



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

Gary G. Pan
COMMISSIONER

Main Street Centre
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Richmond, Virginia 23219
PHONE (804) 371-2327
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DRAFT AGENDA: March 6, 2022

**IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL
SAFETY AND HEALTH CODES BOARD MEETING**

In person location:

**Patrick Henry Building
East Reading Room
1111 E Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219**

Virtual Access:

******Refer to the Third and Fourth Pages of Agenda for Instructions on Registering to Make Public Comment and Meeting Access Information if you plan to attend virtually******

**For March 21, 2022
10:00 AM**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes for: SHCB Board Meeting held on February 16, 2022
SHCB Public Hearing held on March 14, 2022
4. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board on issues pending before the Board today, as well as any other topics that may be of concern to the Board and within its scope of authority.

This will be the only opportunity for public comment at this meeting. Please limit remarks to 5 minutes in consideration of others wishing to address the Board.

5. Old Business

a) **Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220.**

This meeting is being held for the purpose of consideration of the Proposed Revocation of the Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV2 Virus That Causes COVID-19,16VAC25-220, as adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board ("Board") on February 16, 2022, pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

Presenter – Jay Withrow

***(If requested by the Board)* Closed Meeting for the Purpose of Consultation with Legal Counsel Regarding Specific Legal Matters Pursuant to § 2.2-3711.A.8 of the Code of Virginia**

6. New Business. None

7. Items of Interest from the Department of Labor and Industry

8. Items of Interest from Members of the Board

9. Meeting Adjournment

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This meeting will be held both *in person and virtually*.

Members of the public may attend in person or listen to the meeting via the Cisco WebEx platform by using the weblink, access code, and password below, or audio conference only by using the telephone numbers and access code below. Electronic participation capacity is limited and is on a first come, first serve basis due to the capacity of CISCO WebEx technology.

The Patrick Henry Building is currently following the CDC recommendations for handling health protocols. The Agency will be requiring face coverings inside the meeting room. In addition, the room will be subject to an occupancy limit of 25 people. Entrance will be on a first come, first serve basis.

If you wish to make an Oral Public Comment during the “Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board” period of this meeting, you must follow the instructions below:

- Oral public comments will be received from those persons who have submitted an email to **Princy.Doss@doli.virginia.gov** no later than **12:00 PM (NOON)** on **March 18, 2022**, indicating that they wish to offer either in person or electronic oral comments. Comments may be offered by these individuals when their name is announced by Ms. Doss. Oral comments will be **restricted to 5 minutes** each.

- **For oral comments received electronically:**
 - When logging onto WebEx each person **must provide their full name** during the registration process upon entering the meeting. Do not use the default username as it is imperative that the meeting organizer be able to determine who is in attendance based on their registration name. Failure to follow these specific registration instructions will restrict your ability to participate with oral remarks.
 - If you wish to make an oral comment and will be utilizing the “audio conference only” option to witness the hearing, ***you must provide the phone number you will be calling in from in your email to Ms. Doss*** so that the administrator will know whom to unmute at the appropriate time.
 - Other important information:
 - All parties will be muted until Ms. Doss announces the name of the person who is next to provide an oral comment.
 - All public participation connections will be muted following the public comment periods.
 - Please login from a location without background noise.

Individuals who offer both in-person and virtual comments during the Safety and Health Codes Board Meeting on March 21, 2022 are encouraged to submit a written version of any comments by email to **Princy.Doss@doli.virginia.gov** no later than **5:00 PM** on **March 22, 2022**.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTENDING THE SHCB MEETING VIRTUALLY:

Event address for attendees: <https://covaconf.webex.com/covaconf/onstage/g.php?MTID=ef569cd58af7e0feb586e5d018afa113b>

Event number (access code): 2432 430 7958

Event password: DOLI2022

To join the audio conference only:

Call this number: 1-517-466-2023 or **US Toll Free** 1-866-692-4530

Enter this Access Code: 2432 430 7958

Should any interruption of the electronic broadcast of this meeting occur, please call 804-371-2318 or email **Brian.Jaffe@doli.virginia.gov** to notify the agency. Any interruption in the broadcast of the meeting shall result in the suspension of action at the meeting until repairs are made and public access is restored.

FOIA Council Electronic Meetings Public Comment form for submitting feedback on this electronic meeting may be accessed at:

<http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/sample%20letters/welcome.htm>

DRAFT

SAFETY AND HEALTH CODES BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 16, 2022

On February 16, 2022, the Safety and Health Codes Board (“Board”) held a public meeting at the Patrick Henry State Building in Richmond, Virginia. The Board held a hybrid in person meeting with the option for the board members to attend both virtually along with a quorum of board members participating in person. The public also had the option of attending in person or virtually utilizing **WebEx**.

Notice of the public meeting was provided to the public as required by VA Code §2.2-3708.2 and Executive Order 14 (2018). The notice invited the public to witness the meeting remotely via **WebEx**. Notice was provided on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall’s website here: <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=34796>

The participating Board members noted as either in person or virtual participation. There was a quorum of Board members *physically* assembled at one location.

A recording of the meeting in its entirety is available here: <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Virginia-Safety-and-Health-Codes-Board-Meeting-in-Response-to-Executive-Order-6-20220216-1510-1.mp4>

BOARD MEMBERS

PARTICIPATING:

Mr. Chuck Stiff, Acting Vice-Chair (*in person*)
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak (*in person*)
Mr. John Fulton (*in person*)
Dr. Colin Greene (*in person*)*
Ms. Julie Henderson (*in person*)*
Ms. Tina Hoover (*in person*)
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman (*in person*)
Mr. Jay Abbott (*virtual*)
Mr. Robert Buchler (*virtual*)
Mr. Travis Parsons (*virtual*)
Ms. Lutheria Smith (*virtual*)

*VDH representation

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Kelly Bundy
Mr. Michael Luce
Mr. Thomas Thurston

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Gary Pan, Commissioner of Dept. of Labor & Industry
 Mr. Jay Withrow, Director, Legal Support, BLS, VPP, ORA, & OWB
 Ms. Princy R. Doss, Director, Policy, Planning, & Public Information
 Mr. Richard White, IT Project Manager
 Ms. Cristin Bernhardt, Regulatory Coordinator
 Ms. Diane Duell, Director of Litigation
 Mr. Alex West, Senior Staff Attorney
 Marta Fernandes, Director of VOSH Safety Compliance
 Christine Childress, Information Security Officer
 Zahra Qarni, Policy & Planning Specialist

OTHERS PARTICIPATING:

Mr. Joshua Laws, Assistant Attorney General (*virtual*)
 Ms. Lisa Wright, Court Reporter, Chandler & Halasz (*in person*)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Stiff called the meeting to order at 10:13 AM. A quorum was present. Vice-Chair Stiff made opening remarks informing the public that this meeting was being held in person with virtual attendance available for Board members and for the public via WebEx. Vice-Chair Stiff announced that Julie Henderson has been designated as the representative of the Virginia Department of Health by Dr. Colin Greene, Acting Commissioner.

BOARD MEMBER ROLE CALL

IP=in person; V=virtual

BOARD MEMBER	Present	Absent			
Mr. Jay Abbott	V				
Mr. Robert Buchler	V				
Ms. Kelly Bundy		X			
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak	IP				
Mr. John Fulton	IP				
Dr. Colin Greene (Julie Henderson)	IP				
Ms. Tina Hoover	IP				
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman	IP				
Mr. Michael Luce		X			
Mr. Travis Parsons	V				
VACANT					
Ms. Lutheria Smith	V				
Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Stiff	IP				
Mr. Thomas Thurston		X			
TOTALS	6 IP, 4V	3			

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chair Stiff asked the Board if there was any discussion on the agenda. There was none. Vice-Chair Stiff asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was made, properly seconded and the roll call vote was conducted. **The motion carried.**

TIME STAMP OF RECORDING:

Motion #1: Approval of Agenda	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Other
Mr. Jay Abbott	1				
Mr. Robert Buchler	1				
Ms. Kelly Bundy				1	
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak	1				
Mr. John Fulton	1				
Ms. Julie Henderson	1				
Ms. Tina Hoover	1				
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman	1				
Mr. Michael Luce				1	
Mr. Travis Parsons	1				
VACANT					
Ms. Lutheria Smith	1				
Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Stiff	1				
Mr. Thomas Thurston				1	
TOTALS	10			3	

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Vice-Chair Stiff then called for discussion and motion for approval of the December 3, 2021 Meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Stiff asked the Board if there was any discussion on the December 3, 2021 minutes. There was none. There was a request for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made, properly seconded and the roll call vote was conducted. **The motion carried.**

TIME STAMP OF RECORDING:

Motion #2: Approval of SHCB December 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Other
Mr. Jay Abbott	1				
Mr. Robert Buchler	1				
Ms. Kelly Bundy				1	
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak	1				
Mr. John Fulton	1				
Ms. Julie Henderson	1				
Ms. Tina Hoover	1				
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman	1				
Mr. Michael Luce				1	

Mr. Travis Parsons	1				
VACANT					
Ms. Lutheria Smith	1				
Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Stiff	1				
Mr. Thomas Thurston				1	
TOTALS	10			3	

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Vice-Chair Stiff called the next item on the agenda, which was the opportunity for the public to address the Board. Several members of the public registered to speak virtually using WebEx to address the Board on the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID19, 16VAC25-220 ("Virginia Standard") that will be presented to the Board under New Business.

VIRTUAL SPEAKERS:

- Nandan Kenkeremath (Leading Edge Policy & Strategy)
- Hobey Bauhan (Virginia Poultry Federation)
- Josh Phelps (Winchester Metals, Inc.)
- David Broder (SEIU Virginia 512)
- Beck Stanley (Virginia Agribusiness Council)
- Kayla Mock (UFCW 400)
- Robert Hollingsworth (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees)
- Paul Denham (Southern Air)
- Michelle Austin (Bank of Botetourt)
- Michael Snell-Feikema (Coordinating Committee of Community Solidarity: Poultry Workers)
- MK Fletcher (AFL-CIO)
- Julia Hammond (National Federation of Independent Businesses)
- Jodi Roth (Virginia Retail Federation)
- Jared D. Miller (Candidate for Chesapeake School Board)
- Dale Bennett (Virginia Trucking Association)

IN PERSON SPEAKERS:

- Brett Vassey (Virginia Manufacturer's Association)
- Manuel Gago (Legal Aid Justice Center: Virginia Justice Project for Farm/Immigrant Workers)
- Ben Traynham (attorney, on behalf of Virginia Wholesalers Association)
- Brandon Robinson (Associated General Contractors of Virginia)
- Robert Melvin (Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association)

Vice-Chair Stiff called for a 10 MINUTE RECESS. THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 11:42 AM

Vice-Chair Stiff moved to the next item on the agenda, which was New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

The first item on the agenda for new business was the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (“Virginia Standard”). Vice-Chair Stiff recognized Jay Withrow, Director of Legal Support from the Department to present the briefing package. Before presenting the briefing package, Mr. Withrow addressed some of the comments received from the public commenters.

- Standard called “permanent” was a concern for regulated community.
 - o Permanent was meant to replace the “temporary ETS, but the Department was contemplated the Standard would eventually go away after legal basis of “grave danger” did not exist in the workplace.
- Small business/employer costly to comply with the Virginia Standard, PPE and huge cost for small businesses.
 - o Mr. Withrow discussed free services of DOLI Cooperative Programs Division
- 45 other states do not have COVID S&H standards: Why does Virginia need one?
 - o Virginia has done better with COVID statistics/metrics and assisted with mitigating the spread of the virus along with Executive Orders in place and all the efforts of the VDH, etc.
- Comment that the adoption of the VA Standard was on “shaky ground”
 - o Both the previous and current Attorney Generals advised that the Virginia Standard was promulgated in accordance with the law.
- There was a denial of Judicial Review
 - o 4 lawsuits filed and have been reviewed at Circuit Court with some up to Court of Appeals and were dismissed.

Mr. Withrow began presenting the briefing package and the documents that were provided to the Board in advance. Mr. Withrow explained the Executive Order 6 that initiated the actions being taken by the Board to address the Virginia Standard.

Pursuant to Governor’s Executive Order 6, issued January 15, 2022, The Safety and Health Codes Board is to convene an emergency meeting of their membership to discuss whether there is a continued need for the “Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19.”

In response to Governor’s Executive Order 6, the Department is requesting the Safety and Health Codes Board (SHCB) membership to determine whether there is a continued need for the “Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19.” The Department has identified three options for the Board to discuss:

1. There is a continued need for the Virginia Standard and no revisions should be made.
2. There is a continued need for the Virginia Standard but revisions should be made based on the current environment of the virus; and
3. There is no longer a continued need for the Virginia Standard.

The board is directed to consider federal action in regard to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Emergency Temporary Standard. The Board should report its findings to the Governor within 30 days.

Federal OSHA issued statement 12/27/2021 regarding the OSHA Healthcare ETS that it will work expeditiously to issue a final standard and withdrawing the ETS but that the log and reporting provisions remain in effect. 16VAC25-220-10.B.3 provides that upon the fed OSHA ETS being stayed or revoked, the Virginia Standard relating to healthcare workers will take effect and the SHCB will meet within 30 days to determine whether there is a continued need for this chapter.

The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.

Both the previous and current Attorney General have advised the Department that the Virginia Standard was promulgated in accordance with the law.

Mr. Withrow explained the regulatory notice and comment process for amending or revoking the Virginia Standard to include a 30 day public comment period for public and stakeholders to provide feedback to the Board about the proposed amendments/revocation, along with a public hearing and then another SHCB meeting to vote on the amendments/revocation as final.

Mr. Withrow discussed the Attachments to the Briefing Package includes information previously provided to the Board but was included for the new board members. Attachment H, Attachment O and Attachment P, Attachment Q are new attachments. Attachment P is a Draft Guidance Document that has been pulled back to be re-worked for posting as a General Notice with a 30 day comment period. No SHCB action is necessary for the Guidance Document process. The Guidance Document would be issued if the Board ultimately decides to revoke the Virginia Standard.

Mr. Withrow went through the background that led to the adoption of the Virginia Standard as both an emergency temporary standard and then a final standard. The issue of “grave danger” legal standard that resulted in the adoption of those phases of the standard in the past. The status and future predictions of the Omicron variant in Virginia was presented to the Board. A summary of “grave danger” case law was discussed to provide a background for the Board to determine if there still exists a “grave danger” in the Virginia workplace that would warrant continuation of the Virginia Standard.

Vice-Chair Stiff called for a LUNCH BREAK at 1:00 PM.

Mr. Withrow continued with briefing the Board on the current national, state and specific Virginia COVID studies, trends and statistics. Virginia vaccination and hospitalization statistics and trends along with other various metrics were presented to the Board. VOSH statistics regarding Virginia workplace inspections, penalties, fatalities and injuries were also provided to the Board.

Mr. Withrow discussed the federal OSHA Healthcare Standard that is being worked on at the federal level and the requirement that Virginia adopt a standard “at least as effective as” the federal standard. The Board will have the choice to either adopt the federal Healthcare Standard or promulgate their own healthcare standard that is “at least as effective as” the federal OSHA standard that is eventually adopted.

Mr. Withrow explained that there will remain legal protections for employees in Virginia if the Virginia Standard were to be revoked and went through the mandatory VOSH standards that protect workers from infections. He also discussed the guidance document: “Protecting Workers, Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of Covid-19 in the Workplace” that would be developed and issued in the event of revocation of the Virginia Standard.

Mr. Withrow asked if the Board members had any questions about the presentation. Member Parson asked about the federal OSHA Healthcare Standard and whether it was based on grave danger or significant risk. Mr. Withrow did not know for sure but assumed it was not based on grave danger but there has not been any information in the Federal Register. Member Parsons followed up with questioning the justification for Virginia basing on grave danger and not significant risk. Member Parsons praised the Department for all the extensive studies and statistics and questioned why the recommendation for revocation when the studies/statistics in his opinion seem to show a continued need for the standard as opposed to revocation.

With no more questions from the Board, Mr. Withrow presented the Board with the Department’s recommendations below.

- The Staff of the Department of Labor and Industry recommends that the Virginia Safety & Health Codes Board make a finding that there is no longer continued need for the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, based on emerging scientific and medical evidence that the current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitutes a “grave danger” to employees in the workplace under Va. Code 40.1-22(6a), and as discussed in the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in National Federation of Independent Businesses, et. al.; Applicants v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, et al.**

Vice-Chair Stiff asked if there was a motion to accept Recommendation 1 of the Department. The motion was made, properly seconded and the roll call vote was conducted.
The motion carried.

TIME STAMP OF RECORDING: 4:43:00

Motion #3: Approve the Department Recommendation (1) that there is no longer a continued need for the Virginia Standard					
	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Other

Mr. Jay Abbott	1				
Mr. Robert Buchler	1				
Ms. Kelly Bundy				1	
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak		1			
Mr. John Fulton	1				
Dr. Colin Greene	1				
Ms. Tina Hoover		1			
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman	1				
Mr. Michael Luce				1	
Mr. Travis Parsons		1			
VACANT					
Ms. Lutheria Smith	1				
Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Stiff	1				
Mr. Thomas Thurston				1	
TOTALS	7	3		3	

Mr. Withrow presented the Board with the Department’s Recommendation 2 if Recommendation 1 (above) was adopted.

2. If the Board finds that there is no longer a continued need for the standard, Staff of the Department of Labor and Industry recommends that the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board propose that the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARSCoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, be revoked and that such proposal be the subject of a thirty day written comment period and public hearing prior to any final vote to revoke the standard.

The Department also recommends that the Board state in any motion it may make to revoke this regulation that it will receive, consider and respond to petitions by any interested person at any time with respect to reconsideration or revision of this or any other regulation.

Vice-Chair Stiff asked if there was discussion on the matter. There was none. Vice-Chair Stiff asked if there was a motion to accept the Recommendation 2 of the Department. The motion was made, properly seconded and the roll call vote was conducted. **The motion carried.**

TIME STAMP OF RECORDING: 4:46:00

Motion #4: Approve the Department Recommendation (2) that the SHCB propose that the Virginia Standard be revoked with a 30 day public comment period and public hearing prior to a final vote to revoke the standard					
	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent	Other
Mr. Jay Abbott	1				
Mr. Robert Buchler	1				

Ms. Kelly Bundy				1	
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak		1			
Mr. John Fulton	1				
Dr. Colin Greene	1				
Ms. Tina Hoover	1				
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman	1				
Mr. Michael Luce				1	
Mr. Travis Parsons		1			
VACANT					
Ms. Lutheria Smith	1				
Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Stiff	1				
Mr. Thomas Thurston				1	
TOTALS	8	2		3	

Items of Interest from the Department of Labor and Industry

Vice-Chair Stiff asked for items of interest from the Department of Labor and Industry. Commissioner Gary Pan addressed the Board and thanked them for their service to the Safety & Health Codes Board.

Items of Interest from Members of the Board

Vice-Chair Stiff asked for items of interest from the Members of the Board. There were none. Vice-Chair Stiff thanked the Department staff for all their hard work preparing for the SHCB meeting and for compiling the impressive briefing package. Vice-Chair Stiff addressed the Board and thanked them for their time and service to the Board and for bringing their expertise to the Board and the decision making process.

Meeting Adjournment

Vice-Chair Stiff adjourned the meeting at 3:02 PM.

Mr. Jay Abbott <i>Representative for Agricultural Employers</i>
Mr. Robert Buchler <i>Industrial Representative Knowledgeable in Chemical and Toxic Substances</i>
Ms. Kelly Bundy <i>Representative from Construction Industry Employers</i>
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak <i>Representative from Labor in the Construction Industry</i>
Mr. John Fulton <i>Employer Representative of the Boiler and Pressure Vessel Industry</i>
Dr. Colin Greene <i>Virginia Department of Health</i>
Ms. Julie Henderson <i>(representative for VDH)</i>
Ms. Tina Hoover <i>Representative for Agricultural Employees</i>
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman <i>Environmental Specialist II Department of Environmental Quality</i>
Mr. Michael Luce <i>Representative of an Insurance Company</i>
Mr. Travis Parsons <i>Representative from Labor in the Construction Industry</i>
VACANT <i>Labor Representative Knowledgeable in Chemical and Toxic Substances</i>
Ms. Lutheria Smith <i>Representative for the General Public</i>
Mr. Charles L. (Chuck) Stiff <i>Representative for Industrial Employers</i>
Mr. Thomas Thurston <i>Representative for Labor in the Manufacturing Industry</i>

DRAFT

**SAFETY AND HEALTH CODES BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 14, 2022**

This meeting is being held for the purpose of consideration of the Proposed Revocation of the Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, as adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board ("Board") on February 16, 2022, pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

The Safety and Health Codes Board ("Board") held a hybrid meeting that allowed participants to attend in person or electronically utilizing **WebEx**.

Notice of the public hearing was provided to the public as required by VA Code §2.2-3708.2 and Executive Order 14 (2018). The notice invited the public to attend the meeting in person at Patrick Henry Building, 1111 E. Broad Street, East Reading Room, Richmond, VA 23219 or witness the meeting remotely via WebEx. Notice of this public hearing was published in the Richmond Times Dispatch on March 8, 2022. Notice of this hearing was also published on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall's website here: <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=34938>

A recording of the public hearing in its entirety is available here: <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Public-Hearing-on-16VAC25-220-Proposed-Amendments-to-Permanent-Standard-20210805-1335-1.mp4>.

BOARD MEMBERS

PARTICIPATING:

Mr. Chuck Stiff, Vice-Chair (*in person*)
Mr. John Fulton (*in person*)
Mr. Robert Buchler (*virtual*)
Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Lohman (*virtual*)
Mr. Travis Parsons (*virtual*)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Jay Abbott
Ms. Kelly Bundy
Mr. Louis (Lou) Cernak
Dr. Colin Greene/Ms. Julie Henderson (*VDH*)
Mr. Michael Luce
Ms. Lutheria Smith
Mr. Thomas Thurston

STAFF PARTICIPATING:

Ms. Princy R. Doss, Director, Policy, Planning (*in person*)
Ms. Cristin Bernhardt, Regulatory Coordinator (*in person*)
Mr. Richard White, IT Director (*in person*)
Ms. Zahra Qarni, Policy & Planning Specialist (*in person*)
Ms. Marta Fernandes, Director of VOSH Safety Compliance (*virtual*)
Ms. Jennifer Rose, Director of Consultation Services (*virtual*)

OTHERS PARTICIPATING:

Mr. Josh Laws, Assistant Attorney General (*virtual*)
Ms. Lisa Wright, Court Reporter (*in person*)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Stiff called the public hearing to order at approximately 10:00 am. Vice-Chair Stiff made opening remarks informing the public that this hybrid in person and virtual public hearing was being held for the purpose of consideration of the Proposed Revocation of the Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, ("Virginia Standard") as adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board ("Board") on February 16, 2022, pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

Vice Chair Stiff made announcement that the public will get another opportunity to discuss the proposed revocation when the Board meets on March 21, 2022 to consider whether to adopt the proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard as final. During this meeting, the Board will be able to ask questions and receive questions from the public. More information on the March 21, 2022 SHCB meeting and the opportunity for public comments is posted on the Town Hall website as well as the Department of Labor and Industry website.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FINAL PERMANENT STANDARD.

After Vice-Chair Stiff made his opening remarks and Roll Call was taken, the opportunity of public comment on the proposed revocation to the Virginia Standard began. This public hearing only included discussion on the proposed revocation to the Virginia Standard. No votes were taken; there were no deliberations, and no decisions were made.

Members of the public had been given the opportunity to sign up to offer their comments on the proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard ahead of the public hearing.

The following members of the public made appearances virtually through Webex to present public comment on the proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard:

1. Nanden Kenkeremath, Leading Edge Policy & Strategy, LLC
2. P. Dale Bennett, Virginia Trucking Association

There were no members of the public that attended in person to present a public comment on the proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Stiff thanked the public comment speakers, Board members, all participants and the Agency. He requested the public speakers send their written version of their oral comments to Princy Doss at princy.doss@doli.virginia.gov. Mr. Stiff adjourned the public hearing at 10:19 am.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

Gary G. Pan
COMMISSIONER

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DRAFT: MARCH 14, 2022

RECENT INFORMATION HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW

VIRGINIA SAFETY AND HEALTH CODES BOARD

BRIEFING PACKAGE FOR

for March 21, 2022

Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 That Causes COVID-19, §16 VAC 25-220

I. Action Requested.

A. The VOSH Program requests the Safety and Health Codes Board make a final finding that the SARS-Cov-2 virus no longer poses a "grave danger" to employees under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a) and consider final revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (Virginia Standard) to become immediately effective upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation published in the city of Richmond, Virginia. The proposed effective date is March 23, 2022.

B. Executive Order 6.

On January 15, 2022, Governor Glenn Youngkin issued Executive Order 6 (EO 6), Reinventing Job Growth by Removing Burdensome Regulations From Virginia's Business Community¹ (see ATTACHMENT O).

EO 6 provides in part:

1. The Safety and Health Codes Board is to convene an emergency meeting of their membership to discuss whether there is a continued need for the "Permanent

¹ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/eo/EO-6-Keep-Virginia-Open-COVID-Workplace-Standards.pdf>

Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19.” The board is directed to consider federal action in regard to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Emergency Temporary Standard. The Board should report its findings to the Governor within 30 days [by February 14, 2022].

2. The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.

C. 16VAC25-220-10.B.3.

16VAC25-220-10.B.3 provides:

3. Should the federal COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard, 29 CFR 1910.502 et seq., applicable to all settings where any employee provides health care services or health care support services, be adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board but later be stayed by federal OSHA, or otherwise revoked, repealed, declared unenforceable, or permitted to expire, the provisions of this chapter, including 16VAC25-220-50, shall immediately apply to such employers and employees in its place with no further action of the board required. **In addition, the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board shall within 30 days, notice a regular, special, or emergency meeting/conduct a regular, special, or emergency meeting to determine whether there is a continued need for this chapter or whether it should be maintained, modified, or revoked.** (Emphasis added).

Federal OSHA issued the following statement on December 27, 2021 regarding the OSHA Healthcare ETS²:

On June 21, 2021, OSHA adopted a Healthcare Emergency Temporary Standard (Healthcare ETS) protecting workers from COVID-19 in settings where they provide healthcare or healthcare support services. 86 FR 32376. Under the OSH Act, an ETS is effective until superseded by a permanent standard – a process contemplated by the OSH Act to occur within 6 months of the ETS’s promulgation. 29 U.S.C. 655(c).

OSHA announces today that it intends to continue to work expeditiously to issue a final standard that will protect healthcare workers from COVID-19 hazards, and will do so as it also considers its broader infectious disease rulemaking. However, given that OSHA anticipates a final rule cannot be completed in a timeframe approaching the one contemplated by the OSH Act, OSHA also announces today that it is withdrawing the non-recordkeeping portions of the healthcare ETS. **The COVID-19 log and reporting provisions, 29 CFR 1910.502(q)(2)(ii), (q)(3)(ii)-(iv), and (r), remain in effect. These provisions were adopted under a separate**

² <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets/>

provision of the OSH Act, section 8, and OSHA found good cause to forgo notice and comment in light of the grave danger presented by the pandemic. See 86 FR 32559.... (Emphasis added).

The Department has been informed by federal OSHA that its withdrawal of the OSHA Healthcare ETS does not take effect until published in the Federal Register, which as of February 11, 2022 has not yet occurred, although the legal basis for this decision is not clear. However, federal OSHA informed State Plans on February 9, 2022 that it is using its enforcement discretion to no longer enforce the OSHA Healthcare ETS.

The OSHA Healthcare ETS is the subject of a lawsuit by National Nurses United and other organizations filed on January 5, 2022³ in the D. C. Circuit Court of Appeals which requests that the Court issue a writ of mandamus to OSHA compelling it within 30 days of the Court's grant of a writ to issue a Permanent Standard for Healthcare Occupational Exposure to COVID-19 (Permanent Standard); and compels OSHA to retain and enforce the OSHA Healthcare ETS until it is properly superseded by the Permanent Standard.

- D. On November 5, 2021, federal OSHA issued an Emergency Temporary Standard for Occupational Exposure to COVID-19 (Vaccination or Testing ETS) with a vaccination or testing mandate applicable to employers with 100 or more employees.⁴ The ETS was challenged in federal court and ultimately stayed by the U. S. Supreme Court on January 13, 2022 in *National Federation of Independent Businesses, et al., Applicants v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, et al.*⁵

While the Court did not define the term "grave danger," which is the legal basis for adoption of an OSHA emergency temporary standard, it discussed more broadly OSHA's authority to impose a vaccine mandate:

"Contrary to the dissent's contention, imposing a vaccine mandate on 84 million Americans in response to a worldwide pandemic is simply not "part of what the agency was built for." Post, at 10. That is not to say OSHA lacks authority to regulate occupation-specific risks related to COVID-19. Where the virus poses a special danger because of the particular features of an employee's job or workplace, targeted regulations are plainly permissible. We do not doubt, for example, that OSHA could regulate researchers who work with the COVID-19 virus. So too could OSHA regulate risks associated with working in particularly crowded or cramped environments. But the danger present in such workplaces differs in both degree and kind from the everyday risk of contracting COVID-19 that all face. OSHA's indiscriminate approach fails to account for this crucial distinction— between occupational risk and risk more generally—and accordingly the mandate takes on the character of a general public health measure, rather than

³ https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/sites/default/files/nnu/documents/Unions_Petition_for_Writ_of_Mandamus_22-1002_010522_Date_Stamped_ECF.pdf

⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/11042021>

⁵ https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/21a244_hgci.pdf

an “occupational safety or health standard.” 29 U. S. C. §655(b) (emphasis added).⁶

On January 25, 2022, federal OSHA withdrew the Vaccination or Testing ETS "as an enforceable emergency temporary standard, [but the] the agency is not withdrawing the ETS as a proposed rule. The agency is prioritizing its resources to focus on finalizing a permanent COVID-19 Healthcare Standard."⁷ OSHA also stated in regard to the court challenges that it "will do everything in its existing authority to hold businesses accountable for protecting workers, including under the COVID-19 National Emphasis Program⁸ and General Duty Clause."⁹

E. Report to the Governor.

Executive Order 6 (EO 6) provides that the Board should report its findings on whether there is a continued need for the Virginia Standard to the Governor within 30 days of the issuance of EO 6 on January 15, 2022.

Following the Board meeting, the Department will prepare correspondence for the review and signature of the Commissioner which will report to the Governor the results of the Board's meeting.

The Department will publish the report on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall and notify DOLI stakeholders.

F. Guidance from the Office of the Attorney General in Accordance With Executive Order 6.

Executive Order 6 provides in part:

The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.

After reviewing DOLI’s request for legal advice, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) can report, “EO6 orders the Board and DOLI to seek guidance from the OAG regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard. The answer is yes: the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard, as affirmed by the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals.”

G. Proposed Changes to or Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard.

⁶ *Id.* at page 7.

⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets2>

⁸ https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/enforcement/directives/DIR_2021-03_CPL_03.pdf

⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section5-duties>

Any proposed changes to or proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard will go through a similar notice and comment process to that used for adoption of the current standard. This includes a written comment period for the public and stakeholders to provide written feedback to the Board about the proposed changes or proposed revocation, at least one public hearing, and the development of an Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) as necessary (an EIA would not be necessary in the event of proposed revocation). The Board will then hold a second meeting and vote to accept or reject the proposed changes or proposed revocation as final, which would become effective upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation published in the City of Richmond, Virginia.

