

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

MINUTES

**The Watertown Board of Health has scheduled a REMOTE ZOOM meeting on
Monday August 23, 2021 at 7:00 pm**

PRESENT: Dr. John Straus, Dr. Barbara Beck and Richard Arnold,

Staff: Larry Ramdin, Director of Public Health, Maureen Foley, Head Clerk,

In attendance: Brian McCormack, Eleanor Donato, Alan Smolinski, Greg Reibman, Jen Nicholson, John Gannon, Leanne Hammonds, Andrew Hudson

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Straus called the meeting to order 5:33 pm, Roll Call

The board of Health will vote on the indoor masks within public spaces mandate on Monday, August 23, 2021.

Larry Ramdin stated there is an uptick in breakthrough cases. Presently Watertown has had 87 cases with 32 breakthroughs cases in August with 49 active cases presently. May had 29 cases, June had 5 cases and all were breakthroughs. July had 72 cases with 41 breakthroughs.

CDC recommends indoor face masks because Watertown and Middlesex County are in the high transmission range to implement this mandate.

Larry Ramdin, recommended increasing the age from 2 years to 5 years for indoor mask wearing, in keeping with previous orders recognizing that children under 5 will have challenges keeping a face covering on and they are usually in the care of their parents who can exercise care to reduce their risk.. This mandate includes private clubs and houses of worship. Dr. Beck firmly supports this mandate due to the breakthroughs. Richard Arnold is in support as a temporary status and can be rescinded once COVID trends in a better direction.

Motion was made to approve the indoor face covering within public spaces mandate by Dr. Beck and seconded by Mr. Arnold. A roll call vote taken and the motion was approved 3-0. All in favor. (Beck, Arnold, Straus).

John Gannon, Town Councilor asked how the Board of Health was planning on communicating this mandate to the businesses besides the Town Web Site.

Andrew Hudson, a resident was grateful for the Board to raising the child's age to 5 years old due to the social and emotional development of a young child.

Leanne Hammonds, Library Trustee stated the WFPL can help distribute the information about the new mask mandate.

Dr. Straus adjourned the meeting at 5:55 pm

Board Of Health Order on Wearing Face Coverings Indoors August 25, 2021

Whereas cases of COVID-19 in vaccinated and unvaccinated residents due to the highly contagious Delta variant have been increasing in Watertown since July 2021. On July 27, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control issued an advisory for vaccinated persons in areas of substantial and high transmission to wear a mask while indoors.

A mask mandate is an immediate intervention to prevent the spread of disease within spaces open to the public.

Therefore, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 111 sections 31, and 122, the Watertown Board of Health adopts a public health mandate effective August 25, 2021, requiring face coverings for all persons at all times when inside public spaces or private spaces open to the public.

This mandate applies to individuals aged 5 years and over except where an individual is unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. If a customer refuses to wear a mask or cloth face covering for non-medical reasons, a business may decline entry to the individual

- Food service establishment customers may only remove face coverings when seated.
- Performance venue customers may only remove face coverings in the actual act of eating and drinking.
- Indoor performers are required to wear face coverings, except where they are able to maintain a minimum of 25 feet of distance from members of the audience. Indoor bar and dance venue customers may only remove face coverings when seated at tables or seated at a bar. Patrons standing or ordering at the bar must be masked. Guests must be masked on indoor dance floors.
- Lodging guests and workers are required to wear face coverings when inside hallways and common areas.
- Residents, visitors and employees in multi-unit homes and apartments are required to wear face coverings when inside common hallways and spaces.
- Members, visitors and employees in private membership clubs are required to wear face coverings while indoors.
- Face Coverings are required in Houses of Worship.
- Fitness Centers/Health Clubs workers, customers, and visitors are required to wear face coverings during fitness activity, including strenuous activity.

- At personal services establishments, including but not limited to barber shops, hair and nail salons, all customers and workers are required to wear face coverings, except for skin or beard care that occurs on the face, the customer may temporarily remove the face covering but must immediately put the face covering back on for the remainder of the visit.
- Masks remain mandatory for all individuals on public and private transportation systems (including rideshares, livery, taxi, ferries, MBTA, Commuter Rail and transportation stations), in healthcare facilities and in other settings hosting vulnerable populations, such as congregate care settings.
- All businesses open to the public must post signage (i.e. entry ways, points of service, etc.) advising customers that facemask must be maintained inside the establishment. Establishment staff must supervise and enforce this requirement.

This order shall be in place from 12:01 Am on August 25, 2021 and shall remain in place and effective until such time as the risk classification is modified by the CDC and the order is modified or rescinded based upon further CDC guidance by the Watertown Board of Health.