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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

To: Local Media
From: Katrina Harwood, Health Officer
Date: May 14, 2021

Rock County Health Officer Announces Termination of Mask Order

Rock County, WI – Health Officer Katrina Harwood announced today she is lifting the Rock County mask order effective immediately. The termination order can be found in the [Current Orders and Mandates](#) section of the Rock County Public Health Department website. This announcement follows the change in CDC guidance for fully vaccinated people. Studies have shown that fully vaccinated people are protected and can safely resume regular activities. They are also less likely to spread the virus to others.

To be considered fully vaccinated, it must be at least two weeks after your second dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two weeks after you receive the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. People who are not fully vaccinated should still follow CDC guidance and continue social distancing and wearing masks indoors and in crowded spaces. "Now that more of our residents have been vaccinated, we are removing the mask order so that those people can take advantage of the benefits of being vaccinated. We encourage everyone to get vaccinated when they can. We understand that many people still have questions and concerns, and that is normal. If you are unsure about whether the vaccine is right for you, please talk to your doctor," stated Harwood. The vaccine is free and available to anyone age 12 and older.

There are still some instances where fully vaccinated people may be required to wear a mask. According to the [CDC Federal Mask Requirement](#), everyone must still wear masks on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation. There may also be other federal, local, and facility requirements in place that everyone should continue to follow. Businesses may choose to keep mask requirements in place for everyone rather than asking for vaccination status.

Rock County Public Health Department continues to follow CDC guidance and strongly recommends that everyone wear masks in healthcare settings, schools, correctional

facilities, and homeless shelters regardless of vaccination status. These settings present a higher risk of transmission, and extra precautions should remain in place. As more people become vaccinated, these recommendations will continue to be reviewed. Some vaccinated people who are at higher risk or who are immunocompromised may want to continue wearing a mask. Please consult your doctor if you have questions or concerns.

Rock County will remain in Phase Two of the [Rock County Reopening Guidance](#). "We are very optimistic but want to evaluate the data following the changes to masking before moving to the next phase of our Reopening Guidance. It is important for people to follow quarantine and isolation requirements to help contain the spread of COVID-19 and keep our numbers moving in the right direction," stated Harwood. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19, get tested and stay away from others while waiting for your results. If you are fully vaccinated and have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine if you do not have symptoms.

Continue to wash your hands with soap and water, stay home if you are sick, and get vaccinated to protect yourself, your families, and your friends. "We are still all in this together and together, as more people become vaccinated, we can get back to regular activities," said Harwood.

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Rock County Public Health Department serves Rock County citizens by collaborating with partners to ensure a healthy, thriving Rock County. For the latest information about COVID-19 in Rock County, visit the Rock County Public Health Department website at www.co.rock.wi.us/publichealth and follow us on social media @rockcountyphd. Local COVID-19 information is also available on the Rock County Coronavirus Response and Recovery Hub at www.co.rock.wi.us/c19hub.

Please send all media inquiries to Media.PublicHealth@co.rock.wi.us.