

Publications

Ohio Requires Facial Coverings Statewide

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Beginning on **Thursday, July 23, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.**, a statewide mask mandate will go into effect for those living in all 88 Ohio counties. According to Governor Mike DeWine, "requiring masks statewide will make a significant difference and will be key to making sure other counties do not progress to a higher level of increased spread." Currently, there are 78,742 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 3,235 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. Additionally, 9,864 people have been hospitalized, including 2,386 admissions to intensive care units.

Statewide Mask Requirement

All individuals in Ohio who are 10 years old or older must wear facial coverings in public at all times when:

- At an indoor location that is not a residence;
- Outdoors, but unable to maintain six-foot social distance from people who are not household members; and
- Waiting for, riding, driving, or operating public transportation, such as a taxi, a car service, or a private car used for ride-sharing.

Individuals are not required to wear facial coverings if they:

- Have a medical condition or a disability or those communicating with someone with a disability;
- Are actively exercising or playing sports;
- Are officiants at religious services;
- Are actively involved in public safety; or
- Are actively eating or drinking.

Schools should follow the guidance previously issued pertaining to masks.

The mandate, which is part of a public health order, is enforced by state and local authorities, not businesses. Under state law, the penalty for violating a public health order is a second-degree misdemeanor, which is punishable by up to 90 days in jail or a fine of not more than \$750.

Travel Warning and Recommended Self-Quarantines

In addition to the statewide mask requirement, Governor DeWine announced a [travel advisory](#) for all individuals coming into Ohio from states reporting positive COVID-19 testing rates of 15% or higher. This means that those traveling from one of the following states should self-quarantine for 14 days at home or in a hotel: Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina, and Texas. The self-quarantine recommendation applies both to those who live in Ohio and to people who are traveling into Ohio from any of these states.

Limiting Liability for COVID-19 Related Injuries

The Governor has also signed onto a [letter to Congressional leadership](#) with 20 other fellow Governors from across the nation, calling for reasonable limited liability protections for businesses, schools, healthcare workers, and governments as they are reopened during the COVID-19 global pandemic. In Ohio, House Bill 606 and Senate Bill 308 are pending in the General Assembly. Read more about these bills in [this alert](#). These bills would provide qualified civil immunity for injuries caused by the transmission or exposure to COVID-19. Contact your Vorys attorney or a member of Vorys Advisors for an update on this legislation.

We continue to monitor and report on these developments in real time. Contact your Vorys lawyer if you have questions concerning COVID-19 and its impact on your operations.

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Vorys COVID-19 Task Force

Outside of this new law, employers continue to face myriad issues as COVID-19 continues to spread and impact communities and workplaces (some of these issues are addressed in our prior alerts [located here](#)). We will continue to keep you posted on any important developments. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding this new law or any other aspect of COVID-19, please contact your Vorys lawyer.

We have also established a comprehensive Coronavirus Task Force, which includes attorneys with deep experience in the niche disciplines that we have been and expect to continue receiving questions regarding coronavirus. Learn more and see the latest updates from the task force at vorys.com/coronavirus.