

TRI-TOWN HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Lee - Lenox – Stockbridge

TRI-TOWN BOARDS OF HEALTH
LEE, LENOX, AND STOCKBRIDGE BOARDS OF HEALTH

COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTIVE WEARING OF MASKS,
OTHER FACE COVERINGS AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Effective: September 7, 2021

Amended September 22, 2021

WHEREAS, the Delta variants are now accounting for approximately 98% of positive cases in Massachusetts (source <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions>) and cases have started to appear in Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge; and

WHEREAS, these variants are almost twice as contagious as previous variants; and

WHEREAS, we know that masks slow or prevent transmission of all COVID-19 variants so far; and

WHEREAS, as we see cases rise in surrounding counties and communities, we are committed to preventing transmission, keeping our numbers as low as possible, keeping businesses and schools open, and preventing our most vulnerable from severe illness; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, “Given what we know about the Delta variant, vaccine effectiveness, and current vaccine coverage, layered prevention strategies, such as wearing masks, are needed to reduce the transmission of this variant.”, and

WHEREAS, Boards of Health have authority under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 111, section 31 may make reasonable rules and regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, commencing on September 7, 2021, at 12:01 am., the following directives are hereby implemented in the Tri-Town Health District and shall remain in effect until this Directive is rescinded and or amended.

1. Appropriate CDC approved masks or face coverings shall be worn in all indoor spaces in the Tri-Town District communities of Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge, unless seated at a table consuming food and/or drink. A sign shall be posted at the entrance of all buildings. A copy of the sign can be found at www.tritownhealth.org or any other masking requirement sign may be used with similar content.
2. Food service establishment employees shall wear a mask or face covering when serving customers, both indoors and outdoors.
3. Masks shall also be required in crowded outdoor public events, and where physical distancing, of at least six feet or more, cannot be maintained. This includes but is not limited to: events held at fairgrounds/parks, outdoor performance and event venues, restaurants, etc.
4. Masks shall be fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face; and be secured with ties or ear loops; and include multiple layers of fabric; and allow for breathing without

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restriction; and may be removed for eating, drinking where allowed. Disposable surgical/procedural masks, N-95s, elastomeric masks, cloth masks are permitted. Masks with exhale valves are not permitted.

5. Large outdoor events with a capacity of 5000 or more shall consider postponement where social distancing of a minimum of 6 feet per person cannot be maintained. Events less than 5000 shall implement mitigation strategies such as masking and social distancing.

In addition, the Tri-Town Board of Health are encouraging community members to:

1. Get vaccinated and stay at home if showing signs of symptoms.
2. Get tested for COVID-19 if you have new or unexplained symptoms, before and after travelling and/or if you have been exposed.
3. If at risk of exposure, call and schedule a test at 1-855-BMC-LINK
4. More information on COVID-19 can be found at www.tritownhealth.org, www.mass.gov and www.cdc.gov

Exemptions:

1. Nothing in this order shall be construed to require a mask to be worn by children under age two (2) or children who frequently compromise mask integrity with frequent manipulations or removals, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance or anyone who cannot wear a mask for other underlying health and safety reasons.
2. All Schools must comply with minimum standards set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. All school related sport activities must comply with minimum standards set forth by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
3. Providers and/or other Residential and Congregate Care settings that are licensed by Department of Public Health and/or other state agencies such as Department of Mental Health shall follow existing best practices and COVID-19 Guidance for Health Care Providers and are exempt from this directive.
4. Masks may be taken off in restaurants/bars only while seated and eating/drinking.
5. Employees in shared office spaces are not required to mask if social distancing of six feet or more can be maintained.
6. Performers who are singing and/or playing brass or wind instruments, who are performance artists or who are presenting or speaking at an event, are not required to wear face coverings but must adhere to social distancing of at least 10 feet from any member of the public when performing indoors and outdoors
7. Face coverings are not required and shall not be worn when actively participating in water-based activities and when swimming. Wearing a mask in these circumstances increases drowning risk. Face coverings shall be always worn when not in water, including but not limited to indoor pool decks, locker rooms, changing rooms, and restrooms.

Section 5 Enforcement:

The person or entity in control of a public indoor or outdoor space shall have the obligation to enforce the requirements of this public health directive set forth in these policies and procedures.

Non-compliance with this directive may impact further spread of COVID-19, impact the health and safety of others. Non-compliance with this directive, the Tri-Town Boards of Health, under their authority may implement more strict rules and regulations of this directive that may include daily fines for non-compliance and further action that may include suspension and revocation of permits issued by the Boards of Health.

This directive is in effect at 12:01 a.m. September 7, 2021, as voted on by its Board of Health members at their meeting on September 2, 2021.

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This directive, and its status, will be reviewed routinely at Board of Health meetings.