



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

To: DDS Qualified Providers

From: Jordan Scheff, Commissioner

Cc: Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff; Scott McWilliams, Chief Fiscal Officer; Nicholas Jerard, Assistant Chief Fiscal Officer; Sean Bannon, Operations Center Director

Date: March 16, 2022

RE: Updated Masking and Vaccination Guidance

Mask Requirements:

- Pursuant to Special Act 22-1 and the ensuing [Department of Public Health order](#), the mask mandate in CT has been lifted for nearly all settings, regardless of vaccination status, with three exceptions:
 1. Inside PreK-12 public or non-public (e.g., "private", "independent", "boarding", etc.) school buildings, excluding residential dormitories, if a local or regional board of education or similar body governing a nonpublic school or schools requires the use of appropriate face-covering masks;
 2. In any areas accessible by patients or clients* inside a licensed healthcare facility, or other healthcare setting, including, but not limited to:
 - hospitals, outpatient clinics, nursing homes (in compliance with, and as required by, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), assisted living services agencies and other institutions as defined in Conn. Gen. Statutes Section 19a-490;
 - outpatient healthcare settings, including doctors' offices, urgent care centers, dental offices, physical/occupational therapy offices, chiropractic offices, medical spas and blood-collection facilities; clinical laboratories as defined in Conn. Gen. Statutes Section 19a-30; and
 - congregate living settings, including residential care homes and group homes, when healthcare or supportive services are being provided;
 3. Inside homeless shelters or other shelters, such as temporary shelter operations.
- What does this mean for DDS Residential providers?
 - Masks are required for all in ICF settings (public or private).
 - Masks are required for all in healthcare settings, such as DDS dental clinics.
 - Masks are required for all in congregate living settings, defined for DDS as CLAs.
 - For all other residential settings, state guidance indicates that masking is optional for both the participants and staff, regardless of vaccination status. Providers, as with all private businesses, may choose to enforce a different masking policy in these settings.

- What does this mean for DDS Day and Employment providers?
 - State guidance indicates that masking is optional for both the participants and staff, regardless of vaccination status.
 - Providers, as with all private businesses, may choose to enforce a different masking policy.
 - Providers cannot refuse to serve an individual who is unable to tolerate wearing a mask and has a mask exemption form. DDS case managers can facilitate the process for issuing a mask exemption form for eligible DDS individuals.

Vaccination Requirements:

- The state is not taking a position on requiring COVID vaccinations for an individual to participate in a DDS funded day/employment program.
- Providers cannot refuse to serve an individual who provides written medical documentation that they are unable to be vaccinated.

As noted in the [4/9/21 reopening guidance](#), DDS Day and Employment programs are still able to open at 100% capacity, implementing social distancing protocols as they deem appropriate.

Thank you for your ongoing pandemic response efforts.