H. Attachments.

ATTACHMENT A:
CURRENT LAWS, STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

ATTACHMENT B:
VOSH INVESTIGATION AND INSPECTION PROCEDURES

ATTACHMENT C:
VOSH VIOLATIONS ISSUED IN COVID-19 CASES OPENED FROM JANUARY 1, 2020 TO JANUARY 21, 2022

ATTACHMENT D:
EXECUTIVE ORDER 6 (EO 6), REINVIGORATING JOB GROWTH BY REMOVING BURDENSOME REGULATIONS FROM VIRGINIA'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY

ATTACHMENT E:
MARCH 1, 2022 DRAFT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT: GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS TO MITIGATE THE RISK OF COVID-19 TO WORKERS

II. Background.

A. Situation Summary.¹⁰

- On February 7, 2020, the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) issued a Declaration of Public Emergency.¹¹
- On March 7, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 in Virginia was confirmed.¹²

¹⁰ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/> - Situation Summary Taken in Part from the Virginia Department of Health Website

¹¹ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/Order-of-the-Governor-and-State-Health-Commissioner-Declaration-of-Public-Health-Emergency.pdf>

¹² <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/news/2020-news-releases/first-virginia-case-of-covid-19-confirmed-at-fort-belvoir/>

- On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.¹³
- On March 12, 2020 Governor Ralph Northam issued Executive Order 51, Declaration of a State of Emergency Due To Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) in the Commonwealth of Virginia.¹⁴
- On March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁵
- On March 17, 2020 Governor Northam and State Health Commissioner M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA issued a Declaration of Public Health Emergency.¹⁶
- On March 23, 2020 Governor Northam issued Executive Order 53¹⁷ that orders the closure of certain non-essential businesses, bans all gatherings of more than 10 people, and closes all K-12 schools for the remainder of the academic year. Governor Northam also urged all Virginians to avoid non-essential travel outside the home, if and when possible. Food establishments are mandated to offer curbside takeout and delivery service only, or close to the public.
- On March 25, 2020 Governor Northam and State Health Commissioner Norman Oliver, MD, MA directed all hospitals to stop performing elective surgeries or procedures to help conserve supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE). Order of Public Health Emergency Two.¹⁸
- On March 30, 2020 Governor Northam issued Executive Order 55¹⁹, a statewide Temporary Stay at Home order. The executive order took effect immediately and will remain in place until June 10, 2020. The order directed all Virginians to stay home except in extremely limited circumstances. Individuals may leave their residence for allowable travel, including to seek medical attention, work, care for family or household members, obtain goods and services like groceries, prescriptions, and others as outlined in Executive Order Fifty-Three, and engage in outdoor activity with strict social distancing requirements.

¹³ <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

¹⁴ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/eo/EO-51-Declaration-of-a-State-of-Emergency-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/eo/EO-51-Declaration-of-a-State-of-Emergency-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

¹⁵ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>

¹⁶ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Order-of-the-Governor-and-State-Health-Commissioner-Declaration-of-Public-Health-Emergency.pdf>

¹⁷ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

¹⁸ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Two---Order-of-The-Governor-and-State-Health-Commissioner.pdf>

¹⁹ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

- On April 23, 2020, the Commissioner of Labor and Industry received a petition from the Virginia Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC), Community Organizing, and Community Solidarity with the Poultry Workers organizations to enact an emergency regulation to address COVID-19 related workplace hazards in the poultry processing and meatpacking industries.
- On May 8, 2020 Governor Northam issued Executive Order 61 and Order of Public Health Emergency Three, Phase One Easing of Certain Temporary Restrictions Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).²⁰
- On May 12, 2020 Governor Northam issued Executive Order 62 and Order of Public Health Emergency Four, Jurisdictions Temporarily Delayed from Entering Phase One in Executive Order 61 and Permitted to Remain in Phase Zero Northern Virginia Region.²¹
- On May 14, 2020 Governor Northam issued Amended Executive Order 62 and Amended Order of Public Health Emergency Four, Jurisdictions Temporarily Delayed from Entering Phase One in Executive Order 61 and Permitted to Remain in Phase Zero, Phase Zero Jurisdictions.²²
- On May 26, 2020 Governor Northam issued a revised Executive Order 63²³ (EO 63), “Order of Public Health Emergency Five, Requirement to Wear Face Covering While Inside Buildings.” EO 63 also directed the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry [and Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board] to promulgate emergency regulations and standards to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- On December 10, 2020 Governor Northam issued Executive Order 72²⁴ (EO 72) “Order of Public Health Emergency Nine, Common Sense Surge Restrictions, Certain Temporary Restrictions Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).”
- On May 14, 2021, Governor Northam issued Executive Order 79 (EO79) “Order of Public Health Emergency Ten, Ending of Common Sense Public Health Restrictions Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).”

²⁰ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-61-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Three---Phase-One-Easing-Of-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-61-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Three---Phase-One-Easing-Of-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

²¹ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-62-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Four---Jurisdictions-Temporarily-Delayed-From-Entering-Phase-One-in-Executive-Order-61-and-Permitted-to-Remain-in-Phase-Zero-Northern-Virginia-Region.pdf>

²² <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-62-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Four-AMENDED.pdf>

²³ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-63-and-Order-Of-Public-Health-Emergency-Five---Requirement-To-Wear-Face-Covering-While-Inside-Buildings.pdf>

²⁴ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-72-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Common-Sense-Surge-Restrictions-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-72-and-Order-of-Public-Health-Emergency-Nine-Common-Sense-Surge-Restrictions-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

- On May 28, 2021, the CDC issued “Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People”²⁵ which cleared fully vaccinated people to safely resume most normal activities. The CDC continues to recommend preventative measures for unvaccinated people (unvaccinated people refers to individuals of all ages, including children, that have not completed a vaccination series or received a single-dose vaccine) including wearing a face covering and staying six feet apart from people who don’t live with you.²⁶

Face coverings continue to be required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.

- On June 10, 2021, federal OSHA issued an updated version of “Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace.”²⁷ The guidance focuses on safety and health protections and mitigation efforts to protect unvaccinated, not fully vaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers:
 1. Grant paid time off for employees to get vaccinated.
 2. Instruct any workers who are infected, unvaccinated workers who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, and all workers with COVID-19 symptoms to stay home from work
 3. Implement physical distancing for unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers in all communal work areas
 4. Provide unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers with face coverings or surgical masks, unless their work task requires a respirator or other PPE
 5. Educate and train workers on your COVID-19 policies and procedures using accessible formats and in language they understand
 6. Suggest that unvaccinated customers, visitors, or guests wear face coverings
 7. Maintain Ventilation Systems
 8. Perform routine cleaning and disinfection
 9. Record and report COVID-19 infections and deaths: Under mandatory OSHA rules in 29 CFR 1904
 10. Implement protections from retaliation and set up an anonymous process for workers to voice concerns about COVID-19-related hazards
 11. Follow other applicable mandatory OSHA standards
- On June 21, 2021, federal OSHA issued an Emergency Temporary Standard for Occupational Exposure to COVID-19 (COVID-19 ETS) applicable to employees engaged in healthcare services and healthcare support services.²⁸ At its June 29, 2021 meeting, the Board adopted the COVID-19 ETS in Virginia that applies to healthcare services and healthcare support services which expires within six months or when repealed by the Board, whichever occurs first. Application of the Virginia Standard

²⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

²⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

²⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

²⁸ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-06-21/pdf/2021-12428.pdf>

to healthcare services and healthcare support services is suspended while the COVID-19 ETS is in effect, and would reapply after the COVID-19 ETS is no longer in effect.

- On June 29, 2021, the Board adopted federal OSHA's COVID-19 ETS for Virginia with an effective date of August 2, 2021.²⁹ The COVID-19 ETS will expire within six months or when repealed by the Board, whichever occurs first.
- On August 12, 2021, Virginia State Health Commissioner Oliver, MD, MA issued a Statewide Requirement to Wear Masks in K-12 Schools³⁰ under his ongoing Order of Public Health Emergency originally issued on February 7, 2020.
- On August 13, 2021, federal OSHA issued an updated version of “Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace.”³¹
- On August 26, 2021, the Board adopted revisions to the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 That Causes COVID-19, §16 VAC 25-220, which took effect September 8, 2021.
- On November 5, 2021, federal OSHA issued an Emergency Temporary Standard for Occupational Exposure to COVID-19 (COVID-19 ETS) with a vaccination or testing mandate applicable to employers with 100 or more employees.³² The ETS was challenged in federal court and ultimately stayed by the U. S. Supreme Court on January 13, 2022 in National Federation of Independent Businesses, et al., Applicants v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, et al.³³
- On January 14, 2022, Governor Northam issued Executive Order 84 (EO 84), Declaration of Limited State of Emergency, Providing Flexibility to Hospitals, Health Systems, Nursing Homes, Certified Nursing Facilities, and Other Health Care Providers to Combat COVID-19.
- On January 15, 2022, Governor Glenn Youngkin issued Executive Order 6 (EO 6), Reinvigorating Job Growth by Removing Burdensome Regulations From Virginia’s Business Community.
- On January 20, 2022, Governor Youngkin issued Executive Order 11 (EO 11), Declaration of Limited State of Emergency, Providing Flexibility to Hospitals, Health Systems, Nursing Homes, Certified Nursing Facilities, and Other Health Care Providers to Combat COVID-19.³⁴
- On February 16, 2022 the Board adopted the Department's proposed finding that the SARS-Cov-2 virus no longer poses a "grave danger" to employees under Va. Code

²⁹ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/emergency-temporary-standard-interim-final-rule/>

³⁰ https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/PHE-Order_K-12-8-12-2021.pdf

³¹ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

³² <https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/11042021>

³³ https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/21a244_hgci.pdf

³⁴ <https://www.vapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/EO11.pdf>

§40.1-22(6a), and adopted the Department's proposed recommendation that the Virginia Standard be revoked, and that the such proposed revocation be the subject of a 30-day written comment period, a public hearing (during the 30-day period), and a second Board meeting to vote on final revocation of the Virginia Standard.

- On February 25, 2022, the CDC updated its mask wearing guidance based on community level metrics.³⁵

B. Federal OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard for Healthcare Services and Healthcare Support Services.

On June 21, 2021, federal OSHA adopted a COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard, 1910.502, *et seq.*, applicable to the healthcare industry (OSHA Healthcare ETS) (employees engaged in healthcare services and healthcare support services), but does not have a specific regulation or standard that addresses the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 for employers in non-healthcare settings.

On June 29, 2021, the Board adopted federal OSHA's Healthcare ETS for Virginia with an effective date of August 2, 2021. The OSHA Healthcare ETS will expire in Virginia within six months, when withdrawn by OSHA or repealed by the Board, whichever occurs first. During the pendency of the OSHA Healthcare ETS, application of the Virginia Standard to healthcare services and healthcare support services is suspended and will reapply after the COVID-19 ETS is no longer in effect.

Federal OSHA issued the following statement on December 27, 2021 regarding the OSHA Healthcare ETS³⁶:

On June 21, 2021, OSHA adopted a Healthcare Emergency Temporary Standard (Healthcare ETS) protecting workers from COVID-19 in settings where they provide healthcare or healthcare support services. 86 FR 32376. Under the OSH Act, an ETS is effective until superseded by a permanent standard – a process contemplated by the OSH Act to occur within 6 months of the ETS's promulgation. 29 U.S.C. 655(c).

OSHA announces today that it intends to continue to work expeditiously to issue a final standard that will protect healthcare workers from COVID-19 hazards, and will do so as it also considers its broader infectious disease rulemaking. However, given that OSHA anticipates a final rule cannot be completed in a timeframe approaching the one contemplated by the OSH Act, OSHA also announces today that it is withdrawing the non-recordkeeping portions of the healthcare ETS. The COVID-19 log and reporting provisions, 29 CFR 1910.502(q)(2)(ii), (q)(3)(ii)-(iv), and (r), remain in effect. These provisions were adopted under a separate provision of the OSH Act, section 8, and OSHA found good cause to forgo notice and comment in light of the grave danger presented by the pandemic. See 86 FR

³⁵ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_2145-DM76655&ACSTrackingLabel=02.25.2022%20-%20COVID-19%20Data%20Tracker%20Weekly%20Review&deliveryName=USCDC_2145-DM76655

³⁶ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets/>

32559.

With the rise of the Delta variant this fall, and now the spread of the Omicron variant this winter, OSHA believes the danger faced by healthcare workers continues to be of the highest concern and measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are still needed to protect them. Given these facts, and given OSHA's anticipated finalization of this rule, OSHA strongly encourages all healthcare employers to continue to implement the ETS's requirements in order to protect employees from a hazard that too often causes death or serious physical harm to employees.

As OSHA works towards a permanent regulatory solution, OSHA will vigorously enforce the general duty clause and its general standards, including the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protection Standards, to help protect healthcare employees from the hazard of COVID-19. The Respiratory Protection Standard applies to personnel providing care to persons who are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. OSHA will accept compliance with the terms of the Healthcare ETS as satisfying employers' related obligations under the general duty clause, respiratory protection, and PPE standards. Continued adherence to the terms of the healthcare ETS is the simplest way for employers in healthcare settings to protect their employees' health and ensure compliance with their OSH Act obligations.

OSHA believes the terms of the Healthcare ETS remain relevant in general duty cases in that they show that COVID-19 poses a hazard in the healthcare industry and that there are feasible means of abating the hazard.

OSHA plans to publish a notice in the Federal Register to implement this announcement.

The Department has been informed by federal OSHA that its withdrawal of the OSHA Healthcare ETS does not take effect until published in the Federal Register, which as of February 11, 2022 has not yet occurred, although the legal basis for this decision is not clear. However, federal OSHA informed State Plans on February 9, 2022 that it is using its enforcement discretion to no longer enforce the OSHA Healthcare ETS.

The OSHA Healthcare ETS is the subject of a lawsuit by National Nurses United and other organizations filed on January 5, 2022³⁷ in the D. C. Circuit Court of Appeals which requests that the Court issue a writ of mandamus to OSHA compelling it within 30 days of the Court's grant of a writ to issue a Permanent Standard for Healthcare Occupational Exposure to COVID-19 (Permanent Standard); and compels OSHA to retain and enforce the OSHA Healthcare ETS until it is properly superseded by the Permanent Standard.

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https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/sites/default/files/nnu/documents/Unions_Petition_for_Writ_of_Mandamus_22-1002_010522_Date_Stamped_ECF.pdf

III. Summary of Rulemaking Process.

A. Petition Concerning Poultry and Meat Processing.

On April 23, 2020, the Commissioner of Labor and Industry received a petition from the Virginia Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC), Community Organizing, and Community Solidarity with the Poultry Workers organizations to enact an emergency regulation to address COVID-19 related workplace hazards in the poultry processing and meatpacking industries. On April 29, 2020, Commissioner C. Ray Davenport provided an initial response to the April 23rd petition letter.

On May 6, 2020, the Commissioner received a follow-up letter from the same petitioners. On May 14, 2020, Commissioner C. Ray Davenport provided a follow-up response to the April 23rd and May 6th petition letters indicating that the petition would be submitted to the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board for consideration.

B. Virginia Executive Order 63, issued May 26, 2020.

On May 26, 2020, Governor Northam issued a revised Executive Order 63³⁸ (EO 63), “Order of Public Health Emergency Five, Requirement to Wear Face Covering While Inside Buildings” that provides in part:

“E. Department of Labor and Industry

Except for paragraph B above, this Order does not apply to employees, employers, subcontractors, or other independent contractors in the workplace. The Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry shall promulgate emergency regulations and standards to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The regulations and standards adopted in accordance with §§ 40.1-22(6a) or 2.2-4011 of the Code of Virginia shall apply to every employer, employee, and place of employment within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health program as described in 16 Va. Admin. Code § 25-60-20 and Va. Admin. Code § 25-60-30. These regulations and standards must address personal protective equipment, respiratory protective equipment, and sanitation, access to employee exposure and medical records and hazard communication. Further, these regulations and standards may not conflict with requirements and guidelines applicable to businesses set out and incorporated into Amended Executive Order 61 and Amended Order of Public Health Emergency Three.”³⁹ (Emphasis added).

Although EO 63 does not mention the Safety and Health Codes Board, Governor Northam issued a news release which says in part:

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-61-and-Order-Of-Public-Health-Emergency-Three-AMENDED---Phase-One-Easing-Of-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-61-and-Order-Of-Public-Health-Emergency-Three-AMENDED---Phase-One-Easing-Of-Certain-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

“The Governor is also directing the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry to develop emergency temporary standards for occupational safety that will protect employees from the spread of COVID-19 in their workplaces. These occupational safety standards will require the approval by vote of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board and must address personal protective equipment, sanitation, record-keeping of incidents, and hazard communication. Upon approval, the Department of Labor and Industry will be able to enforce the standards through civil penalties and business closures.”⁴⁰ (Emphasis added).

C. Emergency Meetings of Safety and Health Codes Board.

1. Emergency Temporary Standard.

On June 12, 2020 the Department posted a Notice of Meeting for a June 24, 2020 emergency meeting⁴¹ of the Safety and Health Codes Board to consider for adoption an Emergency Temporary Standard/Emergency Regulation (“ETS/ER”), Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, applicable to every employer, employee, and place of employment in the Commonwealth of Virginia within the jurisdiction of the VOSH program as described in §§16VAC 25-60-20 and 16 VAC 25-60-30.

On June 12, 2020 the Department also opened a 10 day Comment Forum⁴² to provide the public the opportunity to submit written comments on the Department’s request to consider for adoption an ETS/ER Infectious Disease Prevention, SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19. The comment period closed on June 22, 2020, and the comments were reviewed with the Board at its meeting on June 24, 2020.

On June 24, 2020, the Board decided to proceed with the adoption of an ETS under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a) and further provided that once the ETS was adopted, the Board would proceed with the consideration of adopting a permanent replacement standard for the ETS.

The Board continued its meeting of June 24th on June 29, 2020,⁴³ July 7, 2020⁴⁴ and July 15, 2020.⁴⁵ On July 15, 2020, the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board adopted §16 VAC 25-220, Emergency Temporary Standard, Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19.

The ETS was published in the Richmond Times Dispatch on July 27, 2020 and took immediate effect.⁴⁶ The ETS expired on January 26, 2021.

⁴⁰ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2020/may/headline-857020-en.html>

⁴¹ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31004>

⁴² <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/comments.cfm?GeneralNoticeid=1118>

⁴³ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31037>

⁴⁴ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31057>

⁴⁵ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31089>

⁴⁶ http://register.dls.virginia.gov/emergency_regs.shtml

D. Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 That Causes COVID-19.

1. Proposed Permanent Standard.

Pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-22(6a), publication of the COVID-19 ETS in the Richmond Times Dispatch constituted notice that the Board intended to adopt a permanent standard within a period of six months.

The Board opted to engage in the following notice and comment process that would mirror, to the extent possible within the compressed six month timeline for adoption, Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA) procedures:

- The Board held a 60 day written comment period for the proposed permanent standard running from August 27, 2020 to September 25, 2020.⁴⁷
- The Board held a public hearing on the proposed permanent standard on September 30, 2020.⁴⁸

The Department received 993 written comments through the Virginia Regulatory Townhall for the 60 day written comment period from August 27, 2020 to September 25, 2020. There were 33 written comments sent directly to the Department during the 60 day written comment period, although a number of those were also posted by the Commenters on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall. There were 29 oral comments received during the public hearing on September 30, 2020.

The Board was briefed on the Department's response to the public comments at its regular meeting on November 12, 2020.

- In response to the public comments received, the Department developed recommended revisions to the proposed permanent standard and published them on December 10, 2020 with a 30 day written comment period ending January 9, 2021.⁴⁹
- A public hearing was held on January 5, 2021.⁵⁰
- An economic impact analysis (EIA)⁵¹ based on the requirements of Va. Code §2.2-4007.04⁵² was issued on January 11, 2021. The EIA was prepared by Chmura Economics & Analytics, a nationally recognized economic consulting firm.⁵³ The

⁴⁷ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?gnid=1137>

⁴⁸ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31418>

⁴⁹ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?gnid=1177>

⁵⁰ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31985>

⁵¹ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VDOLI-COVID-Regulation-Economic-Impact-Analysis-EIA-20210111.pdf>

⁵² <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter40/section2.2-4007.04/>

⁵³ <http://www.chmuraecon.com/>

Department issued an Addendum to the EIA⁵⁴ on January 11, 2021.

2. Review of Comments Submitted: Initial 60 day Written Comment Period from August 27, 2020 to September 25, 2020; and Public Hearing of September 30, 2020.

The Department received 993 written comments through the Virginia Regulatory Townhall for the 60 day written comment period from August 27, 2020 to September 25, 2020.⁵⁵

There were 33 written comments sent directly to the Department during the 60 day written comment period, although a number of those were also posted by the Commenter on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall.⁵⁶

There were 29 oral comments received during the public hearing on September 30, 2020.⁵⁷

3. Review of Comments Submitted: Follow-up 30 day Written Comment Period from December 10, 2020 to January 9, 2021; and Public Hearing of January 5, 2021.

The Department received 238 written comments through the Virginia Regulatory Townhall for the 30 day written comment period from December 10, 2020 to January 9, 2021.⁵⁸

There were 21 written comments sent directly to the Department during the 30 day written comment period, although a number of those were also posted by the Commenter on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall.

There were 24 oral comments received during the public hearing on January 5, 2020.

4. Adoption of Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 That Causes COVID-19.

A meeting of the Board to consider adoption of a final standard was held January 12, 2021⁵⁹ and a continuation of the meeting was held on January 13, 2021,⁶⁰ at which time the Board adopted the final standard, 16VAC25-220 with an effective date of January 27, 2021.⁶¹

⁵⁴ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DOLI-ADDENDUM-TO-EIA-Final-1.11.2021.pdf>

⁵⁵ https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting%2F31594%2FMeetingAgenda_DOLI_31594_v6.pdf

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?gnid=1162>

⁵⁸ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Combined-Townhall-Direct-to-DOLI-and-Oral-Comments-with-Dept-Response-1.10.2021-FOR-PUBLICATION.pdf>

⁵⁹ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31986>

⁶⁰ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=31987>

⁶¹ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Final-Standard-for-Infectious-Disease-Prevention-of-the-Virus-That-Causes-COVID-19-16-VAC25-220-1.27.2021.pdf>

16VAC25-220-20.C provides that within fourteen (14) days of the expiration of the Governor’s COVID-19 State of Emergency and Commissioner of Health’s COVID-19 Declaration of Public Emergency, the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board shall notice a regular, special, or emergency meeting/conduct a regular, special, or emergency meeting to determine whether there is a continued need for the standard.⁶²

The state of emergency that Governor Northam declared on March 12, 2020 in response to COVID-19 expired on June 30.⁶³

E. Proposed Changes to the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 That Causes COVID-19.

On June 29, 2021, the Board adopted federal OSHA's COVID-19 ETS for Virginia with an effective date of August 2, 2021.⁶⁴ The COVID-19 ETS will expire within six months or when repealed by the Board, whichever occurs first. During the pendency of the COVID-19 ETS, application of the Virginia Standard to healthcare services and healthcare support services is suspended and will reapply after the COVID-19 ETS is no longer in effect.

On June 29, 2021, the Board adopted proposed amendments to the Virginia Standard which were the subject of a 30 day written comment period.⁶⁵

On July 1, 2021, Governor Northam completed his review of the proposed amendments to 16VAC25-220 adopted by the Board on June 29, 2021, and requested the following substitute language for 16VAC25-220-10.E be reconsidered by the Board when it reconvenes to consider final adoption of the proposed amendments to the Virginia Standard:

E. To the extent that an employer actually complies with a recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or nonmandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease related hazards or job tasks addressed by this standard, ~~and provided that the CDC recommendation provides equivalent or greater protection than provided by a provision of this standard,~~ the employer's actions shall be considered in compliance with the related provisions of this standard. An employer's actual compliance with a

⁶² NOTE 1: The intent of the language is to give the Board the maximum amount of flexibility to “notice” the Board meeting within 14 days even if the Board may not actually meet within 14 days.

NOTE 2: The new language in 16VAC25-220.C requires the Board to make a “determination” of whether there is continued need for the standard. The Department has identified three “determination” options:

- That there is no continued need for the standard;
- That there is a continued need for the standard with no changes; and
- That there is a continued need for a revised standard.

Regardless of the determination, the Department and Board will provide notice and comment opportunities on any changes to or revocation of the standard.

⁶³ <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2021/june/headline-897920-en.html>

⁶⁴ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/emergency-temporary-standard-interim-final-rule/>

⁶⁵ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/proposed-changes-to-fps/>

recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or non-mandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 related hazards or job tasks addressed by a provision of this standard shall be considered evidence of good faith in any enforcement proceeding related to this standard. The Commissioner of Labor and Industry shall consult with the State Health Commissioner for advice and technical aid before making a determination related to compliance with current CDC guidelines.

1. Review of Comments Submitted: 30 day Written Comment Period from July 1, 2021 to July 30, 2021; and Public Hearing of August 5, 2021.

The Department received 268 written comments through the Virginia Regulatory Townhall for the 30 day written comment period from July 1, 2021 to July 31, 2021.⁶⁶

There were 19 written comments sent directly to the Department during the 30 day written comment period, although a number of those were also posted by the Commenter on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall.⁶⁷

There were 7 oral comments received during the public hearing on August 5, 2021.⁶⁸

[The Department's responses to the above comments were provided to the Board in a separate document.]

2. An economic impact analysis (EIA)⁶⁹ on the Proposed Amendments based on the requirements of Va. Code §2.2-4007.04⁷⁰ is being prepared by Chmura Economics & Analytics, a nationally recognized economic consulting firm.⁷¹

[The EIA was provided to the Board along with the Department's response in separate documents]

3. Written Comment Period from August 16, 2021 to August 23, 2021 opened to address DOLI's Requested Revisions to the Board's Proposed Amendments.

On August 16, 2021, after consultation with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), DOLI has decided to recommend revisions⁷² to the Board's Proposed Amendments to the Virginia Standard originally adopted on June 29, 2021, in response to the CDC's Updated Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People issued on

⁶⁶ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?GNid=1283>

⁶⁷ Public comments sent direct to DOLI can be found here: <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/proposed-changes-to-fps/>

⁶⁸ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=32816>

A recording of the public hearing can be found here: <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/proposed-changes-to-fps/>

⁶⁹ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VDOLI-COVID-Regulation-Economic-Impact-Analysis-EIA-20210111.pdf>

⁷⁰ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter40/section2.2-4007.04/>

⁷¹ <http://www.chmuraecon.com/>

⁷² <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Revisions-to-Proposed-Amendments-to-the-FPS-for-COVID-19-16VAC25-220-Adopted-06.29.2021.pdf>

July 27, 2021⁷³ (requirement in certain situations for fully vaccinated employees to wear face coverings in areas of substantial or high transmission).

The proposed revisions were the subject of a written comment period⁷⁴ from August 16, 2021 to August 23, 2021 on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall.

[The Department's responses to the above comments were provided to the Board in a separate document.]

4. On August 26, 2021, the Board adopted as final the amendments and revisions to the standard. Governor Northam reviewed the amendments/revisions and the standard was published on September 8, 2021 and became effective the same day.⁷⁵

F. Proposed Revocation of Virginia Standard.

1. February 16, 2022 Board Meeting.

The Board met on February 16, 2022 to consider the Department's recommendation to make a proposed finding that Virginia Standard longer poses a "grave danger" to employees under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

The Board adopted the recommendation and also adopted the Department's proposed recommendation that the Virginia Standard be revoked, and that the such proposed revocation be the subject of a 30-day written comment period, a public hearing (during the 30-day period), and a second Board meeting to vote on final revocation of the Virginia Standard.

https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\34796\Agenda_DO LI_34796_v9.pdf

2. Written Comment Period from February 17, 2022 to March 19, 2022 to address the Board's Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard.

The proposed revocation was the subject of a written comment period from February 17, 2022 to March 19, 2022 on the Virginia Regulatory Townhall.⁷⁶

[The Department's responses to the first 15-days of the 30-day comment period were provided to the Board in a separate document on March 10, 2022.]

The Department's responses to days 16-30 and the comments received during the March 14, 2022 public hearing will be provided to the Board in a separate document.]

⁷³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

⁷⁴ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewNotice.cfm?GNid=1309>

⁷⁵ 16VAC25-220. et seq., <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter220/section10/>

⁷⁶ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/comments.cfm?generalnoticeid=2373>

3. Board Public Hearing held on March 14, 2022.

The proposed revocation was the subject of a public hearing on March 14, 2022.⁷⁷

[The Department's responses to the above comments were provided to the Board in a separate document.]

G. Legal Challenges to Governor's COVID-19 Related Executive Orders and the Virginia COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) Effective July 27, 2020 and the Permanent Standard Effective January 27, 2021.

Multiple legal challenges to COVID-19 related Governor's Executive Orders and the VOSH Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, were filed in the Circuit Court for the City of Richmond and consolidated. On March 4, 2021, the Court granted the Commonwealth's motion to dismiss. On March 31, 2021, the plaintiffs appealed the dismissal to the Virginia Court of Appeals (case number 0316-21-2).

The Court of Appeals issued its ruling in the case on December 7, 2021.⁷⁸

The Court found that Governor's Executive Orders (EO) are not subject to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), and that the challenges to the Department's Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) are moot because it has expired. The Court also found that the Department's Final Permanent Standard, which replaced the ETS, went through a distinct and separate rulemaking process and must be challenged separately, if at all.

The Court further found that the Plaintiff's claims under the Virginia Religious Freedom Act are moot because the Executive Orders expired and were replaced. Finally, the Court found that with regard to Count IV in the case (that EO restrictions violated the separation of powers provisions of the Virginia Constitution and impermissibly infringed on rights of assembly and association and the free exercise of religion), broader constitutional claims were raised which are not within the appellate jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals, and transferred those assignments to the Supreme Court of Va.

IV. Updates to CDC Guidance Since September 8, 2021 Effective Date of Virginia Standard.

A. Omicron Variant.

As of December 20, 2021, "CDC has been collaborating with global public health and industry partners to learn about Omicron, as we continue to monitor its course. We don't yet know how easily it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, or how well available vaccines and medications work against it.

⁷⁷ <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewMeeting.cfm?MeetingID=34938>

⁷⁸ <https://www.vacourts.gov/opinions/opncavwp/0316212.pdf>

Spread

The Omicron variant likely will spread more easily than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus and how easily Omicron spreads compared to Delta remains unknown. CDC expects that anyone with Omicron infection can spread the virus to others, even if they are vaccinated or don't have symptoms."⁷⁹

As of December 20, 2021, "The rapid growth rate in Omicron infections is believed to result from a combination of increased transmissibility and the ability to evade immunity conferred by past infection or vaccination (i.e., immune evasion) 4; 5. Data from laboratory experiments and epidemiologic investigations suggest a greater role for immune evasion than increased transmissibility; immunity conferred by prior infection or vaccination is likely to be reduced compared with Delta but not completely overcome. Data also show that vaccinated people who either receive a booster dose or who were also previously infected are likely to have stronger protection against Omicron."⁸⁰

As of January 25, 2022, "The B.1.1.529 (Omicron) variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was first clinically identified in the United States on December 1, 2021, and spread rapidly. By late December, it became the predominant strain, and by January 15, 2022, it represented 99.5% of sequenced specimens in the United States. The Omicron variant has been shown to be more transmissible and less virulent than previously circulating variants."⁸¹

Omicron Subvariant BA.2

CNBC.com, February 9, 2022, "WHO says new omicron BA.2 subvariant will rise globally, but scientists don't know if it can reinfect people."⁸²

The World Health Organization expects a more transmissible version of omicron to increase in circulation around the world, though it's not yet clear if the Covid subvariant can reinfect people who caught an earlier version of the omicron strain.

Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's Covid-19 technical lead, said Tuesday the global health agency is tracking four different versions of omicron. Van Kerkhove said the BA.2 subvariant, which is more contagious than the currently dominant BA.1 version, will likely become more common.

"BA.2 is more transmissible than BA.1 so we expect to see BA.2 increasing in detection around the world," Van Kerkhove said during a question-and-answer session livestreamed on the WHO's social media platforms Tuesday.

....

⁷⁹ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html?s_cid=11734:omicron%20vaccine:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY22

⁸⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/forecasting/mathematical-modeling-outbreak.html>

⁸¹ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104e4.htm?s_cid=mm7104e4_w

⁸² <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/02/08/who-says-omicron-bapoint2-subvariant-will-rise-globally.html>

Researchers in Denmark⁸³ have found that BA.2 is about 1.5 times more transmissible than BA.1 and it is more adept at infecting people who are vaccinated and even boosted. However, people who are fully vaccinated are less likely to spread it than the unvaccinated.

....

Most states in the U.S. have confirmed the presence of BA.2, though it's circulating at a low level with 460 total cases confirmed so far, according to an international data base that tracks Covid variants."

Nature.com, February 24, 2022, "Omicron's lasting mysteries: four questions scientists are racing to answer."⁸⁴

"The diminished severity has provided a thin silver lining to the Omicron surge, but most experts think that this won't be the final variant of concern. There are two likely scenarios going forward, says Jesse Bloom, an evolutionary virologist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Washington. One is that Omicron continues to evolve, creating some sort of Omicron-plus variant that is worse than BA. 1 or BA.2. The other possibility is that a new, unrelated variant appears.

The latter is what's happened with each variant of concern so far. "It suggests that there's a huge amount of plasticity in the virus," says Lucy Thorne, a virologist at University College London. "It's got different evolutionary options."

With dozens of mutations, Omicron explored more of the evolutionary space than the other variants. Many of Omicron's mutations ought to make it less fit, but it thrives, probably because other mutations mitigate those disadvantages."

"Vaccines

Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. However, breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are likely to occur. With other variants, like Delta, vaccines have remained effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. The recent emergence of Omicron further emphasizes the importance of vaccination and boosters."⁸⁵

CDC.gov, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), January 21, 2022, "Effectiveness of a Third Dose of mRNA Vaccines Against COVID-19–Associated Emergency Department and Urgent Care Encounters and Hospitalizations Among Adults During Periods of Delta and Omicron Variant Predominance — VISION Network, 10 States, August 2021–January 2022":

⁸³ <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/28/the-new-bapoint2-omicron-subvariant-is-already-circulating-in-half-of-us-states.html>

⁸⁴ <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00428-5>

⁸⁵ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html?s_cid=11734:omicron%20vaccine:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY22

"[A] multistate analysis of 222,772 ED [Emergency Department] and UC [Urgent Care] encounters and 87,904 hospitalizations among adults with COVID-19–like illness during August 26, 2021–January 5, 2022, estimates of VE [Vaccine Effectiveness] against laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 declined during the Omicron-predominant period compared with VE during the Delta-predominant period.

During both periods, VE was significantly lower among patients who received their second mRNA COVID-19 vaccine dose ≥ 180 days before the medical encounters compared with those vaccinated more recently. VE increased following a third dose and was highly effective during both the Delta- and Omicron-predominant periods at preventing COVID-19–associated ED and UC encounters (94% and 82%, respectively) and preventing COVID-19–associated hospitalizations (94% and 90%, respectively).

Estimates of VE for 2 doses of an mRNA vaccine were higher against COVID-19–associated hospitalizations than against COVID-19–associated ED or UC encounters, especially during the Omicron period, which is consistent with possible vaccine attenuation of severity of COVID-19 disease but was not observed in this network previously.

This study also found that immunocompromised adults had lower third dose VE against COVID-19–associated ED and UC encounters and hospitalization, which is consistent with trends observed for VE following a second dose and is consistent with recommendations for a booster dose for this group 5 months after the additional primary dose.

....

These findings underscore the importance of receiving a third dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine to prevent both moderately severe and severe COVID-19, especially while the Omicron variant is the predominant circulating variant and when the effectiveness of 2 doses of mRNA vaccines is significantly reduced against this variant.

All unvaccinated persons should get vaccinated as soon as possible. All adults who have received mRNA vaccines during their primary COVID-19 vaccination series should receive a third dose when eligible, and eligible persons should stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations."⁸⁶

"Treatments

Scientists are working to determine how well existing treatments for COVID-19 work. Based on the changed genetic make-up of Omicron, some treatments are likely to remain effective while others may be less effective."

⁸⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104e3.htm?s_cid=mm7104e3_x

B. Isolation Guidance for the General Public.

As of January 20, 2021,⁸⁷ "Isolation is used to separate people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 from those without COVID-19. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others....Everyone who has presumed or confirmed COVID-19 should stay home and isolate from other people for at least 5 full days (day 0 is the first day of symptoms or the date of the day of the positive viral test for asymptomatic persons). They should wear a mask when around others at home and in public for an additional 5 days. People who are confirmed to have COVID-19 or are showing symptoms of COVID-19 need to isolate regardless of their vaccination status. This includes:

- People who have a positive viral test for COVID-19, regardless of whether or not they have symptoms.
- People with symptoms of COVID-19, including people who are awaiting test results or have not been tested. People with symptoms should isolate even if they do not know if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19."

"If you test positive for COVID-19 and never develop symptoms, isolate for at least 5 days. Day 0 is the day of your positive viral test (based on the date you were tested) and day 1 is the first full day after the specimen was collected for your positive test. You can leave isolation after 5 full days."⁸⁸

NOTE: "Quarantine is a strategy used to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by keeping people who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 apart from others."⁸⁹

The Virginia Standard does not address quarantine issues, which are the purview of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

⁸⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

⁸⁸ *Id.*

⁸⁹ *Id.*

C. [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2.](#)

As of January 21, 2022⁹⁰:

Key Points

- In general, asymptomatic HCP who have had a higher-risk exposure do not require work restriction if they are [up to date](#) with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses, do not develop symptoms or test positive for SARS-CoV-2. The duration of protection offered by booster doses of vaccine and their effect on emerging variants are not clear; additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

Work Restrictions for HCP With SARS-CoV-2 Infection and Exposures

"Up to Date" with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses is defined in [Stay Up to Date with Your Vaccines | CDC](#)

For more details, including recommendations for healthcare personnel who are immunocompromised, have severe to critical illness, or are within 90 days of prior infection, refer to [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#) (conventional standards) and [Strategies to Mitigate Healthcare Personnel Staffing Shortages](#) (contingency and crisis standards).

Work Restrictions for HCP With SARS-CoV-2 Infection

Vaccination Status	Conventional	Contingency	Crisis
Up to Date and Not Up to Date	10 days OR 7 days with negative test [†] , if asymptomatic or mild to moderate illness (with improving symptoms)	5 days with/without negative test, if asymptomatic or mild to moderate illness (with improving symptoms)	No work restriction, with prioritization considerations (e.g., types of patients they care for)

Work Restrictions for Asymptomatic HCP with SARS-CoV-2 Exposures

Vaccination Status	Conventional	Contingency	Crisis
Up to Date	No work restrictions, with negative test on days 1 [‡] and 5–7	No work restriction	No work restriction
Not Up to Date	10 days OR 7 days with negative test [†]	No work restriction with negative tests on days 1 [‡] , 2, 3, & 5–7 (if shortage of tests prioritize Day 1 to 2 and 5-7)	No work restrictions (test if possible)

[†]Negative test result within 48 hours before returning to work

[‡]For calculating day of test: 1) for those with infection consider day of symptom onset (or first positive test if asymptomatic) as day 0; 2) for those with exposure consider day of exposure as day 0



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

⁹⁰ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Freturn-to-work.html

D. On February 25, 2022, the CDC updated its mask wearing guidance based on community level metrics. "CDC looks at the combination of three metrics — new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days — to determine the COVID-19 community level."⁹¹

COVID-19 Community Levels – Use the Highest Level that Applies to Your Community				
New COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 people in the past 7 days	Indicators	Low	Medium	High
		Fewer than 200	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	<10.0
Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	<10.0%		10.0-14.9%	≥15.0%
200 or more	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	NA	<10.0	≥10.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	NA	<10.0%	≥10.0%

The COVID-19 community level is determined by the higher of the new admissions and inpatient beds metrics, based on the current level of new cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days

In areas of low COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance does not include mask wearing.

In areas of medium COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance provides:

- If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing).

In areas of high COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance provides:

⁹¹ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_2145-DM76655&ACSTrackingLabel=02.25.2022%20-%20COVID-19%20Data%20Tracker%20Weekly%20Review&deliveryName=USCDC_2145-DM76655

- Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status.
- If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection.
- If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing).

Employers and employees can determine a place of employment's COVID-19 community level at:

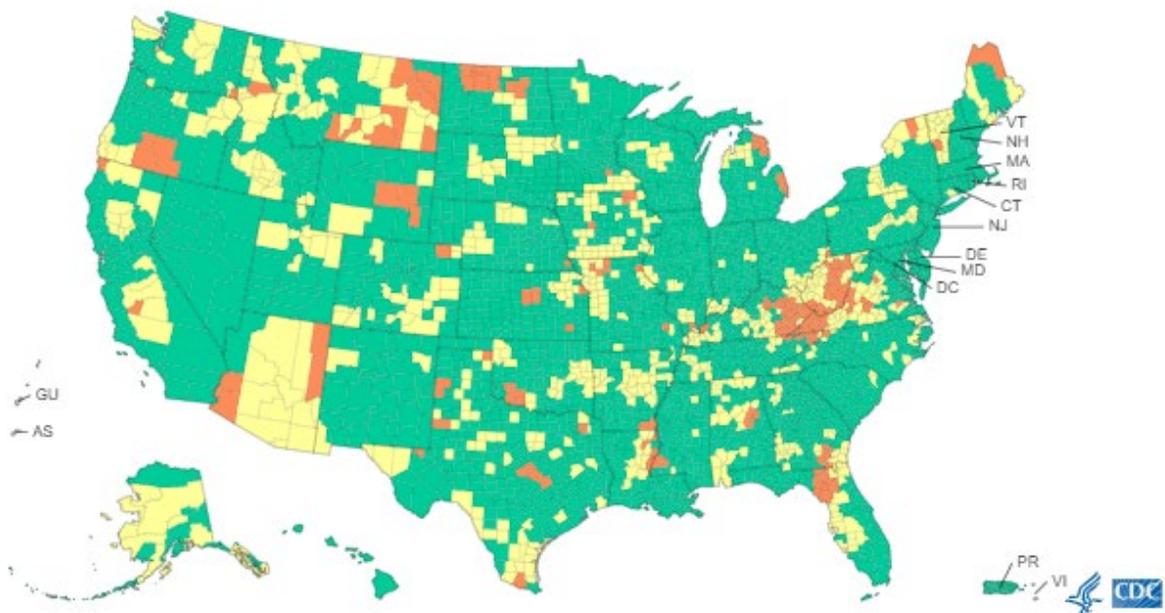
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

U. S. and Virginia Community Levels by County Maps as of March 10, 2022:

U.S. COVID-19 Community Levels by County Map

Maps, charts, and data provided by CDC, updates every Thursday by 8 pm ET

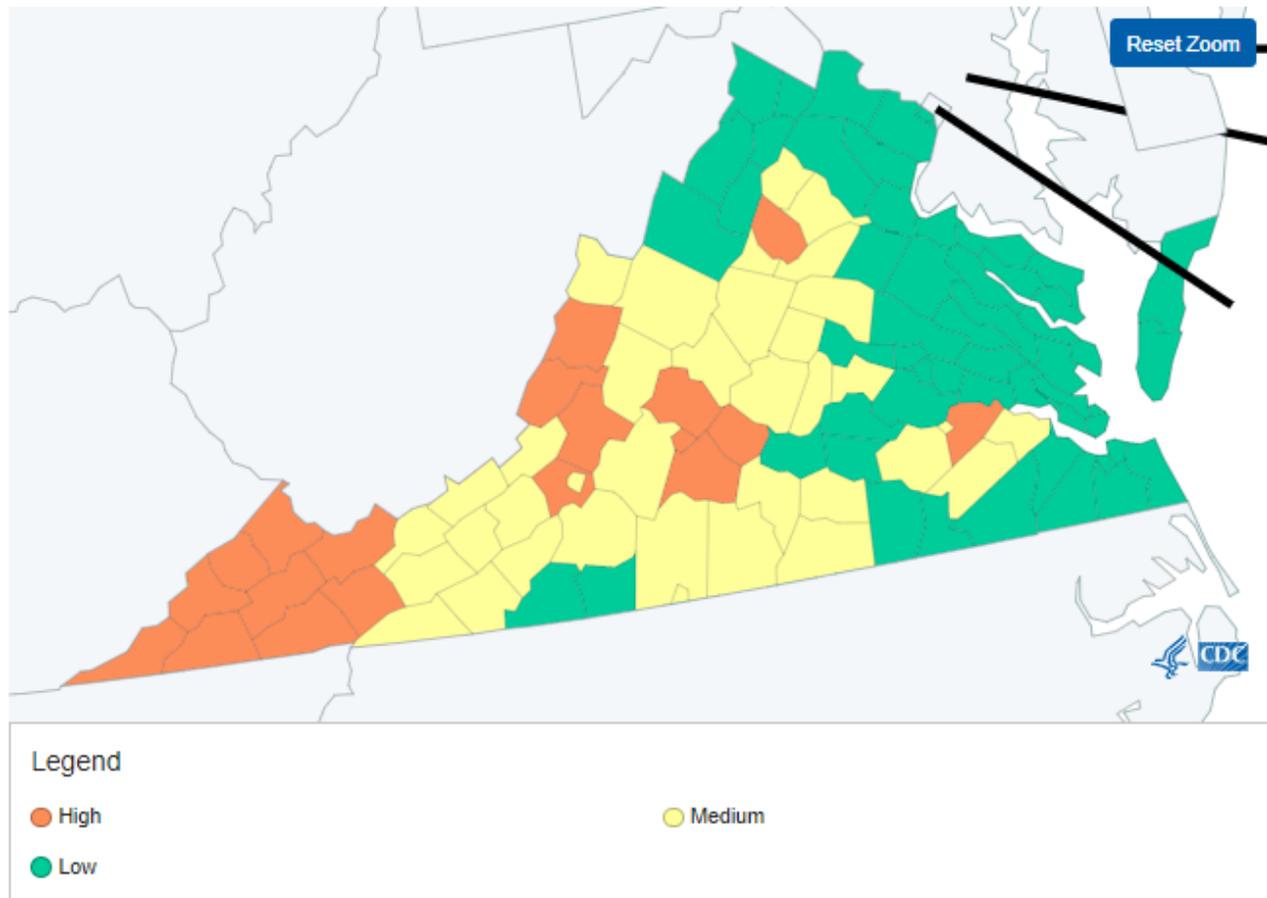
Updated: March 10, 2022



U.S. COVID-19 Community Levels by County Map

Maps, charts, and data provided by CDC, updates every Thursday by 8 pm ET

Updated: March 10, 2022



[INSERT COMMUNITY LEVEL MAP AS OF MARCH 14, 2022]

V. Basis for Board Action.

A. Basis.

1. Applicable Statutes.

The Safety and Health Codes Board is authorized by Title 40.1-22(5)⁹² to:

“... adopt, alter, amend, or repeal rules and regulations to further, protect and promote the safety and health of employees in places of employment over which it has jurisdiction and to effect compliance with the federal OSH Act of 1970...as may be necessary to carry out its functions established under this title....All such rules and regulations shall be designed to protect and promote the safety and health of such employees. In making such rules and regulations

⁹² <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-22/>

to protect the occupational safety and health of employees, the Board shall adopt the standard which most adequately assures, to the extent feasible, on the basis of the best available evidence, that no employee will suffer material impairment of health or functional capacity. However, such standards shall be at least as stringent as the standards promulgated by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-596). In addition to the attainment of the highest degree of health and safety protection for the employee, other considerations shall be the latest available scientific data in the field, the feasibility of the standards, and experience gained under this and other health and safety laws. Whenever practicable, the standard promulgated shall be expressed in terms of objective criteria and of the performance desired. Such standards when applicable to products which are distributed in interstate commerce shall be the same as federal standards unless deviations are required by compelling local conditions and do not unduly burden interstate commerce.”

Va. Code §40.1-22(6a)⁹³ provides that:

....

(6a) The Board shall provide, without regard to the requirements of Chapter 40 (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) of Title 2.2, for an emergency temporary standard to take immediate effect upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation, published in the City of Richmond, Virginia, if it determines that employees are exposed to grave danger from exposure to substances or agents determined to be toxic or physically harmful or from new hazards, and that such emergency standard is necessary to protect employees from such danger. The publication mentioned herein shall constitute notice that the Board intends to adopt such standard within a period of six months. The Board by similar publication shall prior to the expiration of six months give notice of the time and date of, and conduct a hearing on, the adoption of a permanent standard. The emergency temporary standard shall expire within six months or when superseded by a permanent standard, whichever occurs first, or when repealed by the Board.

(Emphasis added).

The Department consulted with the OAG concerning the meaning and proper application of Va. Code §40.1-22(6a):

Any proposed changes to or proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard will go through a similar notice and comment process to that used for adoption of the current standard. This includes a written comment period for the public and stakeholders to provide written feedback to the Board about the proposed changes or proposed revocation, at least one public hearing, and the development of an Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) as necessary (an EIA would not be necessary in the event of proposed revocation). The Board will then hold a second meeting and vote to accept or reject the proposed changes or proposed revocation as final, which would become effective upon

⁹³ *Id.*

publication in a newspaper of general circulation published in the City of Richmond, Virginia.

B. Summary of Case Law on "Grave Danger" and "Necessity".

The terms “grave danger” and “necessity” are not defined in the statute, but have been addressed in federal court cases surrounding federal OSHA’s similar statutory requirement in the OSH Act, §6(c) (identical language underlined):

“(1) The Secretary shall provide, without regard to the requirements of chapter 5, title 5, Unites States Code, for an emergency temporary standard to take immediate effect upon publication in the Federal Register if he determines –

(A) that employees are exposed to grave danger from exposure to substances or agents determined to be toxic or physically harmful or from new hazards, and
(B) that such emergency standard is necessary to protect employees from such danger. (Emphasis added).

29 U.S.C. § 655(c).

From *Asbestos Information Ass’n/North America v. OSHA*, 727 F.2d 415 (5th Cir. 1984) – review of OSHA’s Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) lowering the PEL for asbestos under Section 6(c) of the OSH Act (29 U.S.C. § 655(c):

“As the Supreme Court has noted, the determination of what constitutes a risk worthy of Agency action is a policy consideration that belongs, in the first instance to the Agency. [Citation omitted] The Secretary determined that eighty lives at risk is a grave danger. We are not prepared to say it is not. The Agency need not support its conclusion ‘with anything approaching scientific certainty. [Citation omitted] ... so long as the Agency supports its conclusion with ‘a body of reputable scientific thought,’ it may ‘use conservative assumptions’ to support that conclusion. The Agency also has prerogative to choose between conflicting evidence of equivalent quality, and a court will consider a finding consistent with one authority or another to be supported by substantial evidence.”

From *Florida Peach Growers Ass’n v. Dept. of Labor*, 489 F.2d 120 (5th Cir. 1974) – review of OSHA ETS regarding protecting farmworkers from exposure to certain pesticides during cultivation of various crops:

“The Act requires determination of danger from exposure to harmful substances, not just a danger of exposure; and, not exposure to just a danger, but to a grave danger; and, not the necessity of just a temporary standard, but that an emergency standard is necessary.

OSHA relied on a report finding that 800 persons are killed annually from the improper use of pesticides, and 80,000 injured. The court found this did not support a conclusion that the per se use of the pesticides presents a “grave danger.” *Id.* at

131. There was not enough data in the record on deaths from use of pesticide in the workplace (as opposed to ingestion by children, etc.).

The court looked at petitioner's evidence "detailing the generally mild nature of the relatively few cases of illness reported by crop workers exposed solely to residues. ... from time to time a group of workers will experience nausea, excessive salivation and perspiration, blurred vision, abdominal cramps, vomiting, and diarrhea, in approximately that sequence....these are not grave illnesses, however, and do not support a determination of a grave danger....no deaths have been conclusively attributed to exposure to residues." *Id.* at 131.

The court said "We reject any suggestion that deaths must occur before health and safety standards may be adopted. Nevertheless, the danger of incurable, permanent, or fatal consequences to workers, as opposed to easily curable and fleeting effects on their health, becomes important in the consideration of the necessity for emergency measures to meet a grave danger." *Id.* at 132.

From *International Union, United Auto., Aerospace, and Agr. Implement Workers of America, UAW v. Donovan*, 590 F. Supp. 747 (D.D.C. 1984), where OSHA declined to promulgate an ETS on formaldehyde in the workplace. The court action was brought in district court challenging decision under the federal APA:

"The 'grave danger' and 'necessity' findings must be based on evidence of actual, prevailing industrial conditions, i.e., current levels of employee exposure to the substance in question." *Id.* at 751.

The Court also agreed with the defendant's position that "A danger rises to the level of 'grave' when, based on actual workplace conditions, employees are faced with a risk of contracting serious disease which is substantially greater than a 'significant risk [a finding by OSHA of "significant risk of material health impairment"⁹⁴ to employees from an occupational health hazard is necessary to support the adoption of a health standard]. *Id.* at 755.

⁹⁴ "Before OSHA promulgates any permanent health or safety standard, it must make a 'threshold finding' that 'it is at least more likely than not that long-term exposure' to the regulated substance at current exposure levels 'presents a significant risk of material impairment' that 'can be eliminated or lessened by a change in practices.'" *Industrial Union Department, AFLCIO v. American Petroleum Institute (Benzene)*, 448 U.S. 607, 642, 653 (1980) (plurality) The Supreme Court has provided the guidepost that OSHA follows: a one-in-a-thousand risk that exposure to the regulated substance will be fatal can reasonably be considered significant but a one-in-a-billion risk is likely not significant. *Id.* at 655-56.

OSHA must support its significant risk finding with substantial evidence. *Id.* at 653. Although it must rely on a "body of reputable scientific thought" when assessing risk, *id.* at 656, OSHA does not have to "calculate the exact probability of harm" or support its finding "with anything approaching scientific certainty," *id.* at 655-56. OSHA is entitled to "some leeway" when its "findings must be made on the frontiers of scientific knowledge." *Id.* at 656. We "do not reweigh the evidence and come to our own conclusion[s]; rather, we assess the reasonableness of OSHA's conclusion." *Public Citizen Health Research Group v. Tyson (Ethylene Oxide)*, 796 F.2d 1479, 1495 (D.C. Cir. 1986).

North America's Building Trades Unions v. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and United States Department of Labor, No. 16-1105, [https://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/03C747A5AB141C90852581FE0055A642/\\$file/16-1105-1710179.pdf](https://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/03C747A5AB141C90852581FE0055A642/$file/16-1105-1710179.pdf)

From *Dry Color Mfrs. Ass'n, Inc. v. Brennan*, 486 F.2d 98 (3d Cir. 1973), a review of OSHA's emergency regulations regarding 14 carcinogenic substances under Section 6(c) of the OSH Act (29 U.S.C. § 655(c)):

"...the most that can be said is that DCB and EI pose a 'potential' cancer hazard to men. Although the danger to cancer is surely "grave," subsection 6(c)(1) of the Act requires a grave danger of exposure to substances 'determined to be toxic or physically harmful.' 486 F.2d 98, 104.

"While the Act does not require an absolute certainty as to the deleterious effect of a substance on man, an emergency temporary standard must be supported by evidence that shows more than some possibility that a substance may cause cancer in man. On this record, the evidence supplies no more than some possibility that DCB and EI may cause cancer in man." *Id.* at 104-5.

C. Background.

1. SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes the COVID-19 Disease.

SARS-CoV-2 is a betacoronavirus, like MERS-CoV (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus) and SARS-CoV (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus). Coronaviruses are named for crown-like spikes on their surface. SARS-CoV-2 causes the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

SARS-CoV-2 is easily transmitted through the air from person-to-person through respiratory droplets, aerosols, and other forms of airborne transmission, and the virus can settle and deposit on environmental surfaces where it can remain viable for days.

Pandemic, Endemic, Epidemic

CNBC.com, February 2, 2022, "Covid will always be an epidemic virus — not an endemic one, scientist warns."⁹⁵

"According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an epidemic occurs when the number of cases of a disease increases, often suddenly, above what is usually expected.

The WHO declares a disease a pandemic when its growth is exponential and it is spreading globally.

"While an epidemic is large, it is also generally contained or expected in its spread, while a pandemic is international and out of control," experts from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health explained in a blog post last year. "The difference between an epidemic and a pandemic isn't in the severity of the disease, but the degree to which it has spread."

⁹⁵<https://www.cnb.com/2022/02/02/covid-will-never-become-an-endemic-virus-scientist-warns.html>

Endemic disease is defined as “the constant presence or usual prevalence of a disease or infectious agent in a population within a geographic area” by the U.S. CDC.”

....

“Covid-19 will never become an endemic illness and will always behave like an epidemic virus, an expert in biosecurity has warned.

Raina MacIntyre, a professor of global biosecurity at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, told CNBC that although endemic disease can occur in very large numbers, the number of cases does not change rapidly as seen with the coronavirus.

“If case numbers do change [with an endemic disease], it is slowly, typically over years,” she said via email. “Epidemic diseases, on the other hand, rise rapidly over periods of days to weeks.”

Scientists use a mathematical equation, the so-called R naught (or R_0), to assess how quickly a disease is spreading. The R_0 indicates how many people will catch a disease from an infected person, with experts at Imperial College London estimating omicron’s could be higher than 3.

If a disease’s R_0 is greater than 1, growth is exponential, meaning the virus is becoming more prevalent and the conditions for an epidemic are present, MacIntyre said.

“The public health goal is to keep the effective R — which is R_0 modified by interventions such as vaccines, masks or other mitigations — below 1,” she told CNBC. “But if the R_0 is higher than 1, we typically see recurrent epidemic waves for respiratory transmitted epidemic infections.”

MacIntyre noted that this is the pattern that was seen with smallpox for centuries and is still seen with measles and influenza. It’s also the pattern unfolding with Covid, she added, for which we have seen four major waves in the past two years.

“Covid will not magically turn into a malaria-like endemic infection where levels stay constant for long periods,” she contended. “It will keep causing epidemic waves, driven by waning vaccine immunity, new variants that escape vaccine protection, unvaccinated pockets, births and migration.”

Signs and Symptoms

"Signs of COVID-19" are abnormalities that can be objectively observed, and may include fever, trouble breathing or shortness of breath, cough, vomiting, new confusion, bluish lips or face, etc.

“Symptoms of COVID-19” are abnormalities that are subjective to the person and not observable to others, and may include "fever or chill, cough, shortness of breath or

difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea."⁹⁶

"Symptoms"⁹⁷

Most common

- Fever
- Cough (dry)
- Fatigue

Less common

- Myalgia
- Pharyngitis (or other respiratory symptoms)
- Headache
- GI including diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis
- Loss of taste or smell
- Rash (chilblains, discoloring on fingers/toes)

Serious/warning symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain/pressure
- Confusion
- Lethargy
- Cyanosis

COVID-19 Medical Complications.

"Although most people with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms, the disease can cause severe medical complications and lead to death in some people. Older adults or people with existing chronic medical conditions are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill with COVID-19."⁹⁸

In one study from March 27, 2020, younger adults 20–44 account for 20% of hospitalizations, 12% of ICU admissions."⁹⁹

"When to seek emergency medical attention....

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion

⁹⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

⁹⁷

https://www.hopkinsguides.com/hopkins/view/Johns_Hopkins_ABX_Guide/540747/all/Coronavirus_COVID_19_SA_RS_CoV_2_

⁹⁸ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/symptoms-causes/syc-20479963>

⁹⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6912e2.htm>

- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning...."¹⁰⁰

“Complications can include:

- Pneumonia and trouble breathing
- Organ failure in several organs
- Heart problems
- A severe lung condition that causes a low amount of oxygen to go through your bloodstream to your organs (acute respiratory distress syndrome)
- Blood clots
- Acute kidney injury
- Additional viral and bacterial infections”¹⁰¹

“Illness Severity [CDC]

In a February 16, 2021 study, the largest cohort of >44,000 persons with COVID-19 from China showed that illness severity can range from mild to critical:

- Mild to moderate (mild symptoms up to mild pneumonia): 81%
- Severe (dyspnea, hypoxia, or >50% lung involvement on imaging): 14%
- Critical (respiratory failure, shock, or multi-organ system dysfunction): 5%

In this study, all deaths occurred among patients with critical illness and the overall case fatality rate was 2.3%. The case fatality rate among patients with critical disease was 49%. Among children in China, illness severity was lower with 94% having asymptomatic, mild or moderate disease, 5% having severe disease, and <1% having critical disease.

In a study of U.S. COVID-19 cases with known disposition, the proportion of persons who were hospitalized was 14%. The proportion of persons with COVID-19 admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) was 2%, and overall 5% of patients died.”¹⁰²

CDC.gov, December 20, 2021, "Potential Rapid Increase of Omicron Variant Infections in the United States."

"At present, early data suggest Omicron infection might be less severe than infection with prior variants; however, reliable data on clinical severity remain limited. Even if the proportion of infections associated with severe outcomes is

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/symptoms-causes/syc-20479963>

https://www.hopkinsguides.com/hopkins/view/Johns_Hopkins_ABX_Guide/540747/all/Coronavirus_COVID_19_SA_RS_CoV_2

¹⁰² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>

lower than with previous variants, given the likely increase in number of infections, the absolute numbers of people with severe outcomes could be substantial. In addition, demand for ambulatory care, supportive care for treatment of mild cases, and infection control requirements, quarantining/isolation of exposed/infected workforce could also stress the healthcare system. These stresses likely will be in addition to the ongoing Delta variant infections and a rising burden of illness caused by other respiratory pathogens, such as influenza, which have begun circulating at greater frequencies."¹⁰³

Imperial College London, December 22, 2021, "Report 50 - Hospitalisation risk for Omicron cases in England"¹⁰⁴

"Researchers in England, Scotland, and South Africa have found the risk of admission to hospital to be between 15% and 80% lower with omicron than the delta variant. The findings have not been peer reviewed, and all three studies accept limitations in the research, but the unanimity of the findings has been welcomed. "In my view, there is now solid reason to favour a more optimistic outcome of omicron in the UK than was feared," said James Naismith, director of the Rosalind Franklin Institute at the University of Oxford."¹⁰⁵

International Journal of Infectious Diseases, December 28, 2021, "Decreased severity of disease during the first global omicron variant covid-19 outbreak in a large hospital in Tshwane, South Africa."

