



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE Y IN CENTRAL MARYLAND  
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY • BALTIMORE CITY • BALTIMORE COUNTY • CARROLL COUNTY • HARFORD COUNTY • HOWARD COUNTY

## Lifted Mask Mandates in Maryland: What it Means for Y Members and Program Participants

**Effective 5/17/21:**

### 1. What has taken place?

On Friday, May 14th, Governor Hogan announced the lifting of the mandate requiring mask use indoors. This announcement was preceded by an announcement on Wednesday, May 12th, which also relaxed requirements for social distancing, capacity limits and other restrictions indoors and outdoors in Maryland.

Exceptions are licensed youth programs. Additionally, local jurisdictions have the latitude to impose their own restrictions at their discretion. At the time of this writing, all jurisdictions in central Maryland with the exception of Baltimore City have adopted the Governor's recommended lifting of the mask mandate and other restrictions. In Baltimore City, local mask requirements remain in place indoors.

### 2. Why have the restrictions been lifted?

In making his announcement, the Governor cited the recent **CDC guidance** which indicates that fully vaccinated individuals may resume activities as normal. **This is as a result of improved health indicators in the U.S. and across Maryland, driven by the increasing percentage of individuals who have been vaccinated.**

**It is important to note, however, that both the CDC, state health officials and the Governor strongly recommend that unvaccinated individuals continue to wear face coverings.**

### 3. What does all this mean for use of Y programs and facilities?

#### **Y Family Center Use**

Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties:

**A charitable, cause-driven organization working for community well-being.  
The Y.™ For a better us.**

Effective Monday, May 17, 2021, the following restrictions are lifted/modified:

- Members will no longer be required to wear masks while in Y facilities; however, unvaccinated adults are strongly encouraged to voluntarily continue mask use out of courtesy to their fellow members;
- Temperature checks will no longer be required upon entering Y family centers (the exception being children in our Y Academic Support Centers as further explained below);
- Exercise equipment which had been removed or disabled will once again be available for your use;
- Pre-registration will no longer be required for water fitness or group exercise classes. Members will once again be able to join water fitness and group exercise classes on a first-come, first-served basis unless otherwise indicated in the class schedules (some classes will require tokens as was customary prior to Covid);
- Effective Wednesday, May 19th, reservations for lap lanes, family swim, open gym, family gym and pick-up basketball will no longer be required. Please check your Y center schedule for availability.

Baltimore City (the Weinberg Y in Waverly and the Y in Druid Hill):

Per the order of Mayor Brandon Scott, mask usage continues to be required indoors in Baltimore City. All other easing of restrictions indicated above are also eased in Baltimore City and will be implemented in the two Y family centers in Baltimore City, consistent with all other Y family centers in central Maryland, effective Monday, May 17th.

## **Y Youth Programs**

Safety protocols governing Y policy for youth program participants vary based on state licensing requirements.

Mask usage continues to be required for licensed Y youth programs, which includes Y Academic Support Centers, Head Start, Preschool, Before and After School Enrichment, and all in-school programs. While determinations about camp protocols will be made closer to the start of the camp season, protocols for all other licensed Y youth programs (listed above) include mask wearing, social distancing and temperature checks upon entry.

Participants in other non-licensed Y youth programs that specifically serve children under the age of 12, including Stay & Play and Youth Sports programs for that age group will continue to be required to wear masks at this time. Participants in all other non-licensed Y youth programs, like Youth Sports programs for children 12

and older, and other non-licensed programs will no longer be required by the Y to wear masks. With that said, the Y encourages all members who are not fully vaccinated, including children, to wear masks. We will make every effort to enforce the wishes of parents who request that their children wear masks in these settings.

#### **4. There is no vaccine approved yet for children under the age of 12, so why doesn't the Y continue to require mask use by everyone everywhere in its Family Centers?**

The Y is strongly committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for everyone who accesses our programs and facilities. This is now and always will be our number one priority. With this in mind, throughout the pandemic we have worked very hard to adapt to rapidly changing conditions, balancing health and safety concerns while also trying to provide a satisfying member experience for all. We have carefully listened to members and others with varying and often strongly divergent viewpoints about our policies. As one Y associate aptly said, "this is the first pandemic for everyone."

With all this in mind, ultimately our decisions are guided by the expert advice of public health authorities including the CDC, state and local health departments, and local medical experts. These are our primary sources of objective facts and information. Given their most recent guidance, driven by the vastly improved health metrics in our state, we are comfortable that we've made a prudent decision regarding the lifting of mask use and other restrictions in our Y family centers. We also note that our policy is widely consistent with other large public facing organizations and entities such as retailers, in which the vast majority of the public engages regularly.

**With all that said, ultimately, each individual must make the choices that are most comfortable for them and appropriate for their families.**

**Regardless, we strongly urge any members who are not fully vaccinated to please continue mask wearing at all times within the Y.** While we are not in a position to know who has and hasn't been vaccinated, we hope that individual responsibility and accountability for the common good will prevail.

We also strongly urge all eligible individuals to get vaccinated if they aren't already. Overwhelming evidence points to vaccination as the fastest route to a state of relative safety and certainty which we all need as a community in order to put the pandemic behind us once and for all.

#### **5. What about Y associates? Will they wear masks?**

For the immediate future, as we are assessing the data and options, all Y associates are required to wear masks while working indoors in Y facilities and programs. Use of masks by Y associates in outdoor settings such as outdoor group exercise or camp will be governed by the prevailing state or local guidelines.

We will soon be moving to a policy that will allow vaccinated associates to discontinue wearing a mask, but are working through logistical issues related to implementing that policy.

## **6. What if I have more questions?**

Y members and others should direct questions to their local Y family centers or email [customerservice@ymaryland.org](mailto:customerservice@ymaryland.org).

**Thank you!**