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# CITY OF EASTHAMPTON

## BOARD OF HEALTH

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Easthampton Board of Health issues Mask Order

EASTHAMPTON- On August 31, 2021, the Easthampton Board of Health voted to issue [an Order requiring masks](#) in public indoor spaces and in certain outdoor circumstances. In summary, the Order requires all individuals, age two or older, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask in public indoor spaces, large outdoor gatherings/events where 100 or more people are expected and social distancing cannot be maintained, and on the sidelines/benches/dugouts of moderate to high risk outdoor sporting events. Exemptions to the Order include but are not limited to: individuals with underlying medical conditions, while seated and eating or drinking at restaurants/bars, and in shared office spaces where six feet of distancing is maintained.

The Delta variant is now the predominant COVID-19 variant and accounts for more than 98% of COVID-19 cases in the Northeast. The Delta variant is two times more contagious than the previous variants. Some data is indicating the Delta variant causing more severe illness and symptoms than previous variants in unvaccinated individuals.

The CDC is recommending masks be worn in indoor spaces in all areas experiencing substantial or high transmission. We have watched Hampshire County rise from moderate transmission to substantial, and now the county is experiencing high transmission, the highest threshold set by the CDC. According to the CDC, what is known of the Delta variant thus far, layered prevention strategies, including wearing masks, are needed to reduce the transmission of this variant. Masks are a simple yet highly effective tool in reducing the transmission of airborne viruses.

Vaccinations continue to play a critical role in the layered prevention strategies mentioned above. The COVID-19 vaccines approved in the United States are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. Although breakthrough cases have been reported, the CDC reports that fully vaccinated individuals with Delta variant breakthrough infections appear to spread the virus for a shorter time period and are at less risk for severe illness and death.

If you or someone you know is in need of a vaccine or cloth face masks, please get in touch with the Easthampton Health Department for assistance. This Order will be reviewed at monthly

Board of Health meetings. Local data will continue to be monitored, and weekly COVID-19 data dashboards will be posted on the Health Department Facebook page and website.