



Office of Head Start

Friday, September 16, 2022

Today, the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced that, in the near future, we intend to publish a final rule that will formally remove the requirement for universal masking in Head Start programs for all individuals ages 2 and older. This will align Head Start program masking requirements more closely with the updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) has not monitored mask use at Head Start programs since February 2022, following updated recommendations from the CDC on COVID-19 Community Levels. Until the requirement is removed through the published final rule, OHS will continue to not monitor for mask use.

ACF and OHS encourage all Head Start grant recipients to continue using a combination of tools to [reduce COVID-19 risks](#) in Head Start programs, including those highlighted in the most [recent CDC guidance](#). ACF advises all Head Start programs to monitor the [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) and follow recommended CDC guidelines, which include wearing a high-quality mask indoors when the COVID-19 Community Level is high.

Office of Head Start (OHS) | 330 C Street, SW | 4th Floor Mary E. Switzer Building | Washington, DC 20201 | <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov> | 1-866-763-6481 | [Contact Us](#)

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