"466 hospital COVID-19 admissions since 14 November 2021 were compared to 3962 admissions since 4 May 2020, prior to the Omicron outbreak. Ninety-eight patient records at peak bed occupancy during the outbreak were reviewed for primary indication for admission, clinical severity, oxygen supplementation level, vaccination and prior COVID-19 infection":

"RESULTS

For the Omicron and previous waves, deaths and ICU admissions were 4.5% vs 21.3% ($p < 0.00001$), and 1% vs 4.3% ($p < 0.00001$) respectively; length of stay was 4.0 days vs 8.8 days; and mean age was 39 years vs 49,8 years.

Admissions in the Omicron wave peaked and declined rapidly with peak bed occupancy at 51% of the highest previous peak during the Delta wave.

Sixty two (63%) patients in COVID-19 wards had incidental COVID-19 following a positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR test. Only one third (36) had COVID-19 pneumonia, of which 72% had mild to moderate disease. The remaining 28% required high care or ICU admission. Fewer than half (45%) of patients in COVID-19 wards required oxygen supplementation compared to 99.5% in the first wave. The death rate in the face of an exponential increase in cases during the Omicron wave at the

¹⁰³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/forecasting/mathematical-modeling-outbreak.html>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/mrc-global-infectious-disease-analysis/covid-19/report-50-severity-omicron/>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n3144>

city and provincial levels shows a decoupling of cases and deaths compared to previous waves, corroborating the clinical findings of decreased severity of disease seen in patients admitted to the Steve Biko Academic Hospital."

CONCLUSION

There was decreased severity of COVID-19 disease in the Omicron-driven fourth wave in the City of Tshwane, its first global epicentre."¹⁰⁶

NOTE: "The younger age profile of patients is likely to have been a factor of this clinical profile."¹⁰⁷

Vitals.sutterfield.org, December 28, 2021, "Omicron is the Dominant COVID Variant for Two Reasons."¹⁰⁸

"The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has taken firm hold in the United States. Infectious disease specialist Dr. Gary Green explains why that is....

The first case of Omicron was detected in the U.S. on Nov. 22. Thirty days later, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said Omicron accounted for half of all new COVID-19 cases and 90% of cases in some parts of the country.

....

Omicron is highly catchy. Here's how we know. A virus' infection rate – the average number of infected contacts per infected individual – is measured as R_0 or Basic Reproduction Number. Original SARS-CoV-2 from China has $R_0 \sim 2.79$ and the Delta variant has $R_0 \sim 5.08$. The Omicron variant has $R_0 7.0$ or greater. Dr. Green says this means one case of Omicron infection can result in more than seven other infections. For perspective, the R_0 for seasonal influenza is roughly 1.2 and the R_0 for mumps is 7. The R_0 for measles is 12-18.

"While Omicron's spread is swift, it's less virulent, particularly among a highly vaccinated people," says Dr. Green. This is good news about where the population is headed.

"Similar to the progression 1918 pandemic, Omicron is the first predominant strain to be less virulent (or severe) and may mark an evolutionary turn towards becoming more endemic."

Medrxiv, January 1, 2022, "Epidemiological Characteristics and Severity of Omicron Variant Cases in the APHP Critical Care Units."¹⁰⁹

"Results. On January 18, 45% of patients in the ICU and 63.8% of patients in conventional hospital units were infected with the Omicron variant ($p < 0.001$). The risk of ICU admission with Omicron was reduced by 64% than with Delta (9.3% versus 25.8% of cases, respectively, $p < 0.001$). In critically ill patients, 400

¹⁰⁶ [https://www.ijidonline.com/article/S1201-9712\(21\)01256-X/fulltext](https://www.ijidonline.com/article/S1201-9712(21)01256-X/fulltext)

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*

¹⁰⁸ <https://vitals.sutterhealth.org/omicron-is-the-us-dominant-covid-variant-for-two-reasons/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.25.22269839v1>

had the Delta variant, 229 the Omicron variant, 98 had an uninformative variant screening test and 161 did not have information on variant screening test. 747 patients (84.1%) were admitted for pneumonia. Compared to patients infected with Delta, Omicron patients were more vaccinated ($p<0.001$), even with 3 doses, more immunocompromised ($p<0.001$), less admitted for pneumonia ($p<0.001$), especially when vaccinated (62.1% in vaccinated versus 80.7% in unvaccinated, $p<0.001$), and less invasively ventilated ($p=0.02$). Similar results were found in the subgroup of pneumonia but Omicron cases were older. Unadjusted in-ICU mortality did not differ between Omicron and Delta cases, neither in the overall population (20.0% versus 27.9%, $p = 0.08$), nor in patients with pneumonia (31.6% versus 29.7%, respectively) where adjusted in-ICU mortality did not differ according to the variant (HR 1.43 95%CI [0.89;2.29], $p=0.14$).

Conclusion and relevance. Compared to the Delta variant, the Omicron variant is less likely to result in ICU admission and less likely to be associated with pneumonia. However, when patients with the Omicron variant are admitted for pneumonia, the severity seems similar to that of patients with the Delta variant, with more immunocompromised and vaccinated patients and no difference in adjusted in-ICU mortality. Further studies are needed to confirm our results."

UPI.com, January 3, 2022, Omicron COVID-19 causes less lung damage in animal studies:"¹¹⁰

"The Omicron variant of COVID-19 may cause less severe illness than earlier strains of the virus because it attacks the lungs differently, a study¹¹¹ posted online Monday found.

In research with mice and hamsters, animals infected with the Omicron variant of the virus had less damage in their upper and lower respiratory tracts, said researchers from the United States and Japan.

In addition, the strain that first emerged in South Africa in late November has a "lower viral burden" in the nose, throat and lungs, which essentially means there is less virus in these locations and less chance for spread to other parts of the body, they said.

The mice and hamsters in the study, which the researchers intentionally infected with the Omicron variant for the experiments, showed evidence of "weakened" infections in the lungs and lost less weight than rodents sickened with other strains, a sign of less severe illness, according to the researchers."

ECDC.europa.eu, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, January 14, 2022, "Weekly epidemiological update: Omicron variant of concern (VOC) – week 2 (data as of 13 January 2022) EU/EEA."¹¹²

¹¹⁰ https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2022/01/03/covid-19-omicron-lung-damage-animal-studies/6811641220695/

¹¹¹ <https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-1211792/v1>; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-022-04441-6>

¹¹² <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/weekly-epidemiological-update-omicron-variant-concern-voc-week-2-data-13-january-2022>

"Disease severity related to Omicron

Preliminary evidence suggests that infections with the Omicron VOC have a less severe clinical presentation than Delta. However, it is still too early to make a complete assessment of Omicron's severity.

....

The UKHSA shared a [report](#) estimating that Omicron-infected individuals have 50% lower risk to visit or to be admitted to the hospital than people with infection due to Delta (hazard ratio 0.53, 95% CI 0.50-0.57). They also found a 65% lower hospitalisation risk for Omicron cases who had received 2 doses of a vaccine and 81% reduction with 3 doses, compared to unvaccinated.

Another [study](#)¹¹³ from Scotland used the national data of individuals with symptomatic Omicron infection and identified a reduced hospitalisation risk compared to Delta cases, while the rate of possible reinfection for Omicron was 10 times that of Delta. Vaccinated individuals with the third vaccine dose had a 57% (95% CI 55-60) lower risk to experience symptoms following Omicron infection.

A recent Canadian [report](#)¹¹⁴ confirmed low hospital admission rates (0.3%) and case fatality (<0.1%) for Omicron cases. Shorter median length of hospital stay and reduced need for respiratory support than the previous variants were also reported in another [publication](#)¹¹⁵ (not peer-review) from Texas.

Similar findings were published in a [preprint](#)¹¹⁶ from Southern California where they also report reduced risk of hospital/ICU admission and mortality for Omicron cases compared to Delta. The median hospital stay duration for symptomatic patients was approximately 70% (~3.4 days) shorter for Omicron infected cases. The added value of this study is the contemporaneous comparison of Omicron and Delta variants co-circulating among the same exposed population.

However, most of studies do not account for waning immunity, neither for the likely large amount of under-ascertained reinfections. This could lead to an overestimation of the decrease in severity."

CDC.gov, January 25, 2022, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), "Trends in Disease Severity and Health Care Utilization During the Early Omicron Variant Period Compared with Previous SARS-CoV-2 High Transmission Periods — United States, December 2020–January 2022."

"Emergence of the Omicron variant in December 2021 led to a substantial increase in COVID-19 cases in the United States. Although the rapid rise in cases has resulted in the highest number of COVID-19–associated ED visits and hospital

¹¹³ <https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/publications/severity-of-omicron-variant-of-concern-and-vaccine-effectiveness->

¹¹⁴ <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/epi/covid-19-weekly-epi-summary-report.pdf?la=en>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.12.30.21268560v2>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.11.22269045v1>

admissions since the beginning of the pandemic, straining the health care system, disease severity appears to be lower than compared with previous high disease-transmission periods. In addition to lower ratios of ED visits, hospitalizations, and deaths to cases observed during the Omicron period, disease severity indicators were also lower among hospitalized COVID-19 patients, including ICU admission, receipt of IMV, length of stay, and in-hospital death. This apparent decrease in disease severity is likely related to multiple factors, most notably increases in vaccination coverage among eligible persons, and the use of vaccine boosters among recommended subgroups."¹¹⁷

CDC.gov, February 4, 2022, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), "Clinical Characteristics and Outcomes Among Adults Hospitalized with Laboratory-Confirmed SARS-CoV-2 Infection During Periods of B.1.617.2 (Delta) and B.1.1.529 (Omicron) Variant Predominance — One Hospital, California, July 15–September 23, 2021, and December 21, 2021–January 27, 2022."¹¹⁸

"Among adults hospitalized with SARS-CoV-2 infection at a single hospital in California during the Omicron-predominant period (December 21, 2021–January 27, 2022), COVID-19 vaccination, particularly receipt of a booster dose, was associated with lower likelihood of ICU admission, and, among adults aged ≥ 65 years, lower likelihood of death while hospitalized. Compared with the period of Delta predominance, a higher proportion of adults hospitalized during Omicron predominance were fully vaccinated.

Consistent with earlier findings, Omicron-period hospitalizations were associated with a lower likelihood of ICU admission, IMV, and death while hospitalized, compared with Delta-period hospitalizations. However, the proportion requiring ICU admission and IMV did not differ significantly when stratified by vaccination status, suggesting that much of the lower disease severity observed during Omicron predominance might be driven by increased population-level vaccine-conferred immunity. These findings support the continued importance of COVID-19 vaccination, including booster doses, in mitigating the risk of severe illness associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection.

From mid-July through mid-December 2021, the proportion of fully vaccinated adults in Los Angeles County increased nearly 20%, from approximately 65% to 77%, but the proportion of SARS-CoV-2 hospitalizations occurring in fully vaccinated adults increased almost 60%, from approximately 25% to 40%. The increase in the percentage of fully vaccinated Hispanic adults and the decrease in the percentage of non-Hispanic White adults hospitalized between the two periods likely reflect increased vaccination coverage among Hispanic persons during fall 2021.

Increases in infections among vaccinated persons during the period of Omicron predominance were likely driven both by waning vaccine-derived immunity over

¹¹⁷ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104e4.htm?s_cid=mm7104e4_w

¹¹⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7106e2.htm>

time and by relative resistance to vaccine neutralization in the Omicron variant compared with the Delta variant. This is consistent with the observed decline in effectiveness of 2-dose vaccination against COVID-19 hospitalization during the Omicron period. A previous study also found that, compared with the period of Delta predominance, the period of Omicron predominance in Los Angeles County was associated with a decrease in the degree of protection against COVID-19 and hospitalization. Despite this, COVID-19 vaccination, including a booster dose, was associated with lower likelihood of ICU admission during the Omicron period, and lower likelihood of death among adults aged ≥ 65 years, who are at higher risk for severe outcomes when hospitalized with COVID-19.

Early reports suggest that the Omicron variant has lower replication competence in lung parenchyma, possibly contributing to a decreased severity of illness compared with earlier variants (3). However, among patients hospitalized for COVID-19 during the early Omicron predominant period, most had lower respiratory symptoms and abnormal chest imaging, approximately one third had hypoxemia, and 10% required IMV. These findings demonstrate that, despite observed changes compared with Delta, Omicron variant infection still causes severe lower respiratory illness. Similar data on patient symptoms were not available for Delta-period hospitalizations. However, fewer Omicron-period patients received COVID-19-directed therapies, which might suggest lower proportion with hypoxemia, compared with Delta-period patients. Alternatively, this change might have been driven by changes in prescribing practices or other unmeasured factors.

Approximately 20% of SARS-CoV-2 admissions during early Omicron predominance were likely for reasons other than COVID-19, a proportion even higher among young and vaccinated adults. Given high rates of SARS-CoV-2 community transmission, this is not unexpected."

Journal of the American Medical Association, Jamanetwork.com, February 17, 2022, Research Letter, "Estimates of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant Severity in Ontario, Canada."¹¹⁹

"Results

We identified 37 296 Omicron cases that met eligibility criteria, of which 9087 (24.4%) were matched 1:1 with Delta cases (Table 1). The median follow-up time was 24 days (IQR, 21.0-28.0). There were 53 hospitalizations (0.6%) and 3 deaths (0.03%) among matched Omicron cases compared with 129 hospitalizations (1.4%) and 26 deaths (0.3%) among matched Delta cases. The HR for hospitalization or death among Omicron cases compared with Delta cases was 0.41 (95% CI, 0.30-0.55; 0.33 [95% CI, 0.19-0.56] in sensitivity analysis), while the HR for intensive care unit admission or death was 0.19 (95% CI, 0.09-0.39), and the HR for death was 0.12 (95% CI, 0.04-0.37). Stratified estimates of Omicron severity by age, sex, and vaccination status all indicated reduced Omicron severity

¹¹⁹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2789408>

(Table 2)."

Medrxiv.com, February 22, 2022, " COVID infection rates, clinical outcomes, and racial/ethnic and gender disparities before and after Omicron emerged in the US."¹²⁰

NOTE: This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed [what does this mean?]. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.

COVID infection rates, clinical outcomes, and racial/ethnic and gender disparities before and after Omicron emerged in the US

Method We performed a retrospective cohort study of a large, geographically diverse database of patient electronic health records (EHRs) in the US. The study population comprised 881,473 patients who contracted SARS-CoV-2 infection for the first time between 9/1/2021-1/16/2022, including 147,964 patients infected when Omicron predominated (Omicron cohort), 633,581 when Delta predominated (Delta cohort) and another 99,928 infected when the Delta predominated but just before the Omicron variant was detected in the US (Delta-2 cohort).

We examined monthly incidence rates of COVID-19 infections stratified by age groups, gender, race and ethnicity, compared severe clinical outcomes including emergency department (ED) visits, hospitalizations, intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, and mechanical ventilation use between propensity-score matched Omicron and Delta cohorts stratified by age groups (0-4, 5-17, 18-64 and ≥ 65 years), and examined racial/ethnic and gender differences in severe clinical outcomes.

Findings Among 147,964 infected patients in the Omicron cohort (average age: 39.1 years), 56.7% were female, 2.4% Asian, 21.1% Black, 6.2% Hispanic, and 51.8% White. The monthly incidence rate of COVID infections (new cases per 1000 persons per day) was 0.5-0.7 when Delta predominated, and rapidly increased to 3.8-5.2 when Omicron predominated.

In January 2022, the infection rate was highest in children under 5 years (11.0) among all age groups, higher in Black than in White patients (14.0 vs. 3.8), and higher in Hispanic than in non-Hispanic patients (8.9 vs. 3.1). After propensity-score matching for demographics, socio-economic determinants of health, comorbidities and medications, risks for severe clinical outcomes in the Omicron cohort were significantly lower than in the Delta cohort: ED visits: 10.2% vs. 14.6% (risk ratio or RR: 0.70 [0.68-0.71]); hospitalizations: 2.6% vs. 4.4% (RR: 0.58 [0.55-0.60]); ICU admissions: 0.47% vs. 1.00% (RR: 0.47 [0.43-0.51]); mechanical ventilation: 0.08% vs. 0.3% (RR: 0.25 [0.20-0.31]).

Similar reduction in disease severity was observed for all age groups. There were

¹²⁰ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.02.21.22271300v1>

significant racial/ethnic and gender disparities in severe clinical outcomes in the Omicron cohort, with Black, Hispanic patients having more ED visits and ICU admissions than White and non-Hispanic patients, respectively and women had fewer hospitalization and ICU admission than men.

New England Journal of Medicine, February 23, 2022, "Population Immunity and Covid-19 Severity with Omicron Variant in South Africa."¹²¹

RESULTS

Samples were obtained from 7010 participants, of whom 1319 (18.8%) had received a Covid-19 vaccine. The seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 IgG ranged from 56.2% (95% confidence interval [CI], 52.6 to 59.7) among children younger than 12 years of age to 79.7% (95% CI, 77.6 to 81.5) among adults older than 50 years of age.

Vaccinated participants were more likely to be seropositive for SARS-CoV-2 than unvaccinated participants (93.1% vs. 68.4%). Epidemiologic data showed that the incidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection increased and subsequently declined more rapidly during the fourth wave than it had during the three previous waves. The incidence of infection was decoupled from the incidences of hospitalization, recorded death, and excess death during the fourth wave, as compared with the proportions seen during previous waves.

Medical News Today, March 1, 2022, BA.2 does not seem to be more severe."¹²²

A recent laboratory study suggests that a BA.2 infection may cause more severe illness than BA.1. The study showed it replicated much faster than BA.1 in cultures of upper and lower respiratory tract cells.

Subsequent experiments in hamsters also suggested that BA.2 had a superior ability to replicate and spread in the lungs than BA.1. It also caused more lung damage and had greater adverse effects on lung function in these experiments.

However, data on disease severity in humans so far suggest that the BA.2 variant does not cause more severe illness than BA.1.

A study that researchers conducted in South Africa evaluated the risk of hospitalization due to BA.1 and BA.2 infections between December 5, 2021, and January 29, 2022, when the prevalence of BA.2 infections in the country grew from 3% to 80%. Upon analyzing the outcome of 95,470 COVID-19 cases, the study found that a similar proportion of individuals with BA.1 and BA.2 infections required hospitalization.

A statement by the World Health Organization (WHO), citing this study and other

¹²¹ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2119658>

¹²² <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/omicron-subvariants-ba-1-vs-ba-2-what-the-latest-data-says#BA.2-seems-to-be-more-transmissible>

unpublished real-world evidence from the United Kingdom and Denmark, noted that BA.2 variant may not differ from BA.1 in its ability to cause severe illness in humans.

The discrepancy between the laboratory study and real-world clinical data could be due to the inability of the animal model to recapitulate all aspects of COVID-19 in humans.

Dr. Larry Corey, a virologist at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, said, "Currently, there is no evidence either from South Africa or places in the U.S. that suggest differences in the clinical spectrum and course between BA.1 and BA. 2."

"The BA.2 epidemic has had a 6–8-week later start, so severity data do lag behind. But to date, there is no evidence of significant differences, and cross-protection between the two variants seems in the short term quite high," he told MNT.

British Medical Journal, March 9, 2022, "Clinical severity of, and effectiveness of mRNA vaccines against, covid-19 from omicron, delta, and alpha SARS-CoV-2 variants in the United States: prospective observational study."¹²³

"Results

Effectiveness of the mRNA vaccines to prevent covid-19 associated hospital admissions was 85% (95% confidence interval 82% to 88%) for two vaccine doses against the alpha variant, 85% (83% to 87%) for two doses against the delta variant, 94% (92% to 95%) for three doses against the delta variant, 65% (51% to 75%) for two doses against the omicron variant; and 86% (77% to 91%) for three doses against the omicron variant. In-hospital mortality was 7.6% (81/1060) for alpha, 12.2% (461/3788) for delta, and 7.1% (40/565) for omicron.

Among unvaccinated patients with covid-19 admitted to hospital, severity on the WHO clinical progression scale was higher for the delta versus alpha variant (adjusted proportional odds ratio 1.28, 95% confidence interval 1.11 to 1.46), and lower for the omicron versus delta variant (0.61, 0.49 to 0.77). Compared with unvaccinated patients, severity was lower for vaccinated patients for each variant, including alpha (adjusted proportional odds ratio 0.33, 0.23 to 0.49), delta (0.44, 0.37 to 0.51), and omicron (0.61, 0.44 to 0.85)."

....

Among unvaccinated adults admitted to hospital with covid-19, the delta variant was associated with the most severe disease, followed by the alpha variant and then the omicron variant. Among unvaccinated patients admitted to hospital, covid-19 due to the omicron variant was about 79% and 61% as severe as covid-19 due to the alpha and delta variants, respectively.

The omicron variant was, however, associated with substantial critical illness and

¹²³ <https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj-2021-069761>

death, with 15% of patients admitted to hospital with the omicron variant (vaccinated and unvaccinated) progressing to invasive mechanical ventilation, and 7% dying in hospital."

2. National and State COVID-19 Case, Death and Hospitalization Statistics.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC): U.S. and Virginia Statistics

- a. **As of June 21, 2020**, in the U. S. there were 1,248,029 total cases reported (32,411 new cases compared to June 20, 2020) of COVID-19 and 119,615 deaths (560 new deaths compared to June 20, 2020).¹²⁴ Confirmed COVID-19 cases in Virginia totaled 57,994 with 1,611 deaths.
- b. **As of December 26, 2020**, in the U. S. there were 18,730,806 total cases reported (146,512 new cases compared to December 25, 2020) and 329,592 deaths (1,692 new deaths compared to December 25, 2020). Confirmed COVID-19 cases in Virginia totaled 333,576 with 4,854 deaths.¹²⁵
- c. **As of June 11, 2021**, in the U. S. there were 33,246,578 total cases reported (current 7-day average of 13,997 cases), 2,243,371 hospitalizations (current 7-day average of 2,239), and 596,059 total deaths (current 7-day moving average of 347 deaths).¹²⁶ **As of June 14, 2021**, cases in Virginia totaled 677,812¹²⁷ (7-day average 140 cases), 30,182 hospitalizations (7-day average of 10 hospitalizations),¹²⁸ with 11,318 deaths (7-day average of 3 deaths).¹²⁹
- d. **As of August 11, 2021**, in the U. S. there were 36,268,057 total cases reported (current 7-day average of 114,190 cases), 2,507,105 hospitalizations (current 7-day average of 10,072), and 617,096 total deaths (current 7-day moving average of 407 deaths).¹³⁰ **As of August 10, 2021**, cases in Virginia totaled 725,971¹³¹ (7-day average 1,700 cases), 32,399 hospitalizations (7-day average of 37 hospitalizations),¹³² with 11,625 deaths (7-day average of 5 deaths).¹³³
- e. **As of February 2, 2022**, in the U. S. there were 75,605,991 total cases reported (current 7-day average of 378,015 cases), 4,317,927 hospitalizations (current 7-day average of 16,068), and 892,442 total deaths (current 7-day moving average of 2,404 deaths).¹³⁴

¹²⁴ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

¹²⁵ *Id.*

¹²⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

¹²⁷ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia/>

¹²⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹²⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

¹³¹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia/>

¹³² <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³³ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

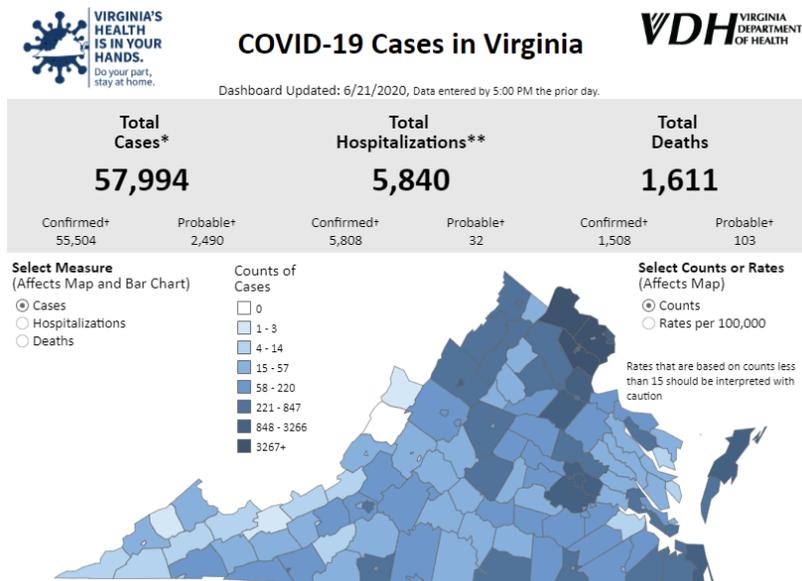
As of February 5, 2022, cases in Virginia totaled 1,598,416¹³⁵ (7-day average 4,468 cases¹³⁶), 47,208 hospitalizations (7-day average of 28 hospitalizations¹³⁷), with 17,393 deaths (7-day average of 8 deaths¹³⁸).

f. As of March 14, 2022, in the U. S. there were 79,248,406 total cases reported (current 7-day average of 37,147 cases), 4,558,964 hospitalizations (current 7-day average of 3,113), and 961,620 total deaths (current 7-day moving average of 1,180 deaths).¹³⁹

As of March 14, 2022, cases in Virginia totaled 1,654,893¹⁴⁰ (7-day average 959.1 cases¹⁴¹), 47,948 hospitalizations (7-day average of 520 hospitalizations¹⁴²), with 19,315 deaths (7-day average of 36 deaths¹⁴³).

National and Virginia Charts

Virginia Cases by County as of June 21, 2020.¹⁴⁴



¹³⁵ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia/>

¹³⁶ Week ending 2.5.2022, 20,102 confirmed cases and 11,172 probable cases = total of 31,274, 7-day rolling average of 4,468, <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³⁷ Week ending 2.5.2022, 179 confirmed hospitalizations and 20 probable hospitalizations = total of 199, 7-day rolling average of 28, <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³⁸ Week ending 2.5.2022, 45 confirmed deaths and 14 probable deaths = total of 59, 7-day rolling average of 8, <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹³⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

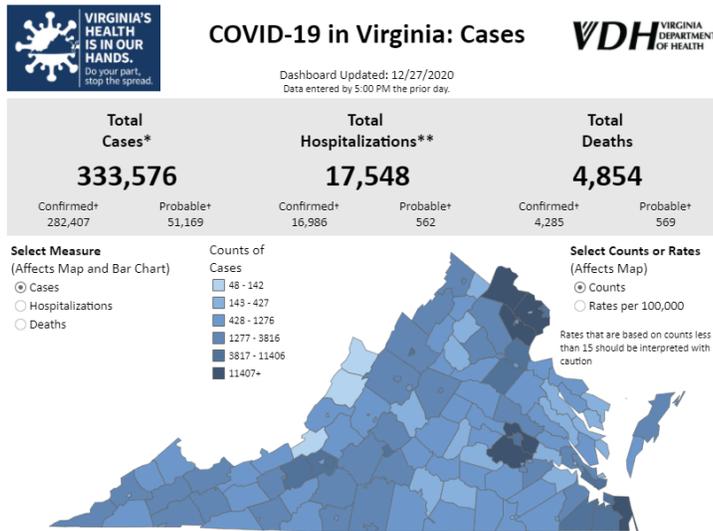
¹⁴¹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹⁴² <https://www.vhha.com/communications/virginia-hospital-covid-19-data-dashboard/>

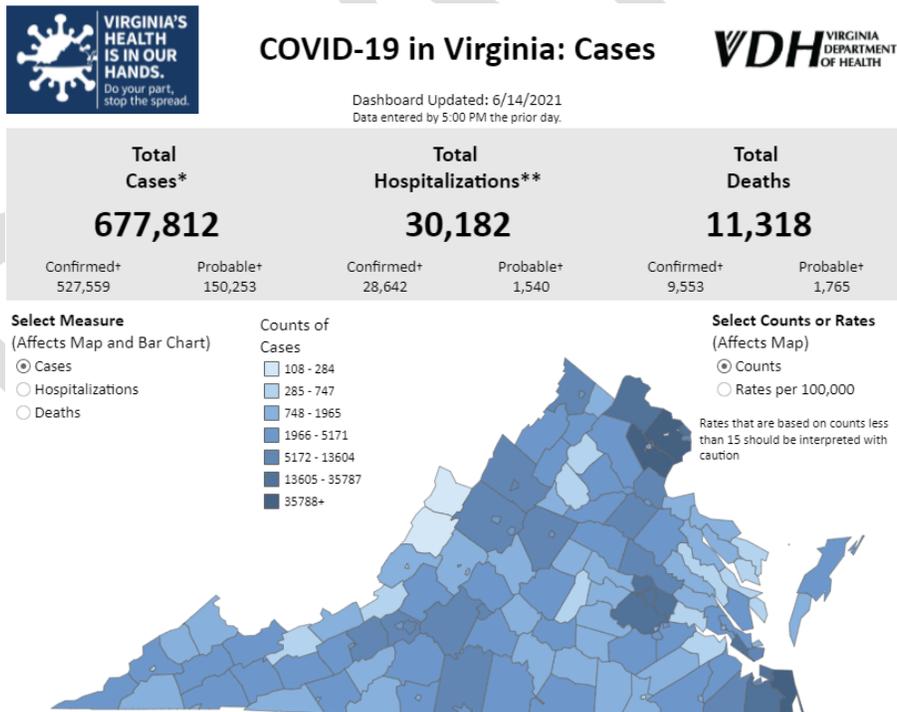
¹⁴³ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

Virginia Cases by County as of December 26, 2020.¹⁴⁵



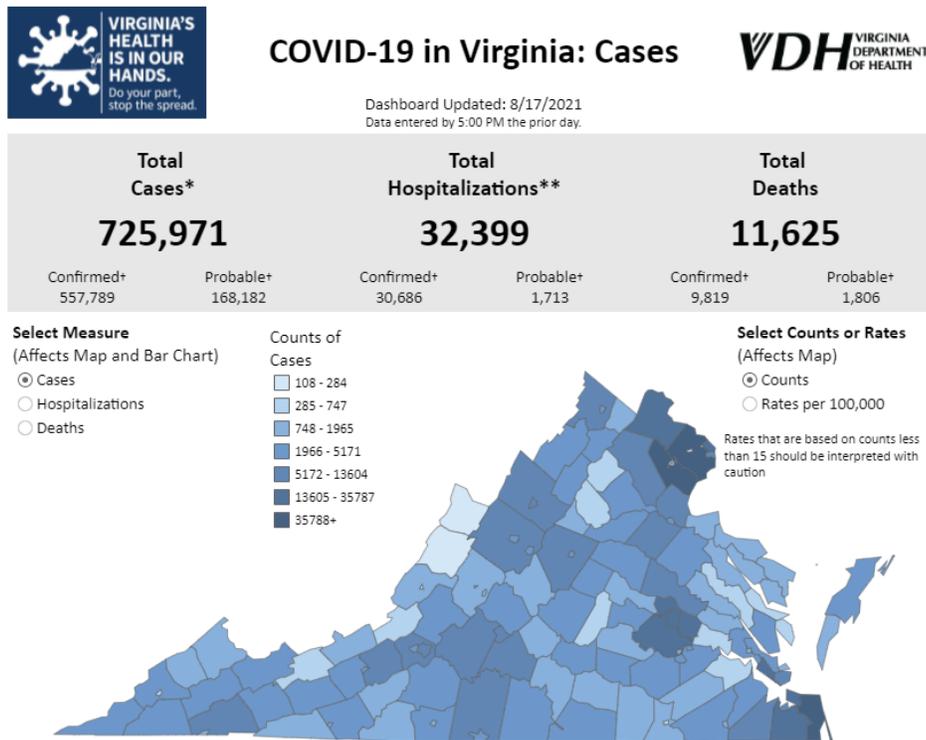
Virginia Cases by County as of June 14, 2021.¹⁴⁶



