

# NEWS BRIEF

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## CDC No Longer Enforcing Mask Mandate on Air Travel and Public Transit

On Monday, April 18, 2022, a federal judge invalidated the national mask-wearing requirement for public transit, airplanes and transportation hubs. In their decision, the federal judge for the Middle District of Florida said the CDC exceeded its authority to enforce mask-wearing.

Initially, the mask-wearing requirement had been extended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) until May 3 in an effort to curb outbreaks of new COVID-19 variants. However, as a result of the court order, the CDC [will no longer enforce the mandate](#), effective immediately. It now falls on individual transit authorities and airlines to determine if they wish to enforce mask-wearing or similar COVID-19 prevention measures.

### What's Next?

In response to the decision, President Joe Biden noted that the Transportation Security Administration would not be enforcing mask-wearing in transit hubs.

Additionally, it's unclear how public and private transportation agencies will respond. At the time of this writing, the largest U.S. airlines have all stated that mask-wearing will now be optional. These companies include Delta Air Lines, American Airlines, United Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Alaska Airlines and JetBlue.

Amtrak released a similar statement saying masks are no longer required on their trains for passengers or employees.

For its part, the CDC is still encouraging individuals to wear masks while on public transit or airplanes. The agency is concerned about the growing spread of the Omicron coronavirus subvariant known as BA.2.

It's also important to note that some localities may be enforcing mask-wearing despite the overturned federal mask mandate. Philadelphia, for instance, reinstated its mask-wearing rule to help curb the new wave of COVID-19.

Knowing this, individuals traveling to different parts of the country should plan ahead to ensure compliance with their destinations' rules.

Continue monitoring guidance from states, localities and individual businesses. Kinloch Consulting Group, Inc. will keep you updated with any notable COVID-19 policy changes.

