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This is an addendum to the Updated Indoor Mask and Social Distance Policy that was initially emailed on Monday, July 26, 2021.

Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards has temporarily reinstated Louisiana's statewide mask mandate indoors for all people age five and older as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to rise across Louisiana, threatening the ability of Louisiana's hospitals to deliver care during this fourth surge of COVID. Louisiana is currently in the worst surge of the COVID-19 pandemic so far in terms of case growth rate, percent positivity and hospitalizations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday released data that shows that while vaccination reduces one's chance of becoming infected with COVID-19, those who do become infected with the Delta variant despite being fully vaccinated are likely at risk of transmitting it to others.

Louisiana's temporary indoor statewide mask mandate will stay in place until at least September 1, but may be extended if necessary.

STATEWIDE MASK MANDATE

Face masks that properly cover the wearer's mouth and nose should be worn indoors at all times, unless a person is in a home, under the Governor's statewide mask mandate, which will be in place until at least September 1.

The order requires face coverings for everyone age 5 or older or enrolled in kindergarten, except for the following:

- Anyone who has a medical condition that prevents the wearing of a face covering
- Anyone who is consuming a drink or food
- Anyone who is trying to communicate with a person who is hearing impaired
- Anyone who is giving a speech for broadcast or to an audience
- Anyone temporarily removing his or her face covering for identification purposes.

Face coverings are highly encouraged for those ages 2 to 4 as tolerated.

As with the Governor's previous mandate, children younger than kindergarten age are exempted if they cannot wear a mask. However, the CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health strongly encourage indoor mask wearing in public for all children aged two and older, especially as they are

not yet eligible for the COVID vaccine. Generally, LDH shares these reminders for individuals and families who are trying to stay as safe as possible during the COVID-10 pandemic:

1. If you can do an activity outdoors instead of indoors, do it outdoors
2. Follow good hygiene practices (wash your hands vigorously and frequently, and don't touch your face)
3. Stay away from crowded settings
4. Work virtually if possible
5. If you suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested immediately
6. If you're in an at-risk group, be extra careful
7. Everyone who is sick or who has COVID symptoms should stay home

To acknowledge that you have received, read and agree to the provisions of the above mask mandate policy; I have attached a “**read receipt**” to this email. If your read receipt does not appear, please reply to this email as acknowledgement of receipt and you agree to the provisions of the policy.

Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns you may have.

Regards,

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