



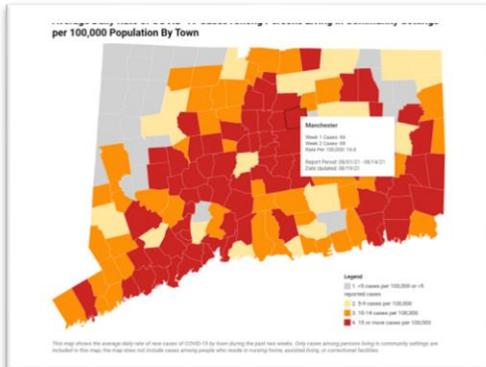
Town of Manchester
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Town of Manchester Issues Mask Mandate

MANCHESTER, CT- Over the last three weeks, the Town of Manchester has experienced a significant increase in confirmed cases of COVID-19, most likely as a result of the Delta variant. The number of individuals hospitalized with COVID-19 in Hartford County is now 10 times higher than early July¹, and as of August 19th, Manchester has entered the Red Alert status for number of new cases per day.

Based on the recommendations of the Town's Health Department, Acting General Manager Steve Stephanou and Mayor Jay Moran, in response to Governor Lamont's Executive Order [Executive Order No. 13A](#), which gives municipalities the ability to legally require masking in indoor public places in their cities and towns, have announced a Town-wide mask mandate for all indoor spaces that are frequented by the public. The only exemptions to this mandate are when people are seated and eating or drinking in an establishment or have a valid written medical exemption from a physician.



"The health and safety of Manchester residents is always my main goal as Mayor," said Mayor Moran. "As I have stated from the onset of this pandemic, I am relying on the advice of our public health professionals, and the Town is supporting this mitigation effort to keep our businesses thriving, our schools open, and our residents safe and healthy."

"Manchester's two main priorities right now are 1) the safe in-person reopening of schools and 2) avoiding business shutdowns and capacity mandates," said Acting Manager Stephanou. "The Town believes that a mask mandate will improve the odds of achieving those goals. We have also been

coordinating our efforts to address the spike in COVID-19 with other nearby municipalities, including South Windsor, in order to implement a more regional response in the absence of a statewide policy."

An Emergency Declaration will be effective Saturday, August 21 at 12:01 AM, requiring everyone in Manchester to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, in all indoor public spaces, meeting spaces, private businesses, and all places of employment except when eating or drinking. There would be no other changes in policy, such as capacity restrictions or social distancing mandates.

"Other than the continued effort to get all of our eligible residents vaccinated, masks remain our most effective tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19," said Health Director Jeffrey Catlett, MPH, R.S. "Vaccines are highly effective against severe illness, but the Delta variant causes more infections and spreads faster than earlier forms of the virus that causes COVID-19."

In an effort to increase local vaccination rates, the Town of Manchester will be sponsoring free vaccine clinics on Saturday, September 4th and Saturday, September 25th. The events will be held under the pavilion at Charter Oak Park from 10 AM to 2 PM.

For information on obtaining the vaccine, please contact the Manchester Health Department directly at 860-647-3173 or email healthdept@manchesterct.gov

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¹ On July 9, only 8 people were hospitalized in Hartford County. As of August 18, that number is 106. Data source State DPH: <https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/COVID-19-Cases-Hospitalizations-and-Deaths-By-Coun/bfnu-rgqt>