



City of Culver City

Staff Report

File #: 23-65, **Version:** 1

Item #:

CC - ACTION ITEM: (1) Discussion Regarding Masking Requirements at Indoor City Council and City Commission, Board and Committee Meetings; and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.

Meeting Date: August 8, 2022

Contact Person/Dept.: Jesse Mays/City Manager's Office
Shelly Wolfberg/City Manager's Office

Phone Number: (310) 253-6000

Fiscal Impact: Yes No

General Fund: Yes No

Attachments: Yes No

Commission Action Required: Yes No **Date:**

Commission Name:

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council; Coronavirus Gov Delivery topic list (08/03/2022)

Department Approval: John M. Nachbar (08/02/2022)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council (1) discuss the City's masking requirements at indoor City Council and City Commission, Board and Committee meetings and (2) provide direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.

BACKGROUND

On March 14, 2022, at a regular public meeting, the City Council determined that it would resume in-person City Council meetings beginning at its April 11, 2022 regular meeting, and that all City Commissions, Boards and Committees (CBC) would resume in person meetings in April. In an abundance of caution, due to the indoor setting, indoor ventilation issues, and to protect persons who are most vulnerable to serious illness from COVID-19, including those who are immunocompromised or unable to be vaccinated, the City Council voted to require all persons who attend the in-person City Council and CBC meetings to wear a well-fitted mask while indoors. (Fortieth Supplement to

Public Order, issued on March 16, 2022)

At the April 25, 2022 City Council Meeting, Council Member Eriksson received City Council consensus to agendize monthly consideration of mask requirements. This topic originally appeared on the May 23, 2022 City Council Agenda but not considered due to the late hour of the meeting.

At the June 27, 2022 City Council Meeting, the City Council discussed this topic of the indoor masking requirements. When this item was considered, additional discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding support for following the actions of Los Angeles County to recommend but not require masks; hospitalization numbers in Los Angeles County; variants as not driving hospitalizations; the importance of looking at science rather than buying into fear; the fact that no county in the state requires mask mandates; length of time that COVID will be around; high compliance in Culver City; and the feeling that the issue should be revisited in a few months. Subsequently, the City Council achieved consensus to uphold the masking requirement for indoor City Council, Commission, Board and Committee meetings, in accordance with the Fortieth Supplement to Public Order, issued on March 16, 2022.

This report includes current masking guidance from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH).

DISCUSSION

Current Public Health Masking Guidance

LACDPH issued a press release on July 29, 2022 that stated:

Although Public Health did not issue a new health officer order to require universal indoor masking because of the improvements in our hospital metrics, given the continued high rate of transmission, wearing masks indoors in public spaces will reduce risk and limit spread.

As a reminder, masking is still required in many settings throughout the county under the existing state and LA County Health Officer orders.

Masks are required in all health care settings, on public transportation, such as buses and trains, and transit hubs, as well as at long-term care settings, shelters, cooling centers, and correctional facilities. Masks are required for 10 days for anyone recently diagnosed with, or exposed to, COVID-19, when they are around other people.

And while LA County still is in this surge, indoor masking is very strongly advised everywhere else: in shared office spaces, in other work settings like manufacturing, in retail settings (whether you work there or are shopping), indoors at schools, and when you are in any indoor space, unless you are actively eating or drinking.

As a reminder, businesses and institutions are permitted to require indoor masking while people are on their premises, and this remains a sensible action to take during times of high transmission.

Current State of COVID-19 Transmission in Los Angeles County

The July 29th LACDPH press release stated:

Using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Community Levels framework, Los Angeles County remains at the high community level this week. However, there are indications that LA County may very soon be moving to the medium community level. Given the latest trends in cases and hospitalizations, Public Health is not instituting universal indoor masking at this time.

LA County's 7-day case rate, while still elevated at 426 weekly cases per 100,000 people, declined from 481 weekly cases per 100,000 people last week. Using the most recent hospitalization data, LA County is experiencing a rate of 9.7 new hospitalizations for LA County, which suggests that by next Thursday, assuming rates stay stable or decline, CDC will designate LA County at the medium community level.

The July 29th LACDPH press release included the following data on COVID-19:

- 6,399 New COVID-19 cases (3,292,692 cases to date)
- 18 New deaths due to COVID-19 (32,708 deaths to date)
- 1,239 people currently hospitalized with COVID-19
- More than 12,332,471 individuals tested; 24% of people tested positive to date

These numbers do not necessarily capture positive tests on at-home tests, which have become abundant and widely available.

Per City Council direction, the purpose of this item is to discuss the masking requirement for all persons who attend the in-person indoor City Council and CBC meetings. If the City Council gives direction to remove the masking requirement, the City Manager would issue a Supplement to Public Order, rescinding the indoor mask requirement in the Fortieth Supplement. Staff would subsequently return to the City Council with a Resolution confirming the City Manager's Public Order, as required by the Culver City Municipal Code.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact for the City Council to discuss this matter.

ATTACHMENTS

None

MOTIONS

That the City Council:

1. Discuss masking requirements at indoor City Council, Commission, Board and Committee meetings; and

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2. If desired, direct the City Manager to issue a new Supplement to Public Order, rescinding the masking requirement in the Fortieth Supplement for indoor City Council, Commission, Board and Committee meetings;

OR

3. Uphold the masking requirement for indoor City Council, Commission, Board and Committee meetings, in accordance with the Fortieth Supplement to Public Order, issued on March 16, 2022;

AND/OR

4. Provide other direction to the City Manager as deemed appropriate.