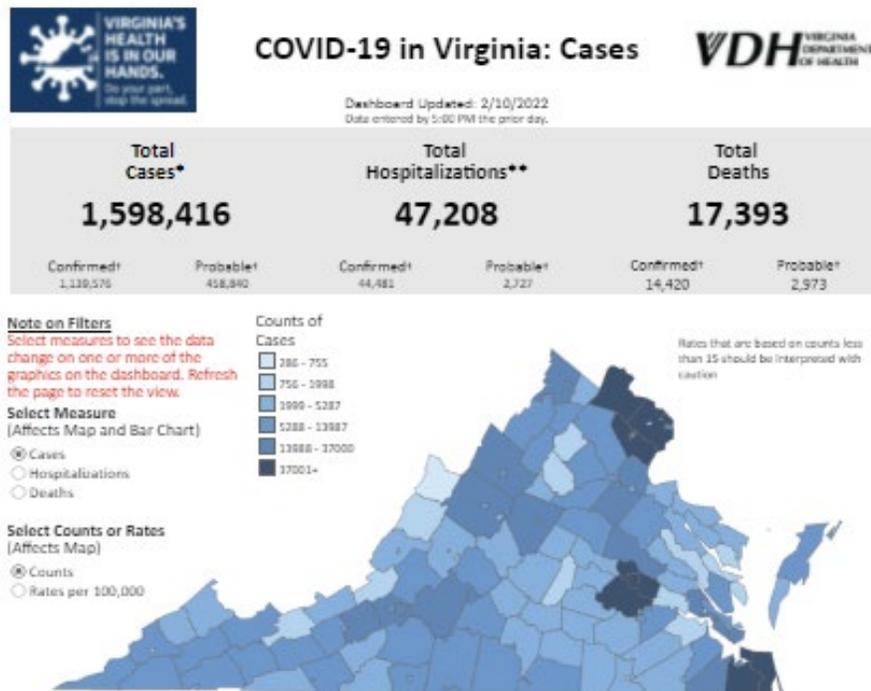
¹⁴⁵ *Id.*

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

Virginia Cases by County as of August 17, 2021.¹⁴⁷



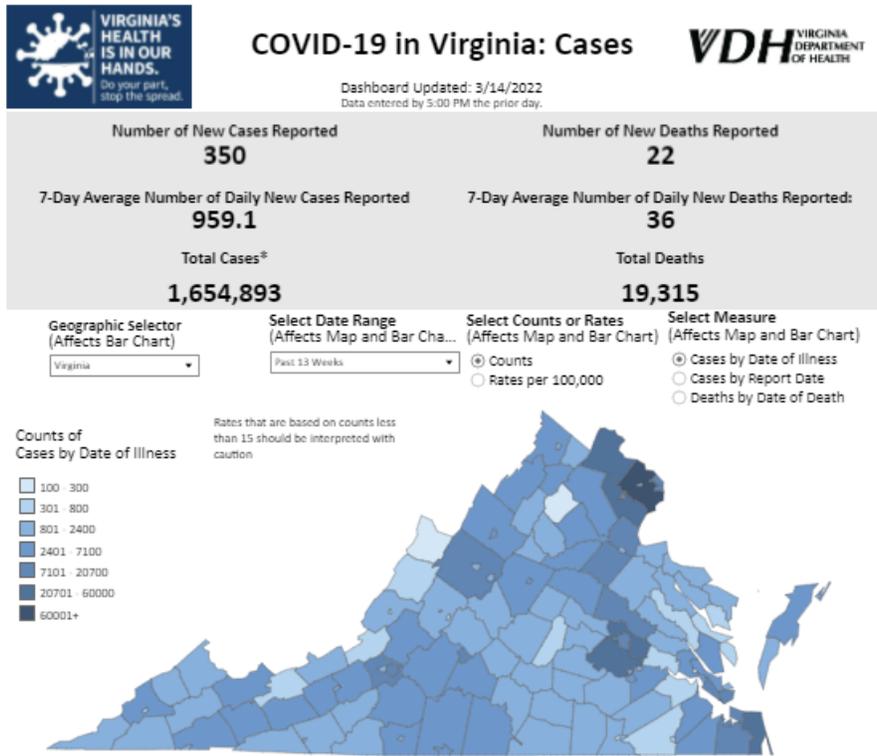
Virginia Cases by County as of February 10, 2022.¹⁴⁸



¹⁴⁷ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

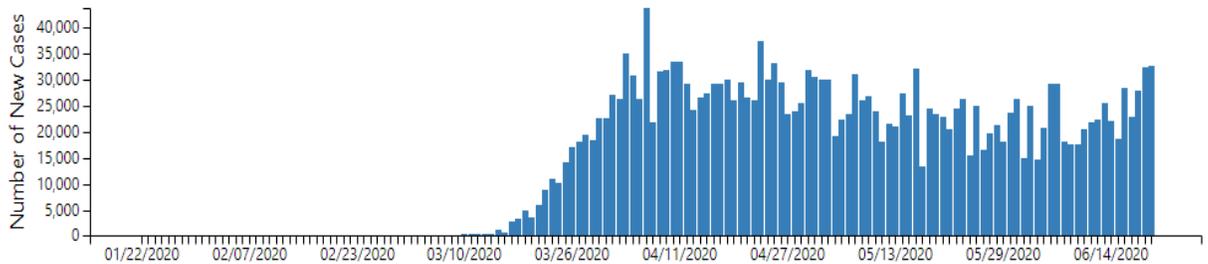
Virginia Cases by County as of March 11, 2022.¹⁴⁹



National COVID-19 Cases as of June 21, 2020.¹⁵⁰

New Cases by Day

The following chart shows the number of new COVID-19 cases reported each day in the U.S. since the beginning of the outbreak. Hover over the bars to see the number of new cases by day.



¹⁴⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

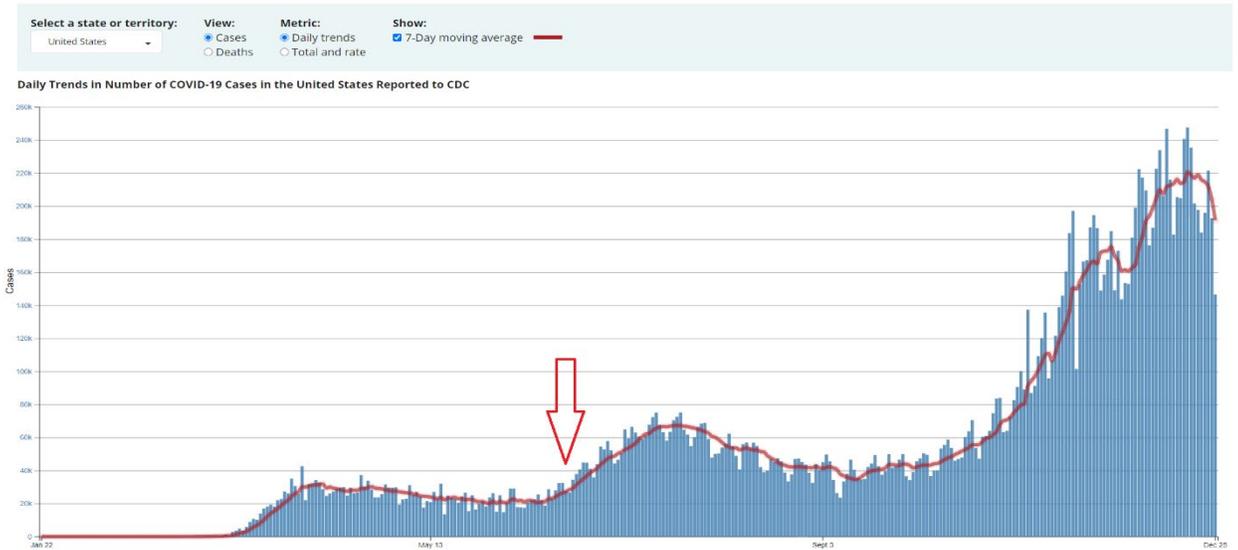
¹⁵⁰ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

Red arrows indicate dates of Board actions on COVID-19.

National COVID-19 Cases as of December 26, 2020.¹⁵¹

Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory

Reported to the CDC by State or Territory



National COVID-19 Cases as of June 11, 2021.¹⁵²

Daily Trends in COVID-19 Cases in the United States Reported to CDC

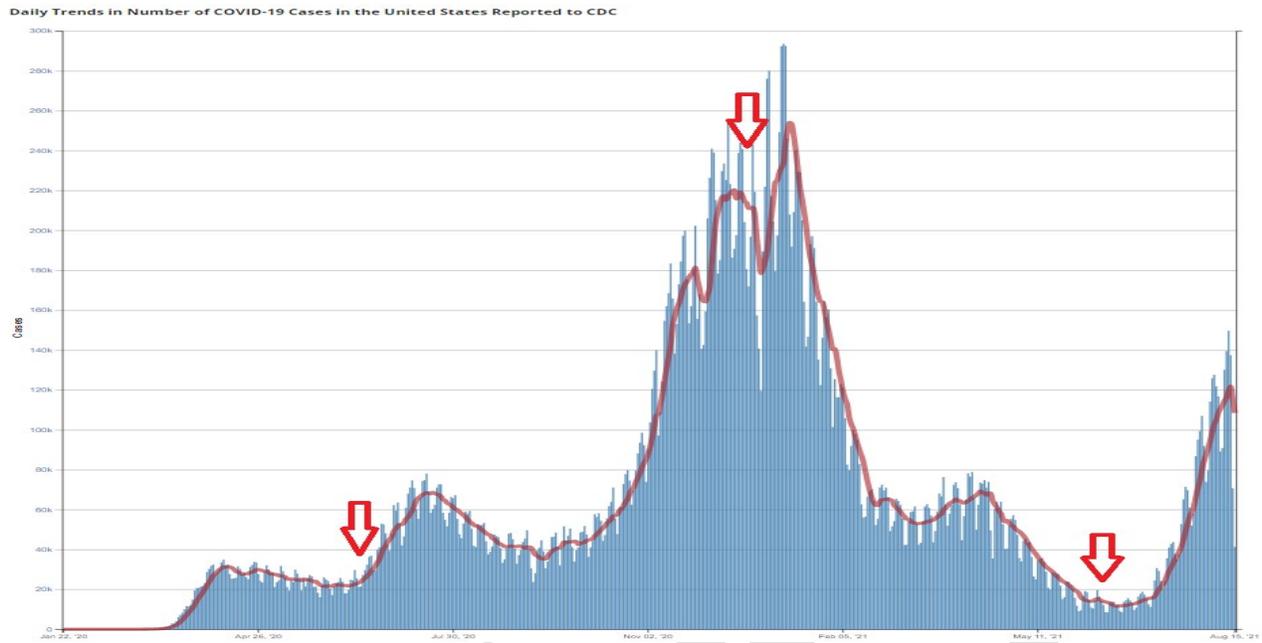
— 7-Day moving average



¹⁵¹ *Id.*

¹⁵² https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\32669\Agenda_DOLI_32669_v6.pdf

National COVID-19 Cases as of August 17, 2021.¹⁵³



National COVID-19 Cases as of February 4, 2022.¹⁵⁴

Daily Trends in COVID-19 Cases in the United States Reported to CDC

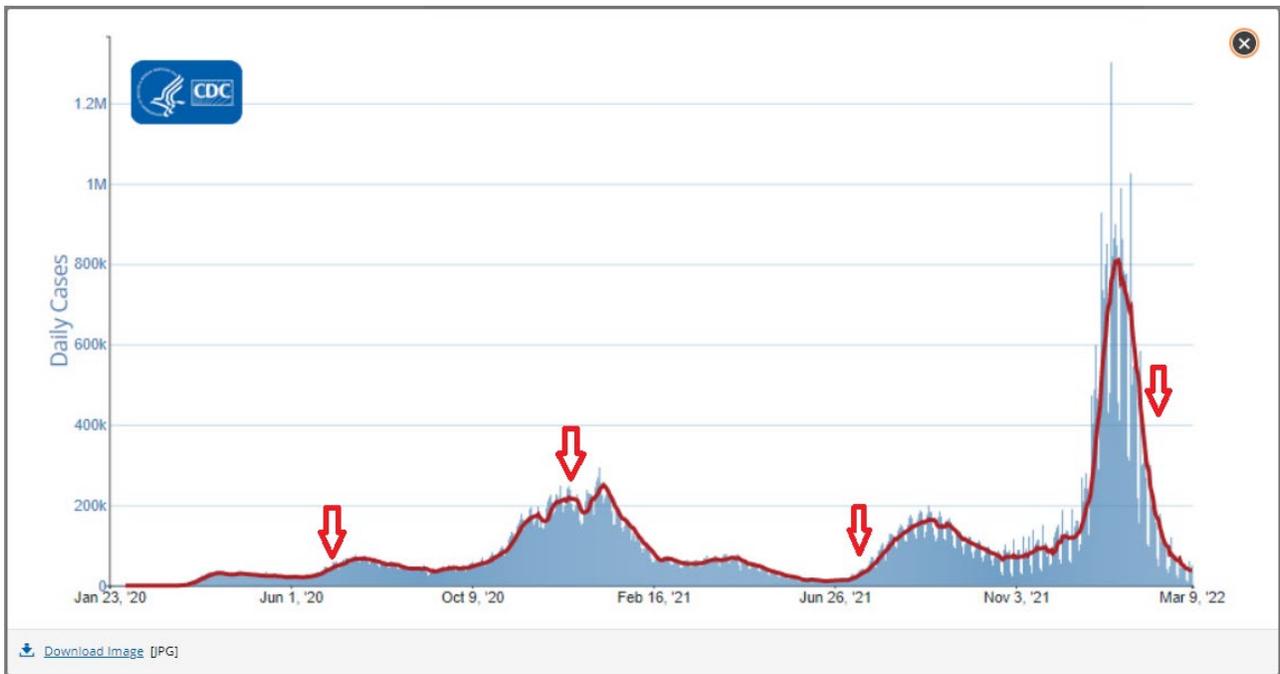
— 7-Day moving average



¹⁵³ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailytrendscases

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

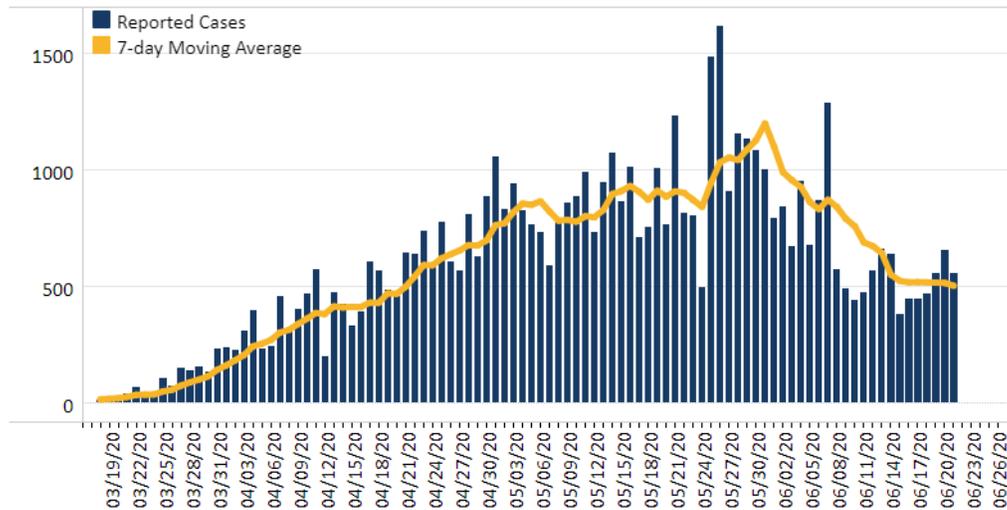
National COVID-19 Cases as of March 14, 2022.¹⁵⁵



Virginia Cases as of June 21, 2020.¹⁵⁶

Total Cases by Date Reported

Number of new cases VDH reported by day.



¹⁵⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

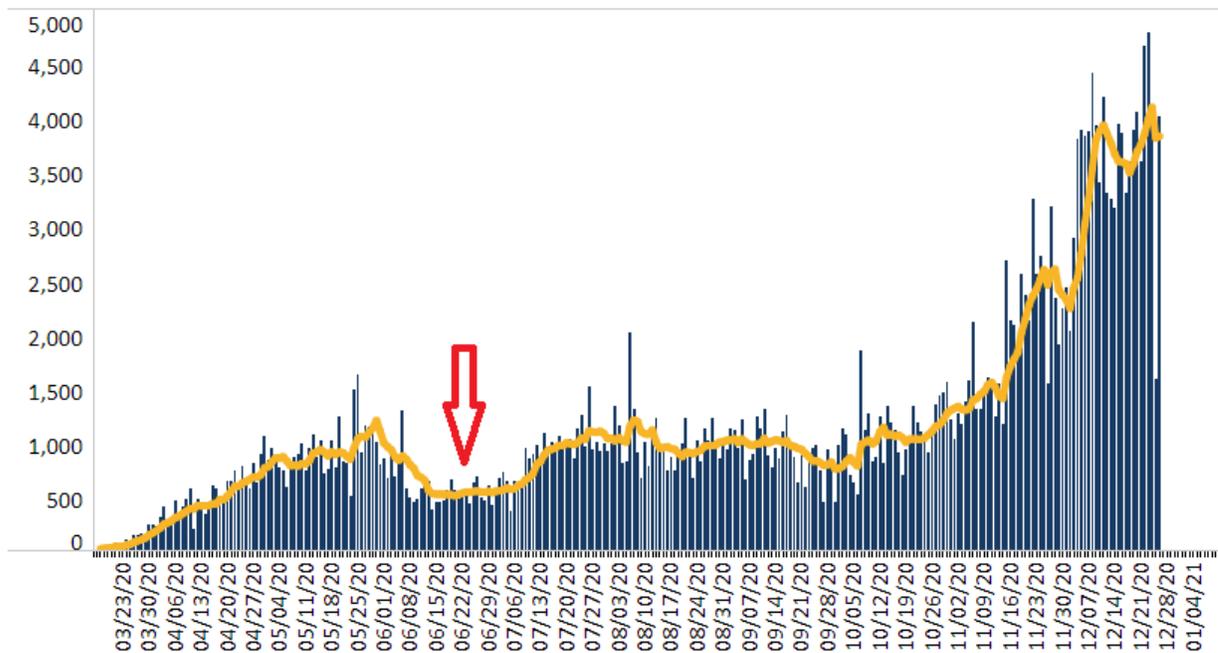
¹⁵⁶ <https://www.dohi.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

Virginia Cases as of December 26, 2020.¹⁵⁷

Total Cases by Date Reported - Virginia

Number of new cases VDH reported by day.

■ Reported Cases
■ 7-day Moving Average



Virginia Cases as of June 14, 2021.¹⁵⁸

Number of Cases by Date of Symptom Onset

Number of cases by the day closest to when symptoms began.

Select Region

(Affects Bar Chart)

(All)

Select Date Range

(Affects Bar Chart)

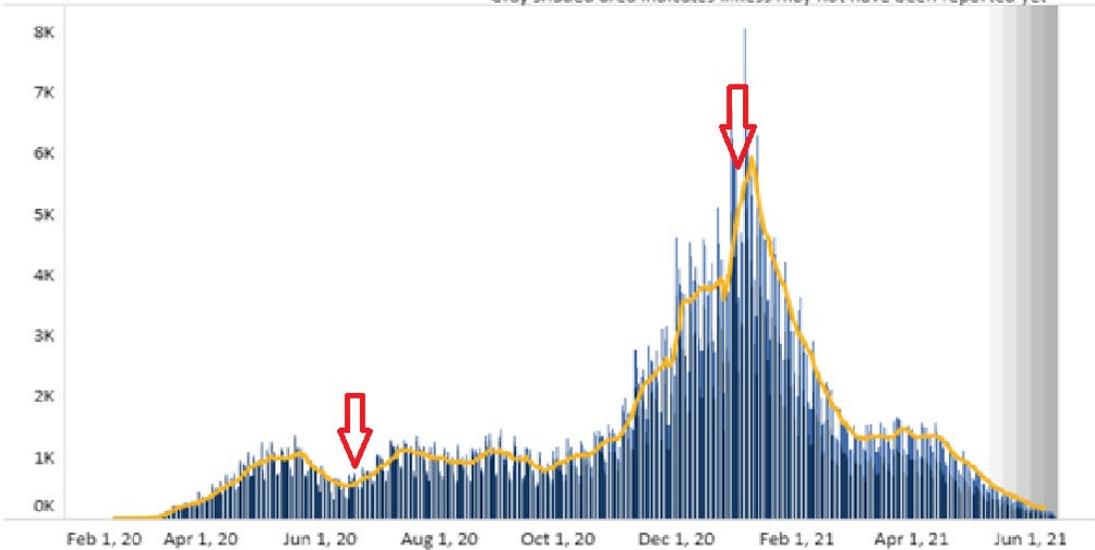
All Reporting

■ Confirmed Cases

■ Probable Cases

■ 7-day moving average

Gray shaded area indicates illness may not have been reported yet



¹⁵⁷ *Id.*

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

Virginia Cases as of August 17, 2021.¹⁵⁹

Number of Cases by Date of Symptom Onset

Number of cases by the day closest to when symptoms began.

Select Region

(Affects Bar Chart)

(All)

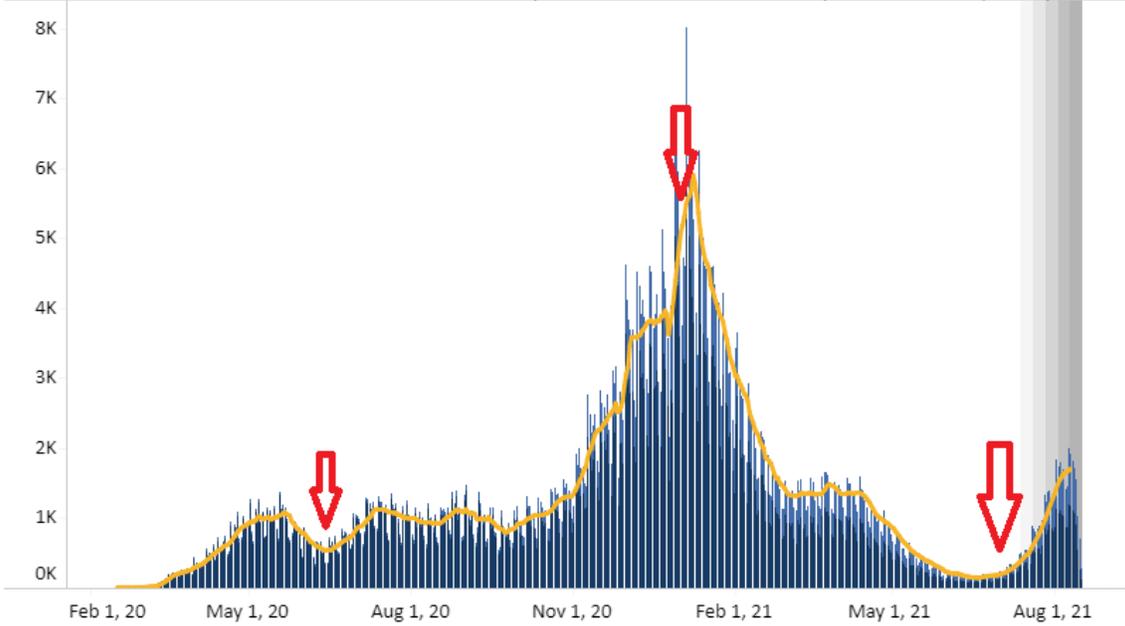
Select Date Range

(Affects Bar Chart)

All Reporting

- Confirmed Cases
- Probable Cases
- 7-day moving average

Gray shaded area indicates illness may not have been reported yet



Virginia Cases as of February 10, 2022.¹⁶⁰

Number of Cases by Date of Symptom Onset

Number of cases by the day closest to when symptoms began.

VDH Locality Name

(Affects Bar Chart)

All

Daily counts by Report Date can be found on the Locality dashboard

Select Date Range

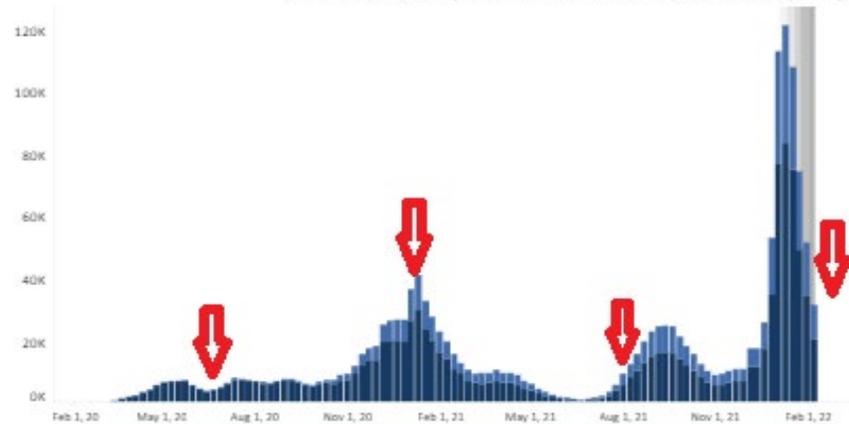
(Affects Bar Chart)

All Reporting

Confirmed Cases

Probable Cases

Gray shaded area indicates illness may not have been reported yet

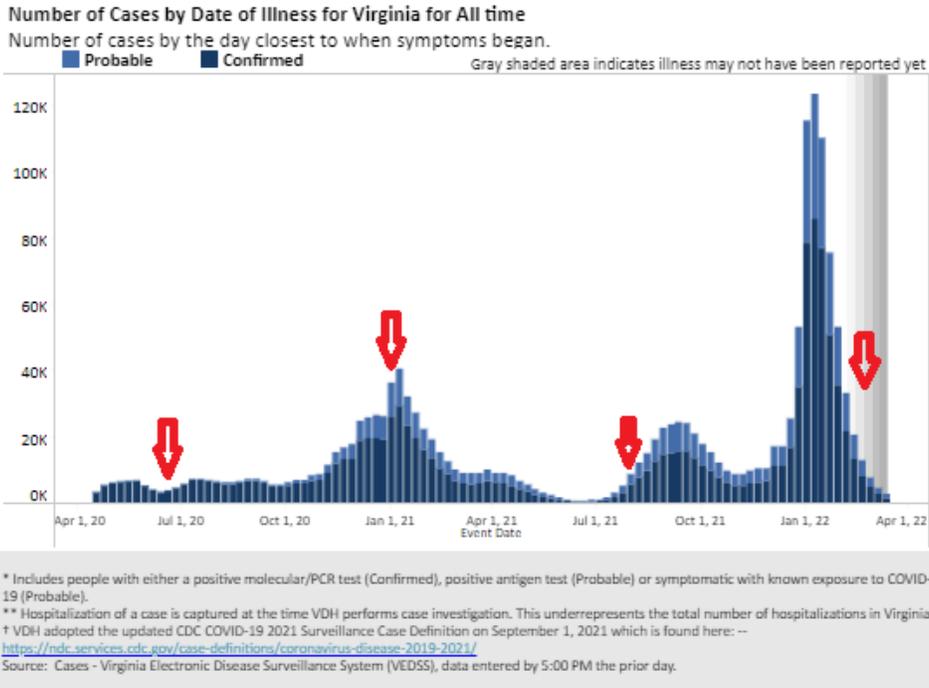


* Includes people with either a positive molecular/PCR test (Confirmed), positive antigen test (Probable) or symptomatic with known exposure to COVID-19 (Probable).
 ** Hospitalization of a case is captured at the time VDH performs case investigation. This underrepresents the total number of hospitalizations in Virginia.
 † VDH adopted the updated CDC COVID-19 2021 Surveillance Case Definition on September 1, 2021 which is found here: – <https://cdc.gov/eids/cdc/case-definitions/coronavirus-disease-2019-2021/>
 Source: Cases - Virginia Electronic Disease Surveillance System (VEDSS), data entered by 5:00 PM the prior day.

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

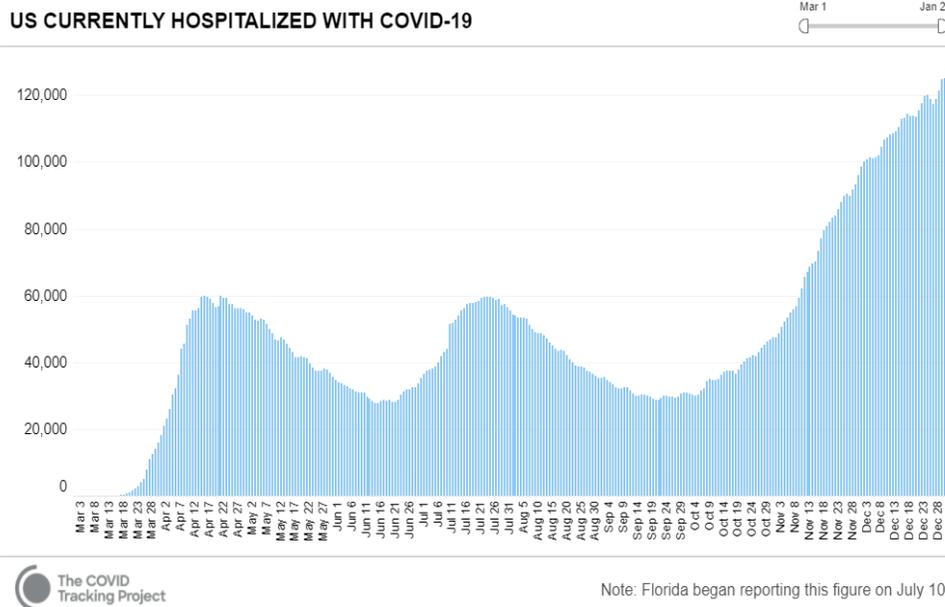
¹⁶⁰ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

Virginia Cases as of March 14, 2022.¹⁶¹



Hospitalizations.¹⁶²

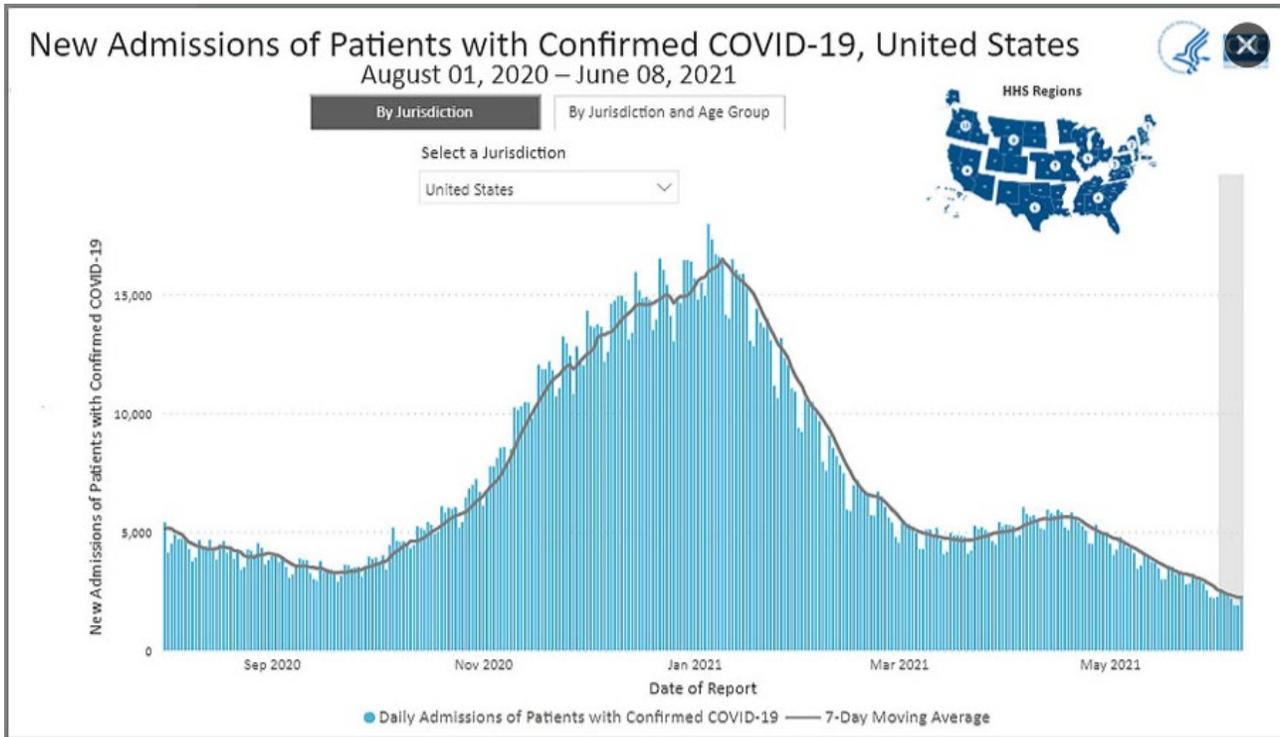
U. S. Hospitalizations through January 2, 2021.



