

City of Racine, Wisconsin  
Office of the Mayor



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 14, 2020

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## **Mayor Issues Executive Order Ending Enforcement Of City Mask Ordinance** *With new guidance from the CDC, Health Department pivots towards vaccination efforts*

**City of Racine** – Today, Mayor Cory Mason issued an emergency declaration which goes into effect at 12:00 Noon today, Friday, May 14, 2021, that suspends enforcement of Racine Ordinances section 54-35, otherwise known as the Mask Ordinance, in the City of Racine. Furthermore, the Mayor will ask the Common Council to fully repeal the ordinance at their meeting on Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Earlier this week, the CDC, issued new guidance which said fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

“The City of Racine has always said we will follow the best public health guidance from the CDC and other experts as we work to mitigate COVID-19 locally. The CDC issued this new guidance because of the success the nation is having in getting people vaccinated, especially in major population centers. However, this new guidance also means that the City’s mask ordinance is now outdated and nearly impossible to enforce, which is why Public Health Administrator Bowersox, ask for an emergency order of suspension,” **said Mayor Cory Mason.**

**Mason continued,** “This does not mean the pandemic is over. If you are not vaccinated, COVID-19 is still a very serious threat to your health, and you should continue to wear masks and follow other best practices. The CDC only issued this new guidance because of the large numbers of people getting vaccinated. We are at this point because people understand the seriousness of this virus. I offer my sincerest thanks and gratitude to all Racinians who wore their masks, stayed home, stayed distant, and who have now been vaccinated. It is because of you, that we get this small but meaningful reward, of removing our masks. I encourage everyone to join us, get vaccinated, and get life back to normal.”

According to the latest data from the City of Racine Public Health Department 44.2% of their jurisdiction’s residents age 16 and up have had their first dose, and 37% are fully vaccinated. The City’s COVID-19 case rate is currently 234 cases per 100,000 individuals over the last 14 days (down from 305 seven days ago) and has 5-day average percent positivity rate of 13% (down from 20% seven days ago).

**Dottie-Kay Bowersox, Public Health Administrator for the City of Racine** had this to say, “The CDC announcement is meant to encourage those that have not been vaccinated to do so at one of the multiple vaccination sites within communities. In order for this community to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases and its transmission, it is imperative for those not vaccinated to continue to wear a facial mask and get vaccinated. Rationale for not getting vaccinated is no longer viable since current vaccines are effective against the predominate strains of COVID-19 in the United States, they have been proven safe, those vaccinated have a lower chance of transmitting the virus, and the more individuals vaccinated the less likely new variants are to emerge. This decision by the CDC empowers individuals to keep

themselves, family, friends, and those you have yet to meet safe and healthy. If you have not been vaccinated against COVID-19 do so today.”

The City of Racine reminds residents that while the City is suspending enforcement, other local businesses, institutions, or private residences can still require masks, and that if you are unvaccinated, the CDC guidance is to still wear a mask, use social distance, and to wash hand frequently.

Additionally, as of now, the **CDC’s school guidance remains unchanged**. Most students will still be unvaccinated and schools should follow [CDC’s guidance for schools](#). Teachers, school administrators, and staff should continue to follow CDC’s school guidance until more people and children are vaccinated. Students and staff on buses should continue to follow all masking and physical distancing guidelines.

As a reminder to City residents there are many venues within the City to get vaccinated. The following are just a few:

- The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, 1134 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, will be open on Friday, May 14th and Saturday, May 15th from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. both days to administer first doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Residents must come back to the MLK Center for the second dose on Friday, June 4th and Saturday, June 5th between 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. both days; and
- The City of Racine Public Health Department operates a vaccination clinic at Festival Hall each week. Appointments are available typically on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. To schedule your appointment [click here](#).
- The AMI Clinic at Regency Mall has evening and weekend hours each week. To register to get an appointment please visit [vaccinate.wi.gov](http://vaccinate.wi.gov) or call 1-844-684-1064.
- For even more locations, please visit: <https://www.racinecoronavirus.org/racine-covid-19-vaccine/>

City residents should remember:

- Vaccinations are FREE
- You DO NOT need to show an ID
- Bus rides are FREE – just tell the driver you are going to get vaccinated.
- Anyone age 12 and above is eligible to get vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine – they just need to be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian

The language of the emergency declaration can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).

### **About the City of Racine**

With a population of 78,000, **Racine, Wisconsin** is the fifth largest municipality in the state of Wisconsin. It is home to manufacturing businesses that enjoy world-wide reputations, SC Johnson, CNH Industrial, Twin Disc, Modine, and In-Sink-Erator among them. Racine is also home to diverse cultures, a thriving downtown, and world-class beaches along the shores of Lake Michigan.

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