 spectators for outdoor recreational sports, effective immediately. This change advances by two weeks a change that was scheduled to go into effect on May 15 and will allow additional spectators to participate in final games of the current high school sports season and the summer sports season.

Governor Northam reiterated that the next steps to ease mitigation measures will go into effect on Saturday, May 15 as previously [announced](#). He expects to be able to roll back the remaining capacity limits in mid-June as long as the Commonwealth’s health metrics remain stable and vaccination progress continues.

More than 3.7 million Virginians have been vaccinated with at least one dose, representing 57 percent of Virginia’s adult population, and 2.5 million Virginians are fully vaccinated, representing 39 percent of the adult population. Virginians over the age of 16 can schedule a vaccination appointment by [visiting vaccinate.virginia.gov](#) or calling 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682, TTY users call 7-1-1).

The full text of Sixth Amended Executive Order Seventy-Two and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine is available [here](#). Updated guidelines for specific sectors can be found [here](#).

The full text of Seventh Amended Executive Order Seventy-Two and Order of Public Health Emergency Nine, which takes effect on May 15, can be found [here](#).

Visit virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia for more information and answers to frequently asked questions.

[Full Release](#)