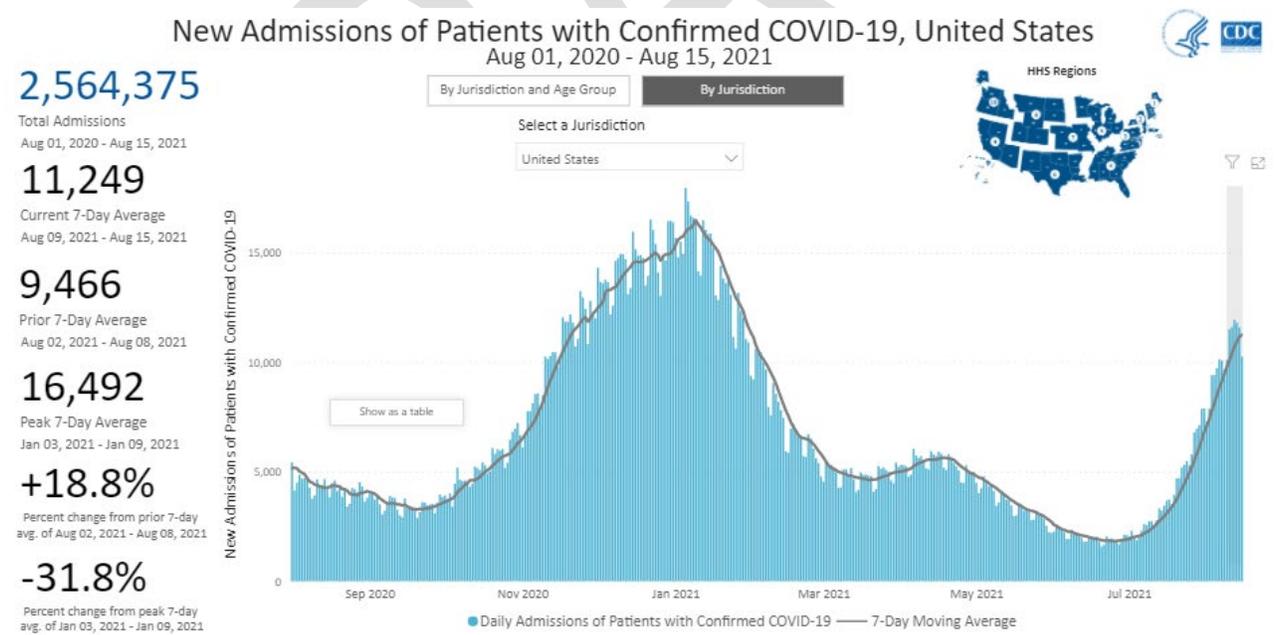
¹⁶¹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

¹⁶² <https://covidtracking.com/data/charts/us-currently-hospitalized>

U. S. Hospitalizations August 1, 2020 through June 8, 2021.¹⁶³



U. S. Hospitalizations from August 1, 2020 through August 15, 2021.¹⁶⁴



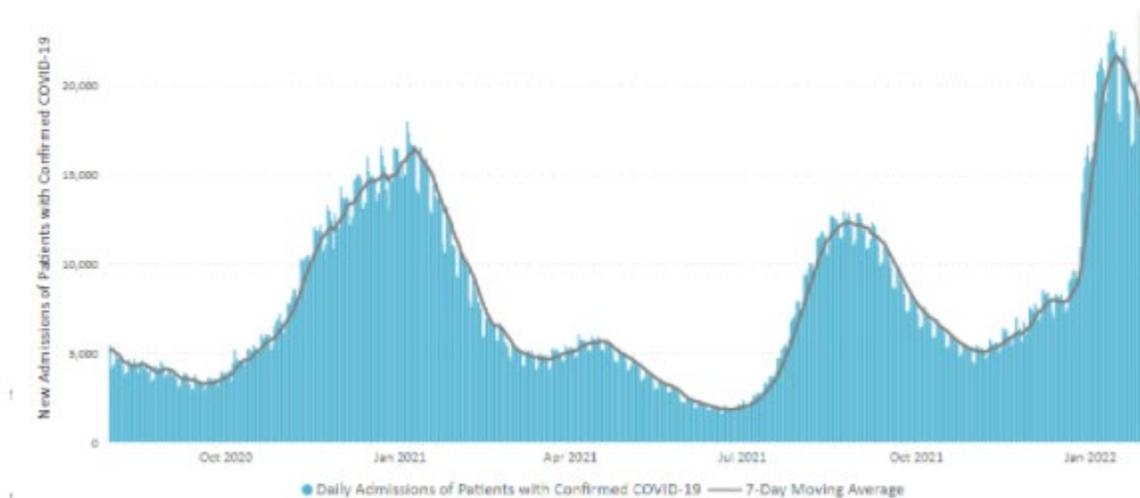
Based on reporting from all hospitals (N=5,251). Due to potential reporting delays, data reported in the most recent 7 days (as represented by the shaded bar) should be interpreted with caution. Small shifts in historic data may occur due to changes in the CMS Provider of Services file, which is used to identify the cohort of included hospitals. Data since December 1, 2020 have had error correction methodology applied. Data prior to this date may have anomalies that are still being resolved. Data prior to August 1, 2020 are unavailable.
Last Updated: Aug 17, 2021
Unified Hospital Dataset, White House COVID-19 Team, Data Strategy and Execution Workgroup

¹⁶³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

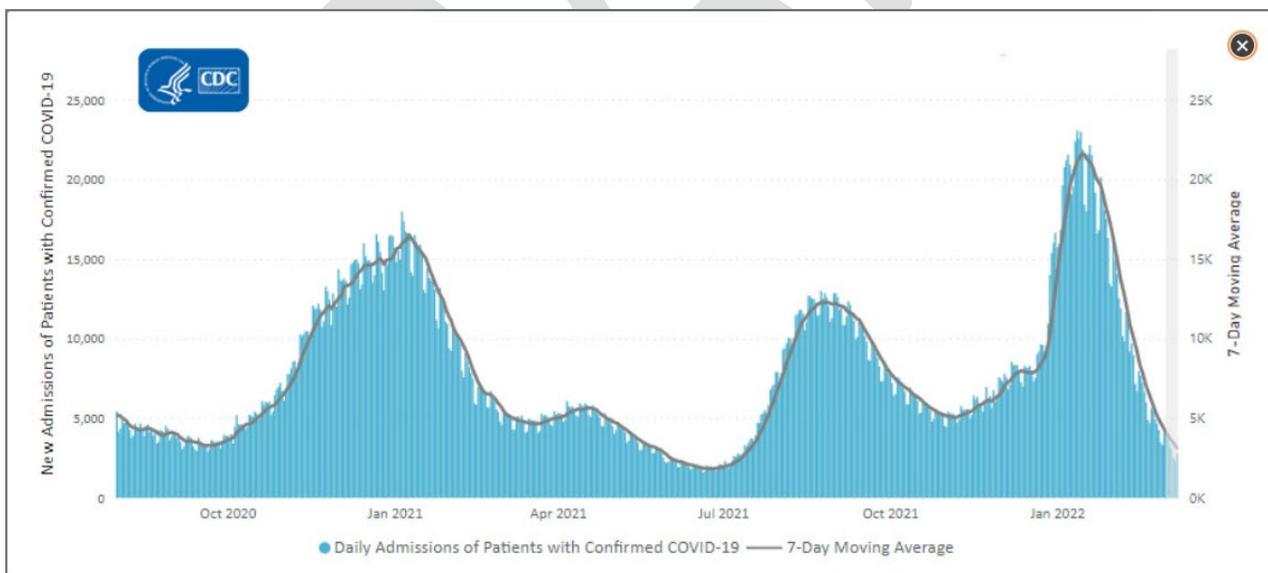
¹⁶⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

U. S. Hospitalizations from August 1, 2020 through February 1, 2022.¹⁶⁵

Daily Trends in Number of New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions in the United States



U. S. Hospitalizations from August 1, 2020 through March 14, 2022.¹⁶⁶

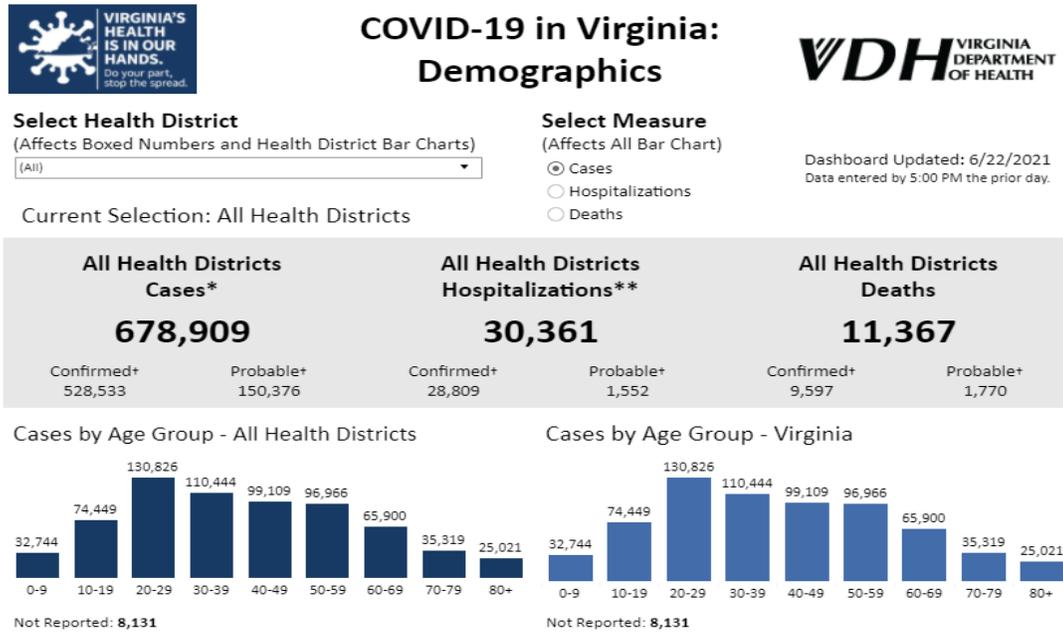


¹⁶⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

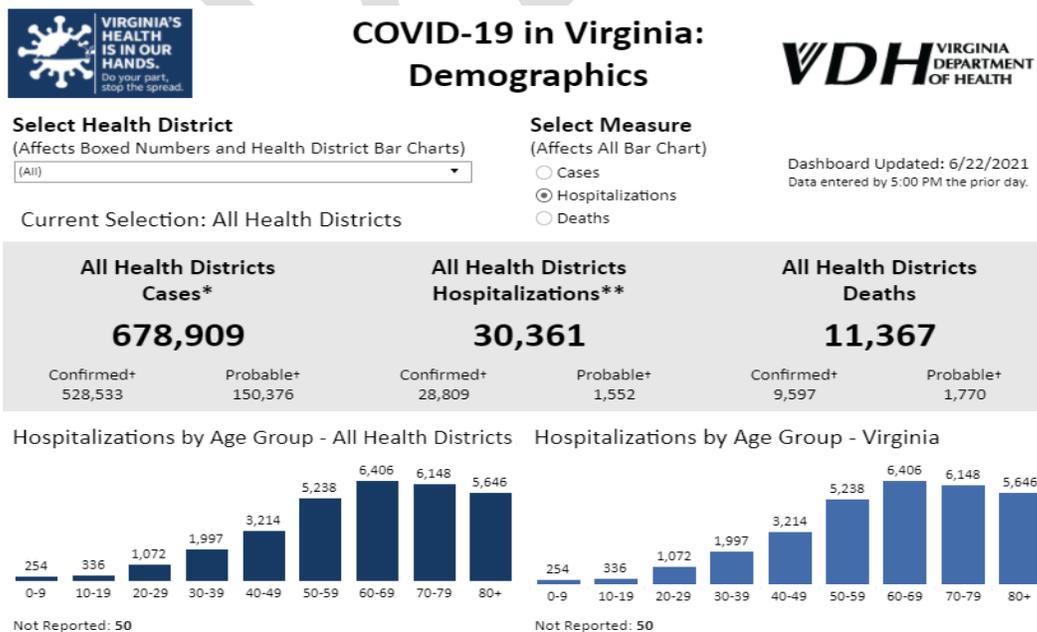
¹⁶⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

COVID-19 in Virginia Demographics as of June 22, 2021.¹⁶⁷

Approximately 74.1% of COVID-19 cases occurred in the working age population of 20-69.



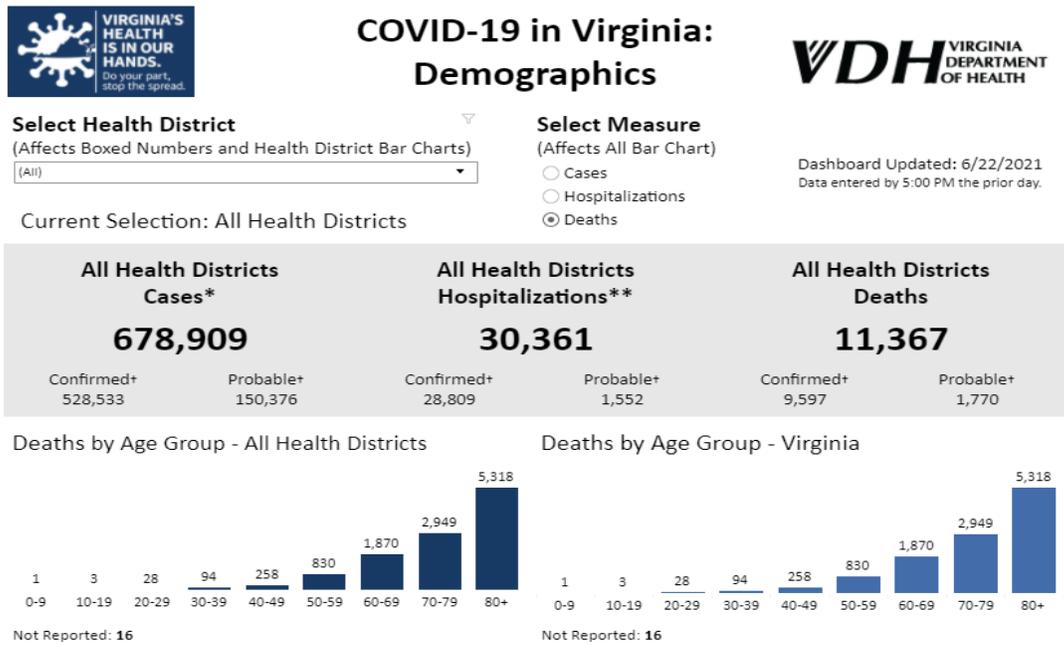
Approximately 59.0% of COVID-19 hospitalizations occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of June 22, 2021.¹⁶⁸



¹⁶⁷ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

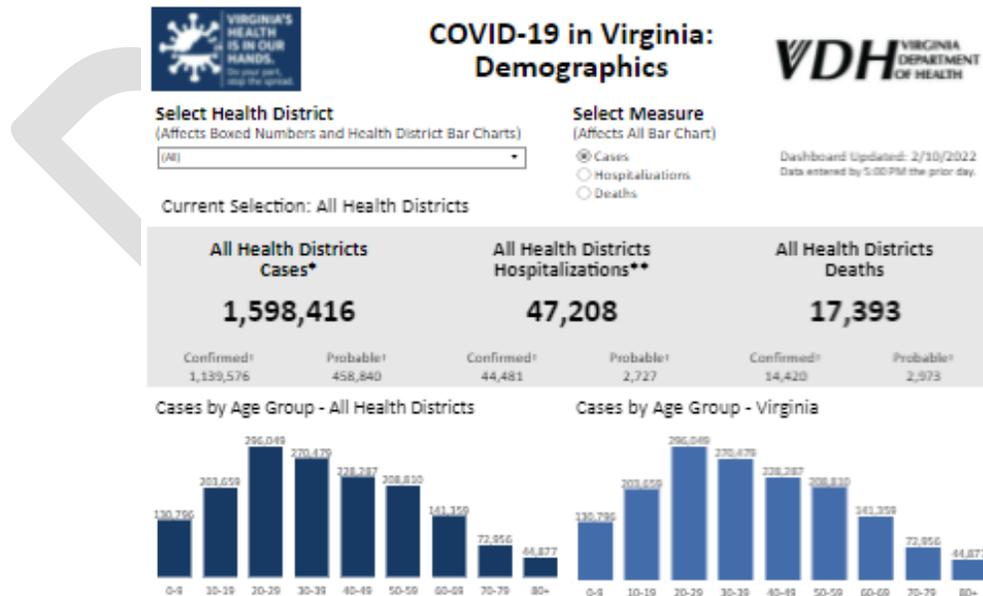
¹⁶⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

Approximately 27.1% of COVID-19 deaths occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of June 22, 2021.¹⁶⁹



COVID-19 in Virginia Demographics as of February 10, 2022.¹⁷⁰

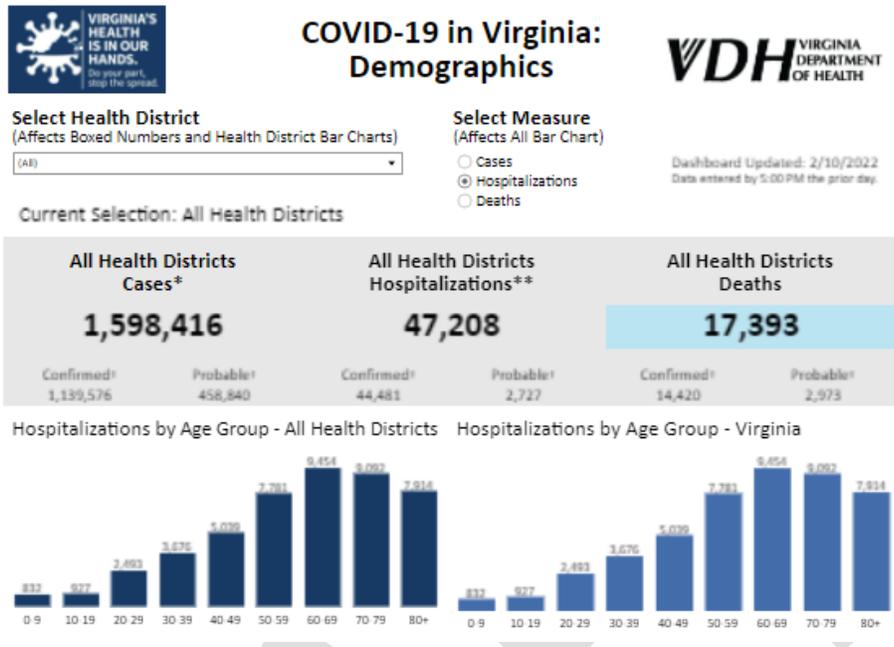
Approximately 71.6% of COVID-19 cases occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of February 10, 2022.



¹⁶⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

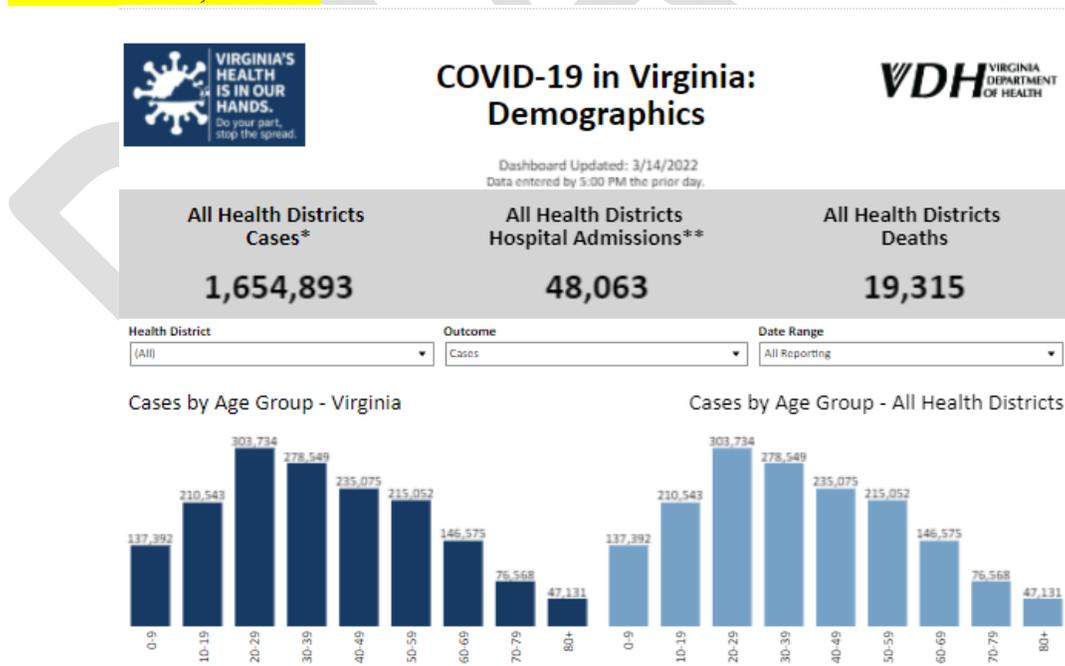
¹⁷⁰ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

Approximately 60.2% of COVID-19 hospitalizations occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of February 10, 2022.¹⁷¹



COVID-19 in Virginia Demographics as of March 14, 2022.

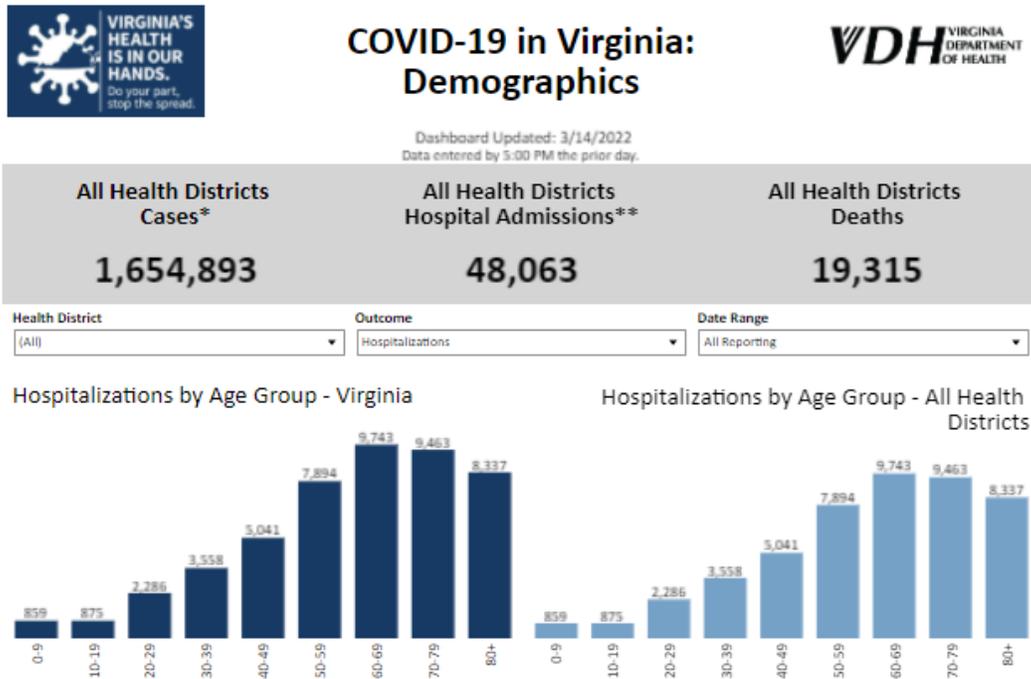
Approximately 71.4% of COVID-19 cases occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of March 14, 2022.¹⁷²



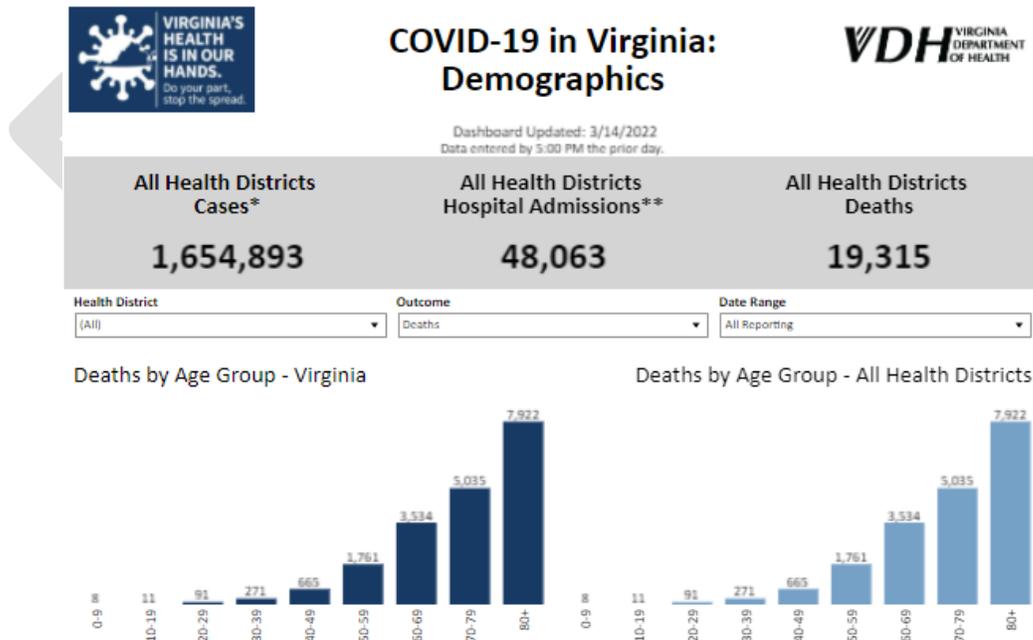
¹⁷¹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

¹⁷² <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

Approximately **59.4% of COVID-19 hospitalizations** occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of March 14, 2022.¹⁷³



Approximately **32.8% of COVID-19 deaths** occurred in the working age population of 20-69 as of March 14, 2021.¹⁷⁴

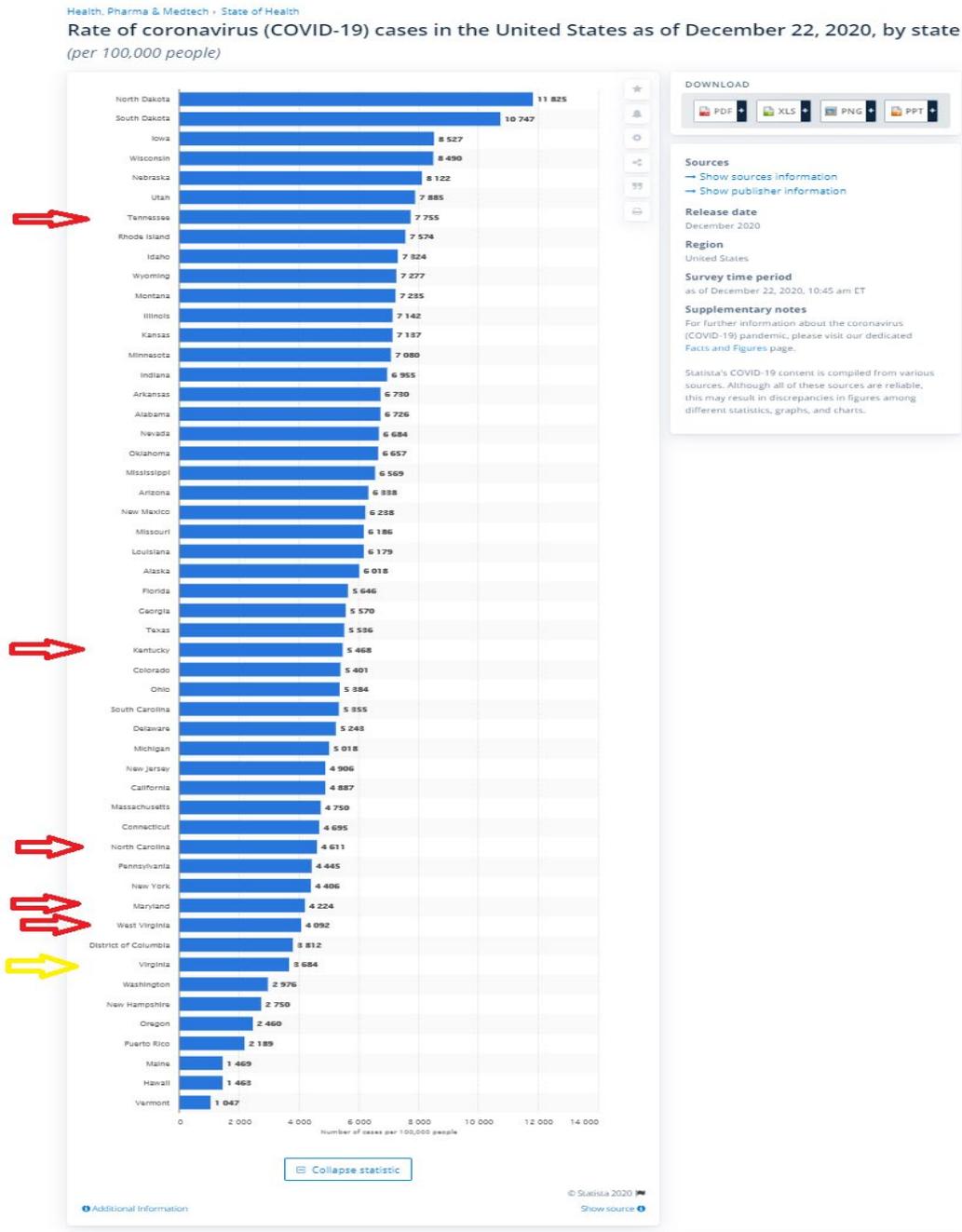


¹⁷³ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-demographics/>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of December 22, 2020 ¹⁷⁵

