



## CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING: AUGUST 27, 2021

THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS BRIEFING FOR THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY

### Emergency Indoor Mask Order for All Municipal Buildings and Offices



The Board of Health and Select Board have jointly issued an emergency order requiring that **all individuals ages 5 and up wear a mask when inside any municipal building or office**. These locations include Town Hall, Tolles Parsons Center, Warren Recreation Building, Fire and Police Departments, Department of Public Works and Facilities Buildings, Recycling and Disposal Facility, Municipal Light Plant, and all Wellesley Free Library buildings. The order also requires Town employees to wear masks whenever they are engaging with the public indoors, and unvaccinated Town employees are required to wear masks at all times when inside municipal buildings. Read [the signed order](#).

Specific exceptions to the mask order are for medical or disabling conditions; communication, speech, or hearing impairments; or when eating or drinking during designated lunch or snack periods. Mask up signs will be posted in Town offices. If you forget a mask, Town staff will provide you with one.

This order is effective on **Wednesday, September 1** and will remain in effect until it is rescinded by both Boards. Health and Town officials will be periodically reviewing Town COVID-19 data to help determine when the emergency order can be removed.

### Wellesley Public Schools Indoor Mask Requirement



In alignment with a directive from the commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the Wellesley School Committee is requiring all Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) students and staff to wear masks indoors throughout the month of September. This requirement went into effect on August 26 in preparation for the start of the 2021-2022 school year on September 1. WPS will revisit this masking requirement in early October to reassess if it is still needed.

The School Committee and administration has also prepared a [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) list](#) that explains the COVID-19 mitigation strategies and practices the district will follow as WPS returns to more normal operations this year. Details are available on the [Wellesley Public Schools website](#).

### COVID-19 Home Tests



There are many home tests for COVID-19 now available for both PCR and antigen testing. The “rapid test” including Abbott BinaxNOW Antigen Self-Test, as well as other similar tests, can be easily purchased from pharmacies for use at home. **Please be aware:** While the tests are very convenient, the results of many home tests are not reported to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) or the Wellesley Health department. Tests administered by testing sites (i.e. pharmacies, Stop the Spread sites, physician offices, clinics, etc.) are reported to these health agencies.

For positive results, it is important that public health professionals contact the positive individual to provide guidance on isolation and quarantine, and help identify any close contacts of the infected

person. Isolating from others while infected is critical, especially during this surge of the highly infectious Delta variant. *Even those who are fully vaccinated can infect others.*

If you do use a home test for COVID-19 and receive a positive result, **please follow the State's [most current guidelines for isolation](#) and call your primary care provider or the Wellesley Health Department at 781-235-0135.**

### **Get the VAX!**

A reminder that the COVID-19 vaccine is readily available, safe, and free of charge. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has [fully approved the Pfizer vaccine](#) for individuals age 16 and up, and has also given emergency approval for the vaccine to be administered to youths age 12 to 15. If you have not been vaccinated, the Health Department urges you to Get the Vax as soon as possible. In the coming months, all individuals and especially those with compromised immune systems may choose to get a third booster of the vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccine appointments are available from local pharmacies, physician offices, clinics, and other locations. Vaccine information is available on the [State website](#).

**Visit Wellesley's COVID-19 Information Hub at [www.wellesley.ma.gov/coronavirus](http://www.wellesley.ma.gov/coronavirus)**

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