- 7 - Tennessee
- 29 - Kentucky
- 39 - North Carolina
- 42 - Maryland
- 43 - West Virginia
- 45 - Virginia

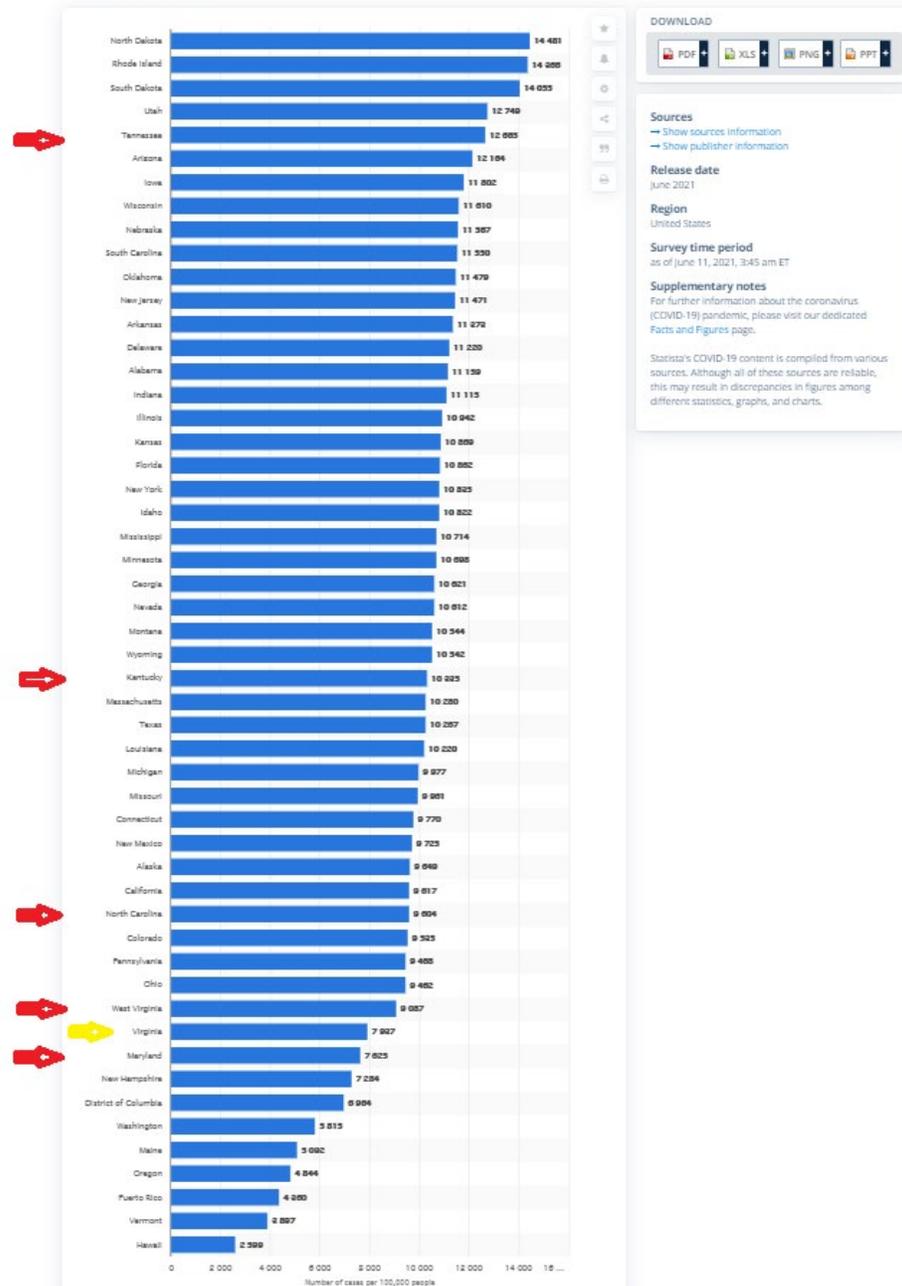


¹⁷⁵ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of June 11, 2021 ¹⁷⁶

- 5 - Tennessee
- 28 - Kentucky
- 38 - North Carolina
- 42 - West Virginia
- 43 - Virginia
- 44 - Maryland

Rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in the United States as of June 11, 2021, by state
(per 100,000 people)



¹⁷⁶ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of August 13, 2021 ¹⁷⁷

- 5 - Tennessee
- 28 - Kentucky
- 34 - North Carolina
- 42 - West Virginia
- 43 - Virginia
- 44 - Maryland

Rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in the United States as of August 13, 2021, by state
(per 100,000 people)



¹⁷⁷ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of February 10, 2022 ¹⁷⁸

- 4 - Tennessee
- 7 - Kentucky
- 14 - West Virginia
- 25 - North Carolina
- 45 - Virginia
- 49 - Maryland



¹⁷⁸ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of March 14, 2022 ¹⁷⁹

- 4 - Tennessee
- 6 - Kentucky
- 8 - West Virginia
- 25 - North Carolina
- 44 - Virginia
- 50 - Maryland



¹⁷⁹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

Summary Table of COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings for Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia, Total Cases Per 100K.¹⁸⁰

Data point dates:

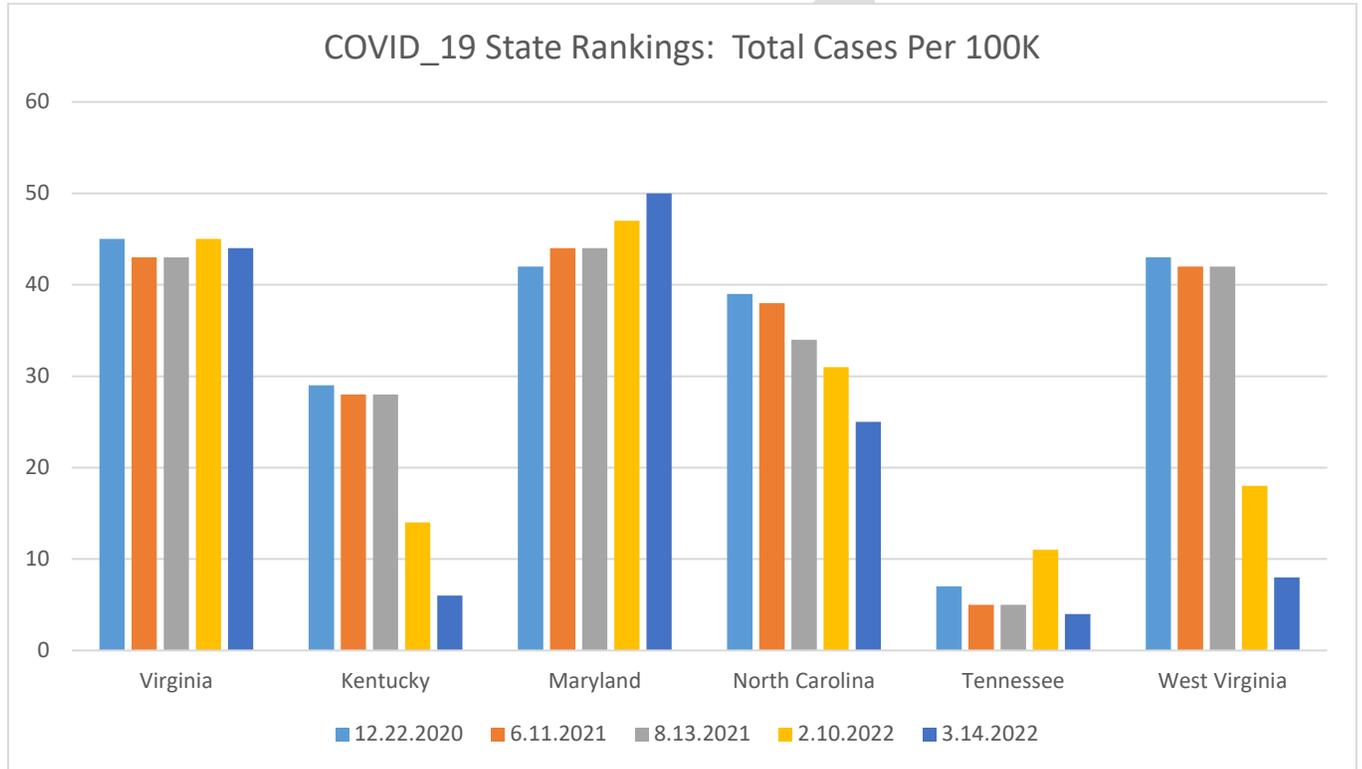
December 22, 2020

June 11, 2021

August 13, 2021

February 10, 2022

March 14, 2022



¹⁸⁰ *Id.*

COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings: Average Daily Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days as of December 26, 2020. ¹⁸¹

- 1 - Tennessee
- 6 - West Virginia
- 19 - North Carolina
- 25 - Kentucky
- 30 - Virginia
- 39 - Maryland

Data Table for Average Daily Cases per 100k in Last 7 Days

CDC | Updated: Dec 27 2020 2:05PM

State/Territory ↕	Average Daily Cases per 100k in Last 7 Days ↕
Tennessee	119.7
California	95.7
Arizona	88
Oklahoma	83.2
Indiana	72.5
West Virginia	71.4
Alabama	68.6
Utah	67.3
Arkansas	65.6
Nevada	64
Delaware	63.6
New York*	63.6
Pennsylvania	63.2
Georgia	62.6
Ohio	61.4
Massachusetts	59.7
Mississippi	57.9
Rhode Island	57.4
North Carolina	56.8
New Mexico	56.5
Idaho	53.7
South Carolina	50.9
New Jersey	50.6
New York City*	50.5
Kentucky	48
Florida	46.4
Kansas	45.4
New Hampshire	45.4
Illinois	44.8
Virginia	44.7
Nebraska	43.7
Louisiana	43.2
Texas	42.7
South Dakota	42.4
Colorado	42.2
Wyoming	40.9
Missouri	40.8
Connecticut	39.9
Maryland	38.7
Wisconsin	37.7
Montana	37.6
Iowa	37
Alaska	34.3
Maine	31.2
Minnesota	30.2
Michigan	29
District of Columbia	27.7
North Dakota	26.7
Washington	26.5
Oregon	22.1
Puerto Rico	21.4
Vermont	14.3
Virgin Islands	9.1
Hawaii	8.5
Guam	6.3
Northern Mariana Islands	1.8
American Samoa	0
Federated States of Micronesia	0
Palau	0
Republic of Marshall Islands	0

¹⁸¹ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings: Average Daily Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days as of June 14, 2021.¹⁸²

- 11 - Kentucky
- 21 - West Virginia
- 39 - Tennessee
- 42 - North Carolina
- 47 - Virginia
- 49 - Maryland

Data Table for Cumulative Cases per 100k in Last 7 Days

CDC | Data as of: June 14, 2021 1:13 PM ET. Posted: June 14, 2021 2:13 PM ET [Download Data](#)

State/Territory ↕	7-Day Case Rate per 100,000 ↕
Virgin Islands	89.8
Colorado	73.2
Wyoming	67.7
Missouri	64.2
Utah	59.8
Washington	51.8
Arkansas	50.7
Florida	50.6
Nevada	43.2
Oregon	42.1
Kentucky	40.7
Arizona	40.3
Montana	39.6
Indiana	33.9
Idaho	32.1
Alabama	31.1
Louisiana	29.7
North Dakota	29.5
Texas	29
Mississippi	28.9
West Virginia	28.1
Kansas	26.6
Hawaii	25.6
Maine	25.4
Oklahoma	25.1
South Carolina	24.3
Georgia	24.1
Delaware	23.8
Pennsylvania	22
New Mexico	20.5
Ohio	20.5
Alaska	19.6
American Samoa	N/A
Guam	20.5
New York City*	20.2
Minnesota	19
New Jersey	18.7
Illinois	18.6
Tennessee	18.3
Michigan	18.2
Iowa	17.4
North Carolina	16.5
New York*	15.7
Rhode Island	14
Wisconsin	12.5
Massachusetts	11.5
Virginia	11.5
Puerto Rico	11.1
Maryland	11
New Hampshire	11
Nebraska	10.6
South Dakota	10.1
California	9.7
Vermont	9.3
Connecticut	9.2
District of Columbia	8.8
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A
Northern Mariana Islands	0
Palau	0
Republic of Marshall Islands	0

¹⁸² https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings: Average Daily Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days as of August 16, 2021. ¹⁸³

- 10 - Kentucky
- 11 - Tennessee
- 29 - North Carolina
- 42 - Virginia
- 43 - West Virginia

Data Table for Cumulative Cases per 100k in Last 7 Days

CDC | Data as of: August 16, 2021 1:36 PM ET. Posted: August 16, 2021 4:59 PM ET

State/Territory †	7-Day Case Rate per 100,000 ‡
Florida	704.5
Louisiana	642
Mississippi	540.5
Arkansas	514.6
Alabama	356
Texas	337.2
Hawaii	324.6
Missouri	317.3
Georgia	306
Kentucky	306
Tennessee	291.8
South Carolina	289.7
Virgin Islands	285.6
Arizona	266.6
Wyoming	248.3
Oklahoma	231.3
Kansas	227.3
Oregon	223.5
Alaska	213.1
Puerto Rico	197
Idaho	186.7
Washington	186.4
New Mexico	186.3
Nevada	180.1
Indiana	179.9
Guam	176.8
Delaware	176
New York City*	171.2
North Carolina	164.4
Montana	161.3
New York (Level of Community Transmission)*	151.8
Ohio	149.1
Utah	142.3
New York*	137.1
California	136.6
Wisconsin	136.1
Rhode Island	132.9
Iowa	132.7
New Jersey	131.9
North Dakota	130.4
Illinois	127
Virginia	124.1
West Virginia	119.7
Minnesota	112.1
District of Columbia	109
Pennsylvania	108.1
Maryland	99
Massachusetts	91.8
Connecticut	81.5
Maine	77.1
Colorado	76.9
South Dakota	74.8
Michigan	70.5
New Hampshire	68.9
Vermont	66.5
Nebraska	39.6
Northern Mariana Islands	0
Palau	0
Republic of Marshall Islands	0
American Samoa	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A



¹⁸³ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings: Average Daily Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days as of February 10, 2022. ¹⁸⁴

- 5 - Kentucky
- 6 - West Virginia
- 12 - Tennessee
- 21 - North Carolina
- 31 - Virginia
- 58 - Maryland

Sign up to receive the COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review.

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[View Historic Case and Death Data](#) [Download Chart](#)

Data Downloads and Footnotes

Expand each accordion to view data table and download data

Data Table for Cumulative Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days

CDC | Data as of: January 24, 2022 1:07 PM ET. Posted: January 24, 2022 3:23 PM ET

[Download Data](#)

State/Territory #	7-Day Case Rate per 100,000 #
Wisconsin	2,552.1
Rhode Island	2,350.9
Utah	2,350.8
Hawaii	2,257.3
Alaska	2,225.8
Pulau	2,131.7
Oklahoma	2,085.5
Kansas	2,064
North Dakota	2,033.3
California	1,977
Arizona	1,961.3
Guam	1,940.8
Arkansas	1,904.1
Vermont	1,872.3
New Mexico	1,859.7
Alabama	1,787.5
West Virginia	1,772.9
New Hampshire	1,610.3
Massachusetts	1,591.6
Mississippi	1,571
Wyoming	1,538
South Dakota	1,528.2
Nebraska	1,506.5
Indiana	1,465.3
Illinois	1,440.9
Washington	1,440.5
Missouri	1,441
Colorado	1,426.5
Texas	1,421.1
Michigan	1,403.5
Minnesota	1,391.7
Louisiana	1,363.8
Oregon	1,363.3
Nevada	1,355
North Carolina	1,302
Delaware	1,292.4
South Carolina	1,288.2
Tennessee	1,252.7
Kentucky	1,204.6
Iowa	1,171.2
Virginia	1,131.5
Georgia	1,095.9
Florida	1,062.6
Ohio	1,044.3
Idaho	962.5
Connecticut	956.5
Montana	937.1
Puerto Rico	923.8
New York City*	917.9
Pennsylvania	888.8
New York (Level of Community Transmission)*	882
New York*	854.7
New Jersey	824
District of Columbia	755.1
Northern Mariana Islands	615.2
Virgin Islands	600.2
Maryland	504.7
Maine	449.5
Republic of Marshall Islands	0
American Samoa	N/A
Federated States of Micronesia	N/A



¹⁸⁴ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings: Average Daily Cases per 100K in Last 7 Days as of March 14, 2022. ¹⁸⁵

- 6 - Kentucky
- 7 - West Virginia
- 19 - Virginia
- 23 - North Carolina
- 39 - Tennessee
- 53 - Maryland

Data Table for Cumulative Cases per 100k in Last 7 Days

CDC | Data as of: March 13, 2022 6:29 PM ET. Posted: March 13, 2022 7:55 PM ET

State/Territory ↕	7-Day Case Rate per 100,000 ↕
Northern Mariana Islands	588.2
Guam	480.7
Idaho	304.9
Palau	255.4
Alaska	224.5
Kentucky	221.6
West Virginia	145
Colorado	132.3
Vermont	128.7
Maine	118.6
Arkansas	114.4
Texas	109.5
Washington	105.6
Nevada	105
Rhode Island	97.7
Arizona	90
New Mexico	88.4
New Jersey	83.8
Virginia	83.4
California	82
Oklahoma	80.7
District of Columbia	77.2
North Carolina	73.8
Minnesota	72
New Hampshire	71.5
Massachusetts	71.2
Illinois	67.2
Delaware	66
North Dakota	65.6
New York*	65.1
Oregon	62.7
Michigan	59.7
Alabama	58.3
New York City*	57.9
Georgia	57.8
Missouri	57.8
Montana	57.2
Wyoming	55
Tennessee	53.4
Wisconsin	52.9
Pennsylvania	51.1
Connecticut	47.2
Mississippi	45.4
Hawaii	43.9
Indiana	43.6
Kansas	42.7
Puerto Rico	41.7
Ohio	40.6
Florida	39.7
Utah	39.6
Iowa	39
South Dakota	36.9
Maryland	35.4
South Carolina	35.4
Nebraska	33.7
Louisiana	29.7
Virgin Islands	21.6

¹⁸⁵ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

Summary Table of COVID-19 State/Territory Rankings for Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia, Average Daily Cases Per 100K in Last 7 Days.¹⁸⁶

Data point dates:

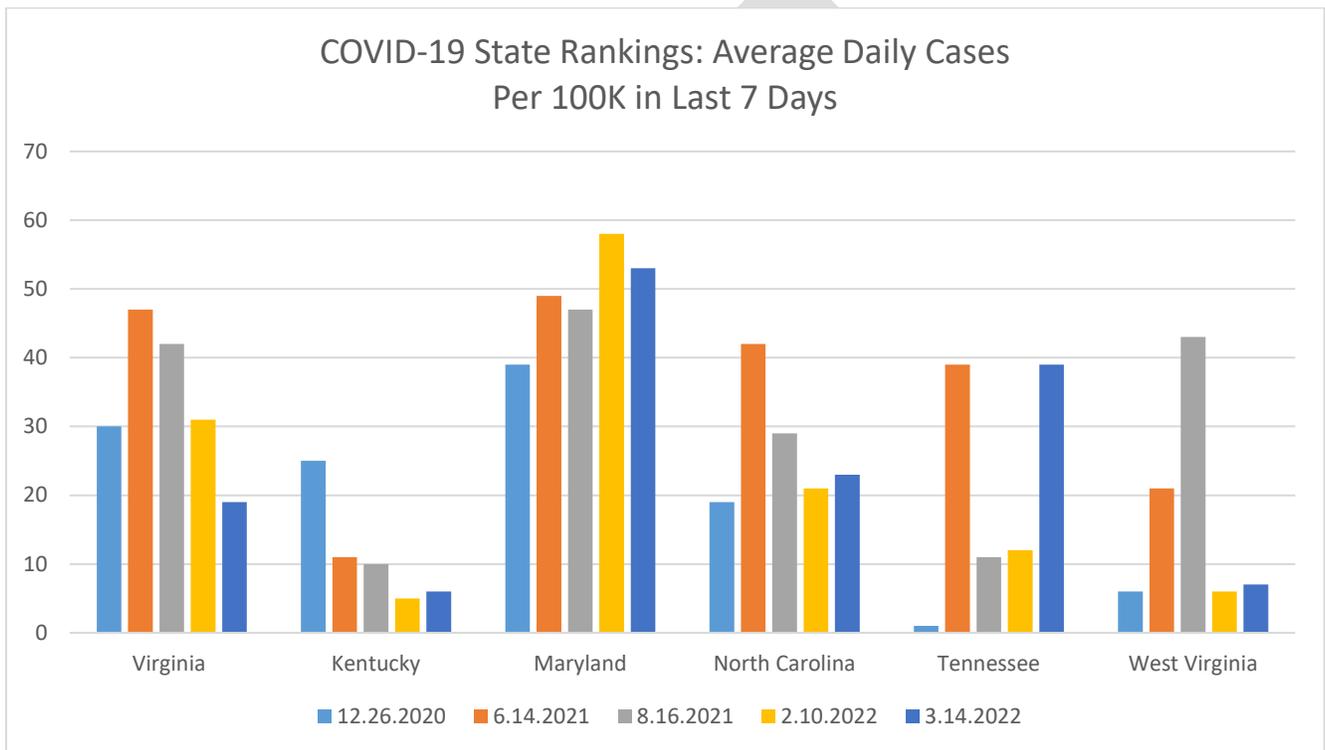
December 26, 2020

June 14, 2021

August 16, 2021

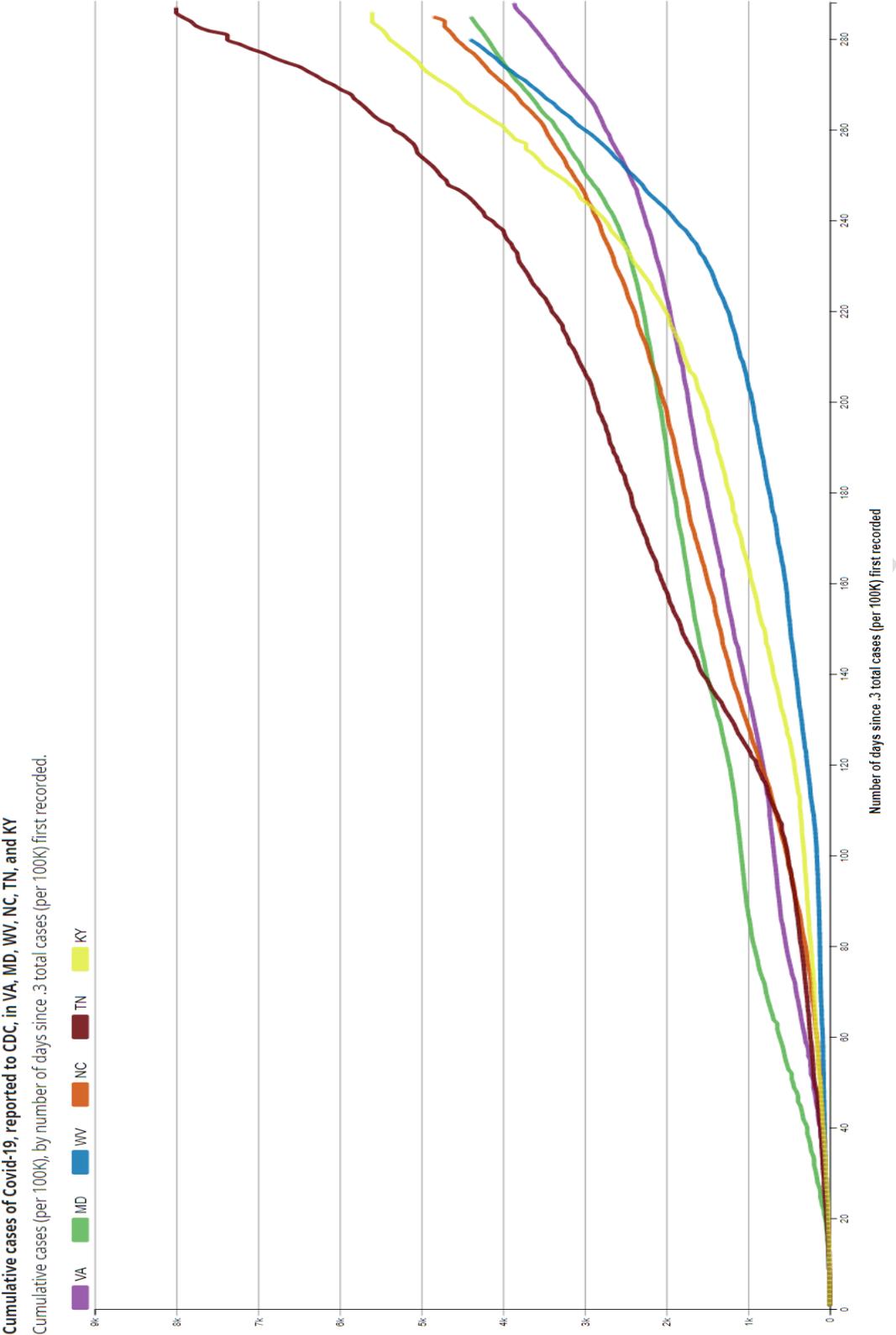
February 10, 2022

March 14, 2022



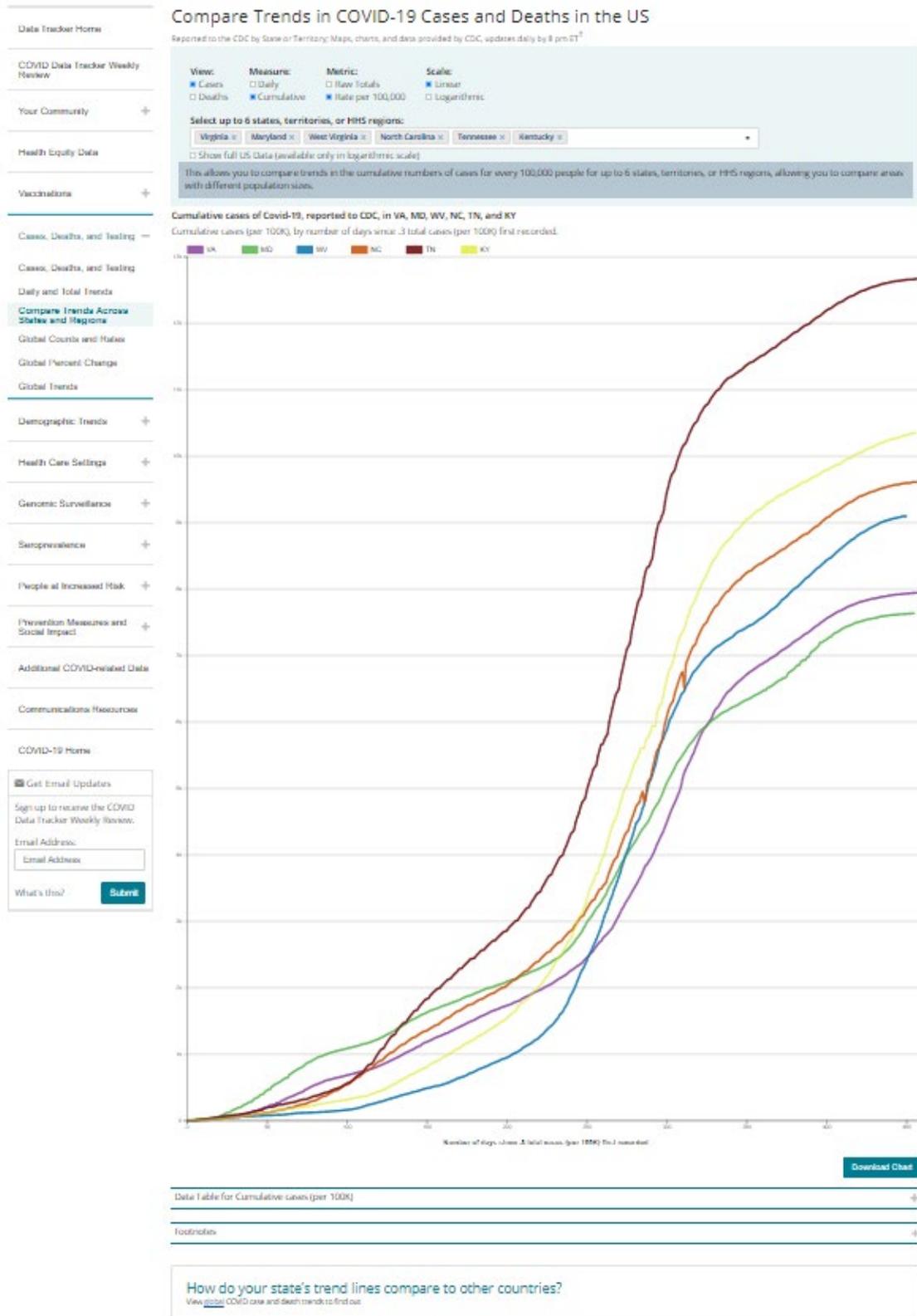
¹⁸⁶ *Id.*

Comparison of trends (Totals per 100,000) in COVID-19 cases by state December 26, 2020:¹⁸⁷



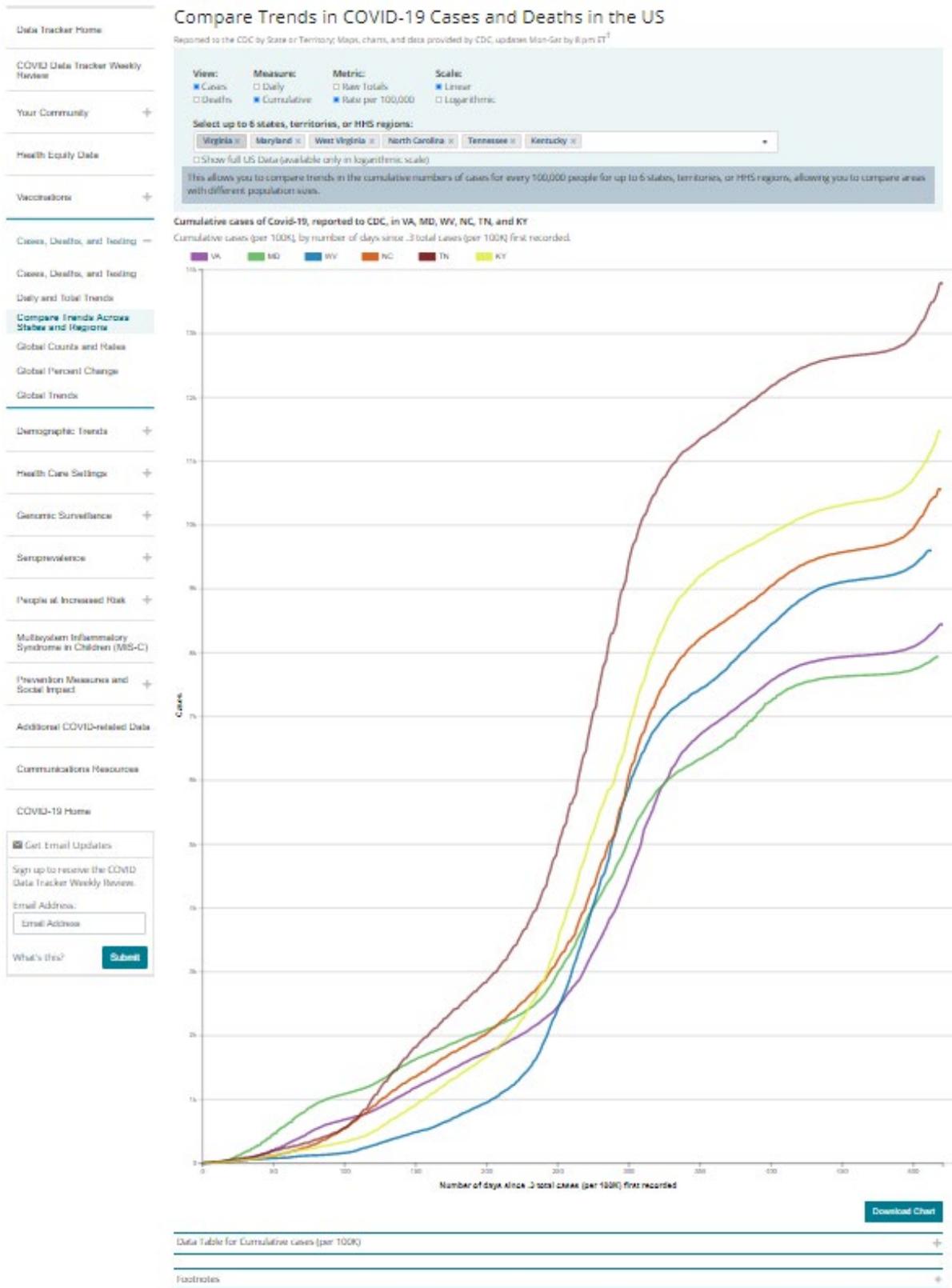
¹⁸⁷ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

Comparison of trends (Totals per 100,000) in COVID-19 cases by state June 14, 2021:188



188 <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/BP-Final-Standard-for-SARS-CoV-2-that-Causes-COVID-19-DRAFT-1.4.2021.pdf>

Comparison of trends (Totals per 100,000) in COVID-19 cases by state August 15, 2021:¹⁸⁹



¹⁸⁹ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#compare-trends_cases-cum-rate-lin

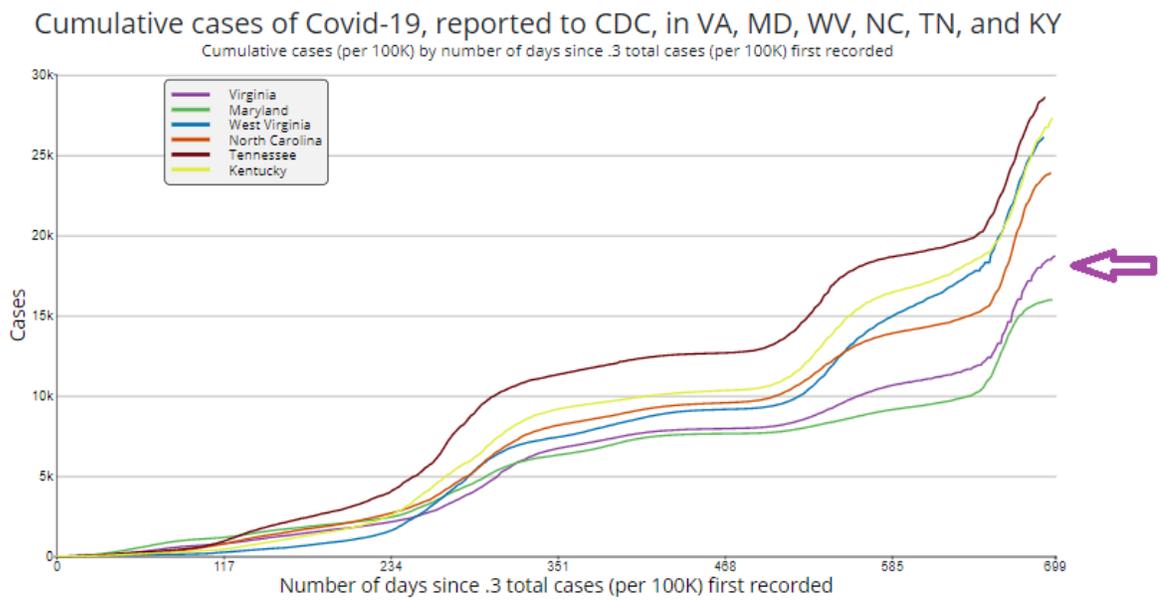
Comparison of trends (Totals per 100,000) in COVID-19 cases by state February 10, 2022:¹⁹⁰

View: Cases Deaths
Measure: Daily Cumulative
Metric: Raw Totals Rate per 100,000
Scale: Linear Logarithmic
Date: Index Date Submission Date

Select up to 6 states, territories, or HHS regions:

Show full US Data (available only in logarithmic scale)

This allows you to compare trends in the cumulative numbers of cases for every 100,000 people for up to 6 states, territories, or HHS regions, allowing you to compare areas with different population sizes.



¹⁹⁰ <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#compare-trends>

Comparison of trends (Totals per 100,000) in COVID-19 cases by state March 14, 2022:

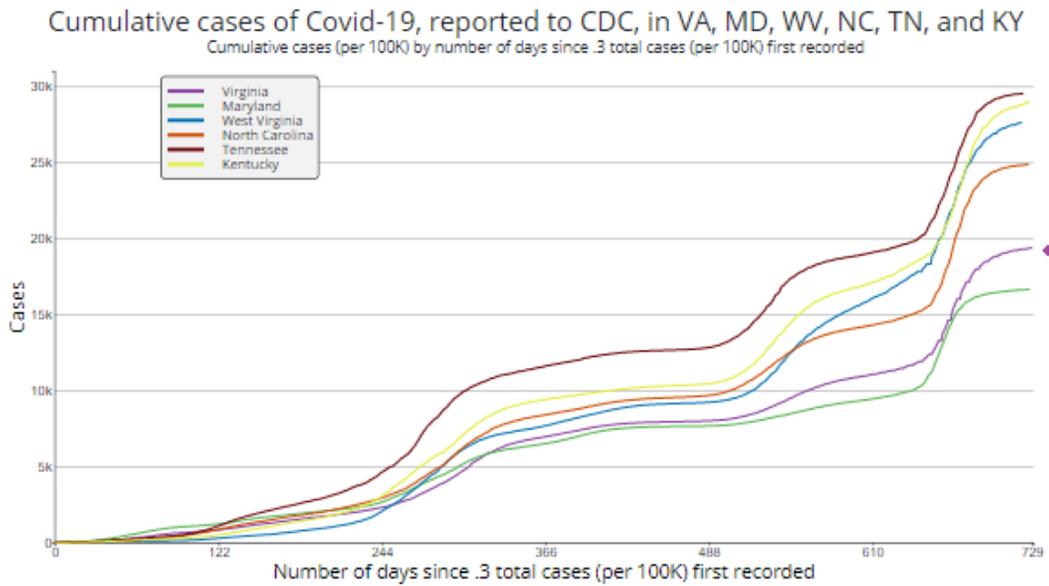
View: Cases Deaths Measure: Daily Cumulative Metric: Raw Totals Rate per 100,000 Scale: Linear Logarithmic Date: Index Date Submission Date

Select up to 6 states, territories, or HHS regions:

Virginia x Maryland x West Virginia x North Carolina x Tennessee x Kentucky x

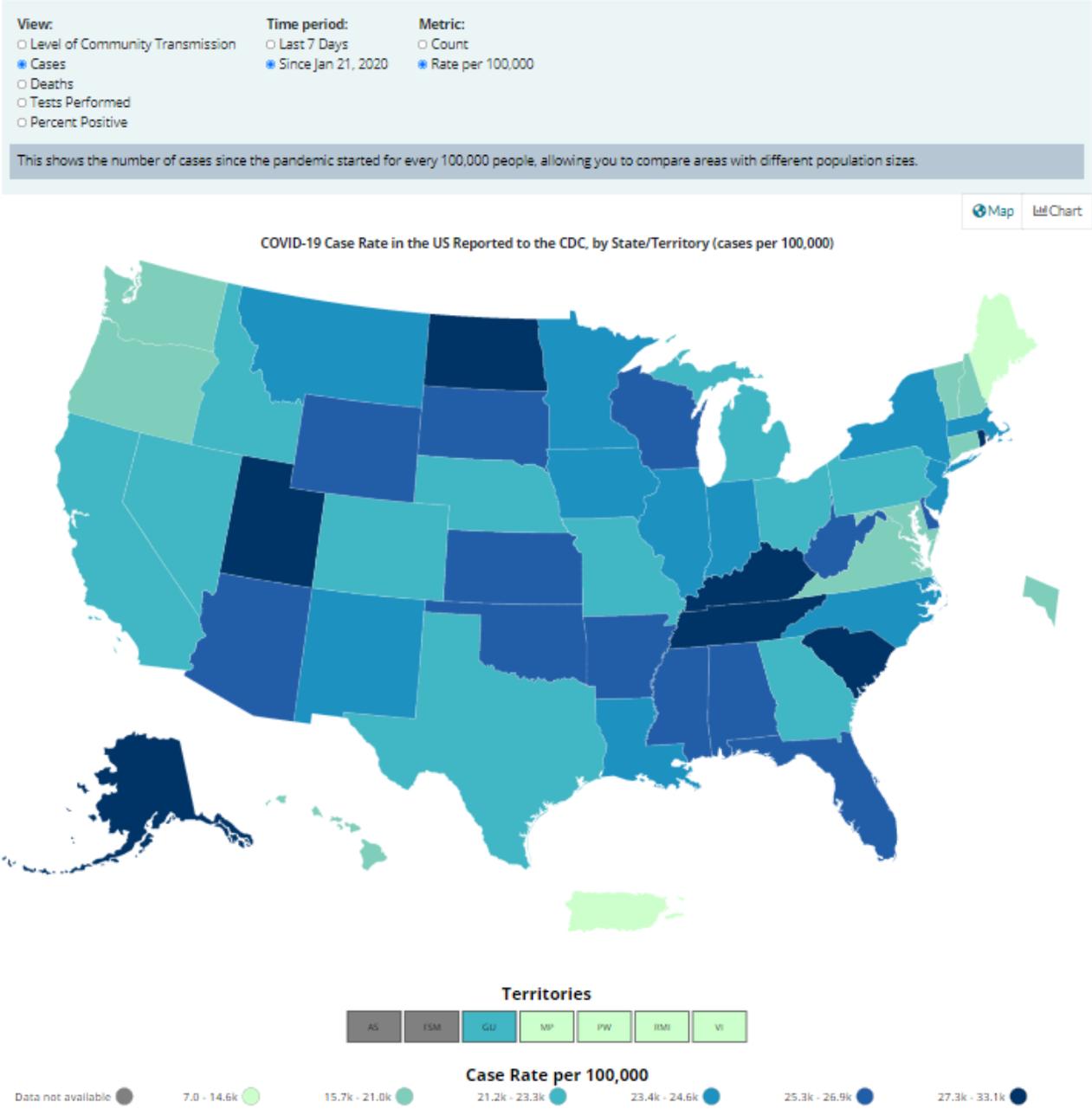
Show full US Data (available only in logarithmic scale)

This allows you to compare trends in the cumulative numbers of cases for every 100,000 people for up to 6 states, territories, or HHS regions, allowing you to compare areas with different population sizes.



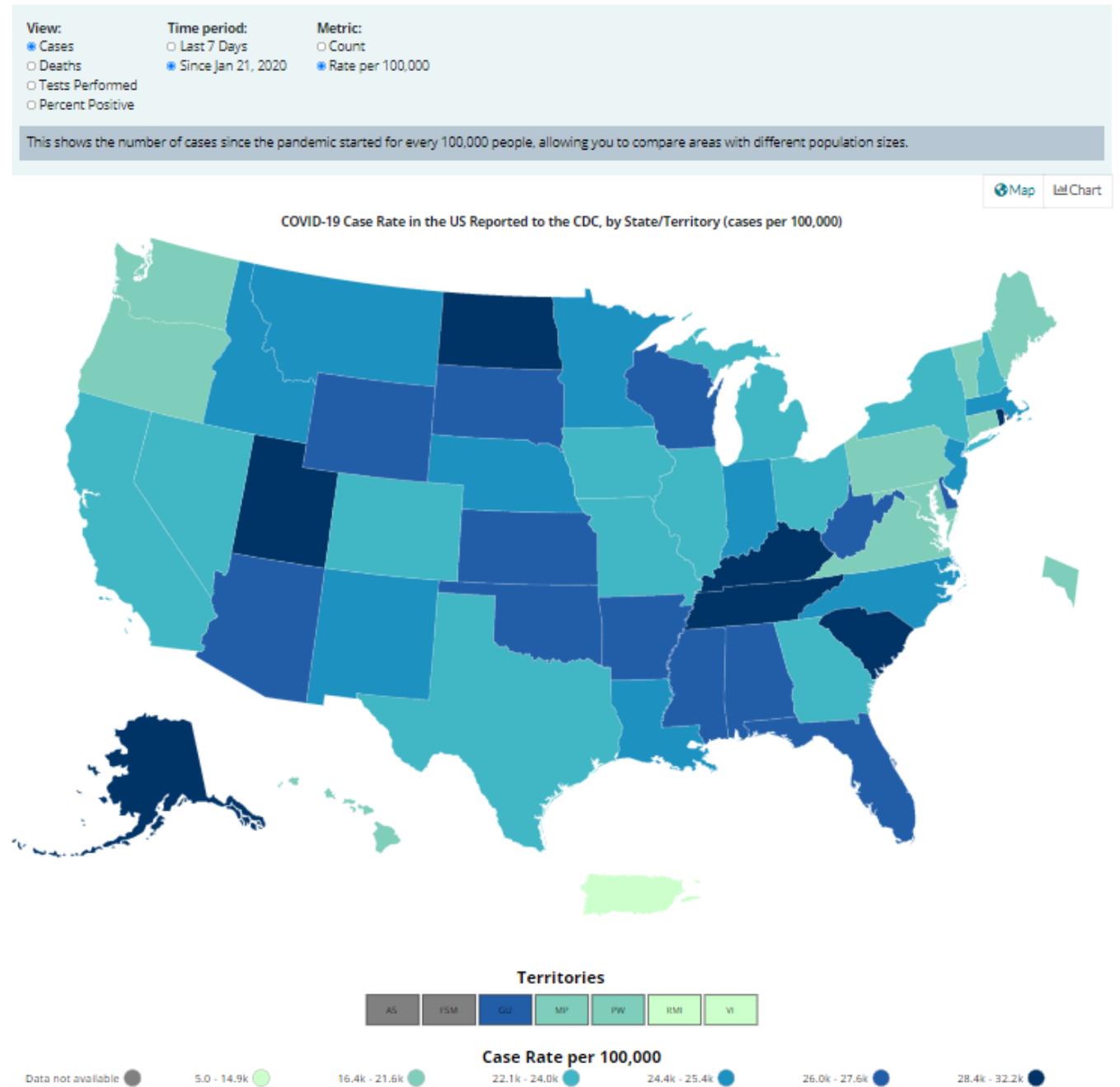
DK

United States COVID-19 Cases Per 100K since January 21, 2020 by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of February 10, 2022.¹⁹¹



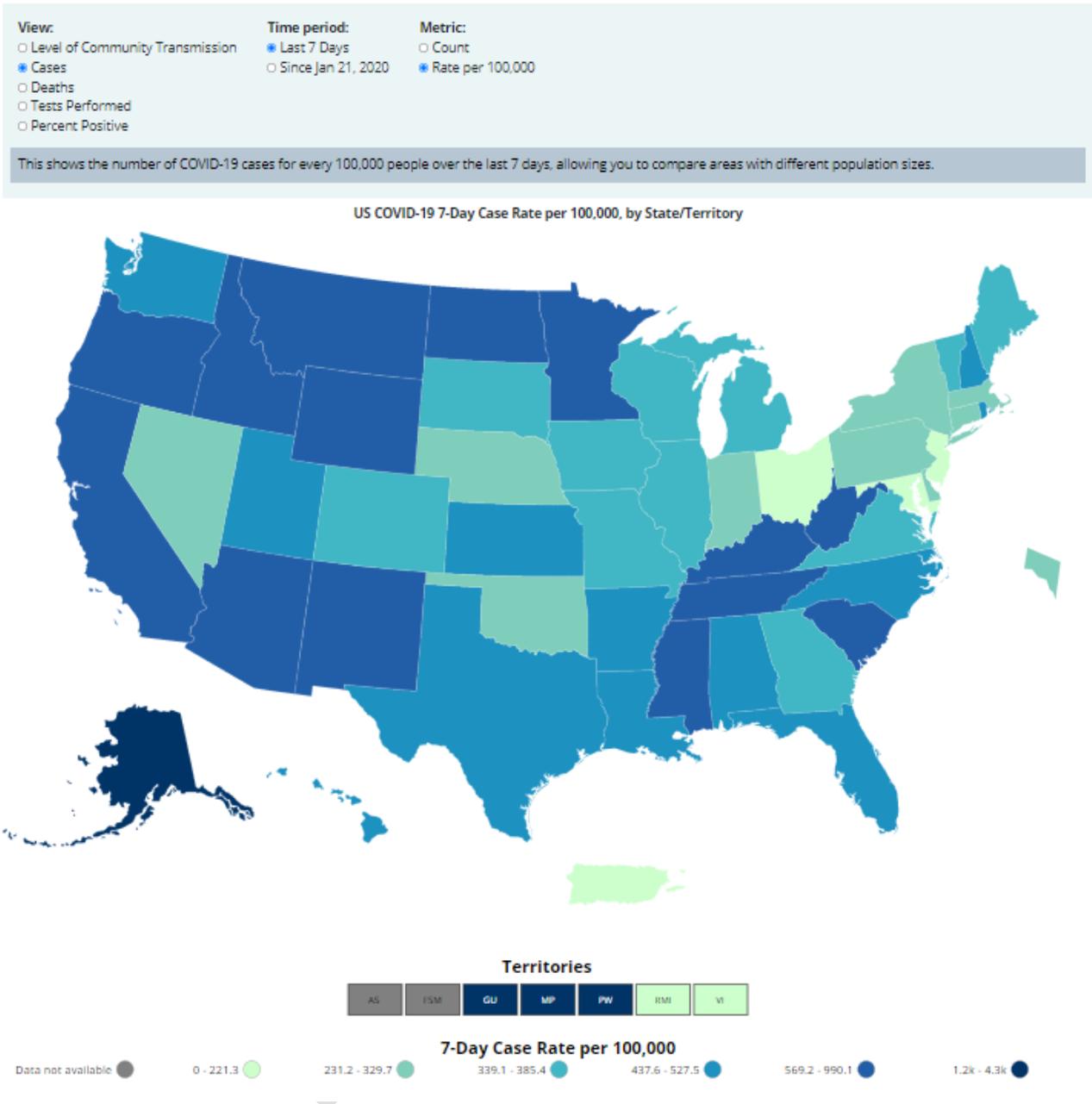
¹⁹¹ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100k

United States COVID-19 Cases Per 100K since January 21, 2020 by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of March 14, 2022.¹⁹²



¹⁹² https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100k

United States COVID-19 Cases Per 100K Last 7-days by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of February 10, 2022.¹⁹³



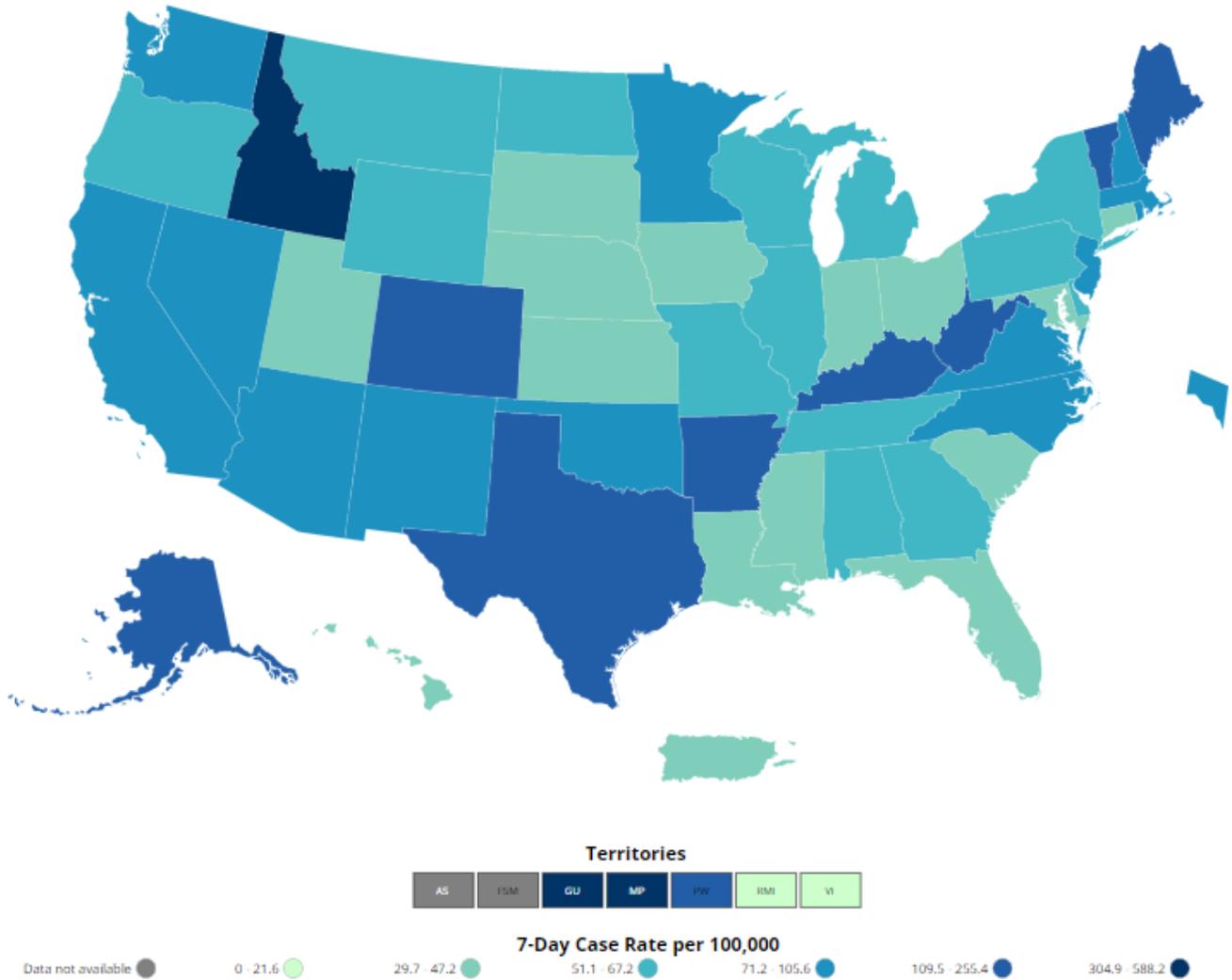
¹⁹³ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

United States COVID-19 Cases Per 100K Last 7-days by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of March 14, 2022.¹⁹⁴

- View: Cases Deaths Tests Performed Percent Positive
- Time period: Last 7 Days Since Jan 21, 2020
- Metric: Count Rate per 100,000

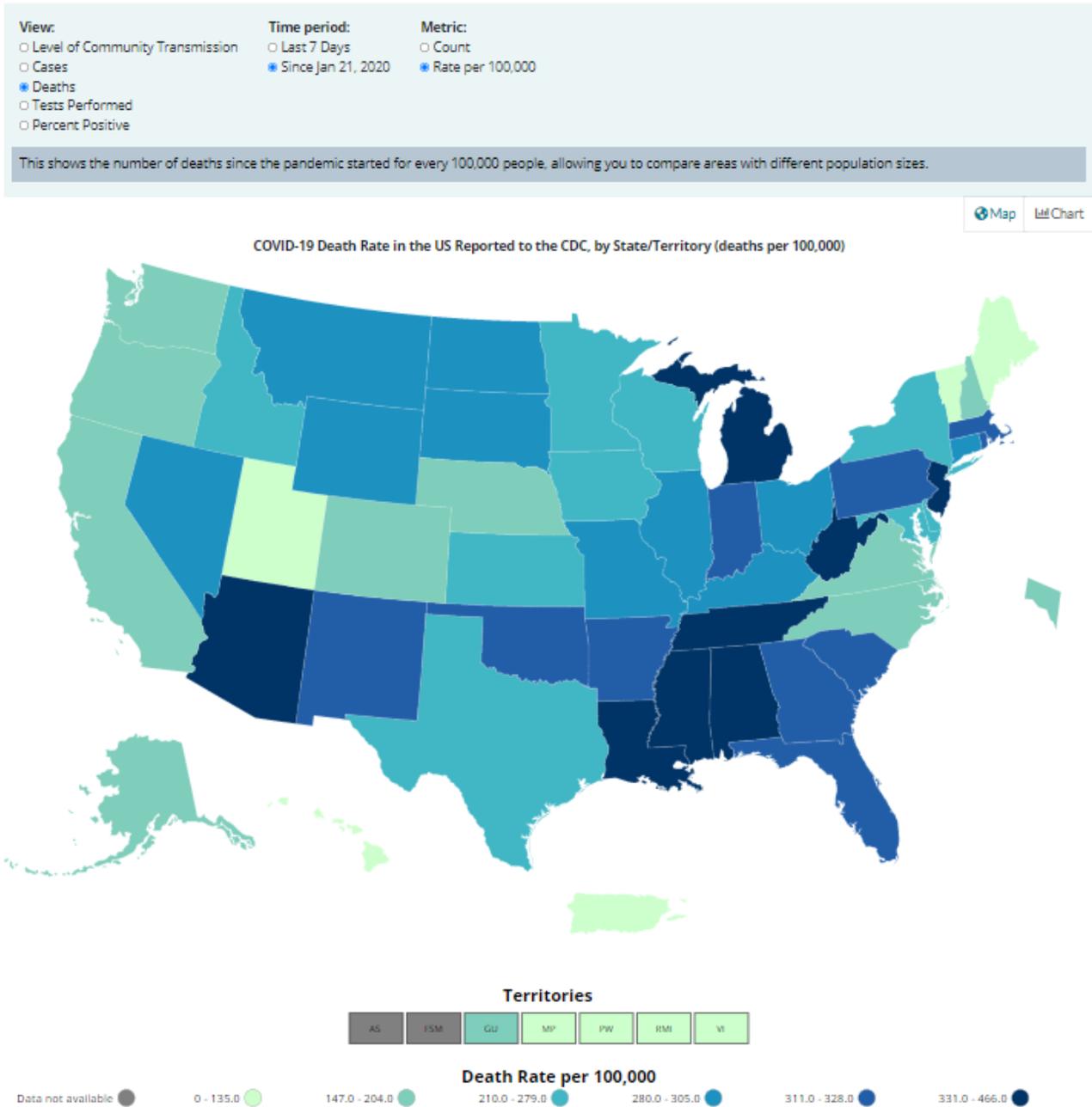
This shows the number of COVID-19 cases for every 100,000 people over the last 7 days, allowing you to compare areas with different population sizes.

US COVID-19 7-Day Case Rate per 100,000, by State/Territory



¹⁹⁴ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

United States COVID-19 Deaths Per 100K Since January 21, 2020 by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of February 10, 2022.¹⁹⁵



¹⁹⁵ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100k

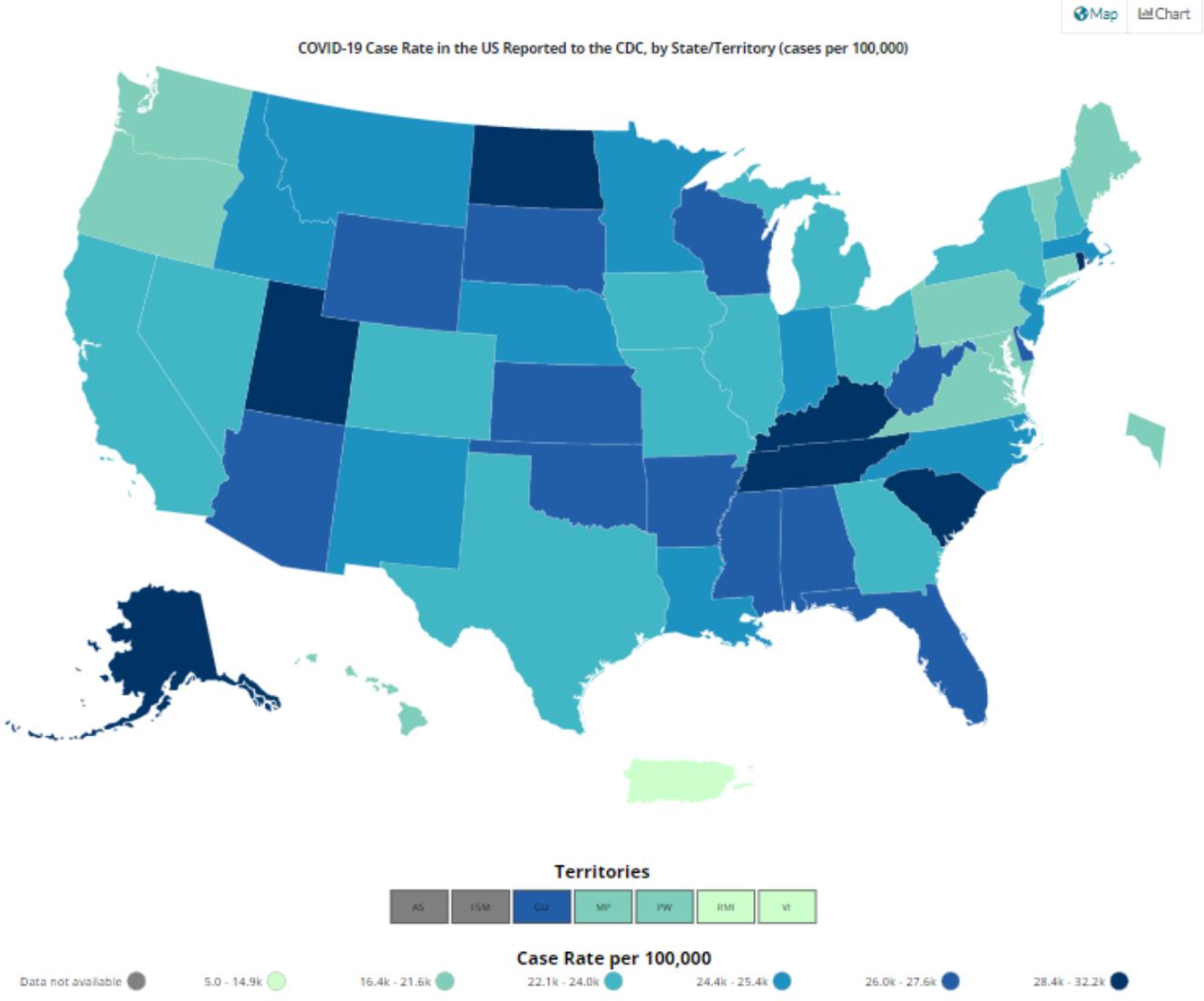
United States COVID-19 Deaths Per 100K Since January 21, 2020 by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of March 14, 2022.¹⁹⁶

View:
 Cases
 Deaths
 Tests Performed
 Percent Positive

Time period:
 Last 7 Days
 Since Jan 21, 2020

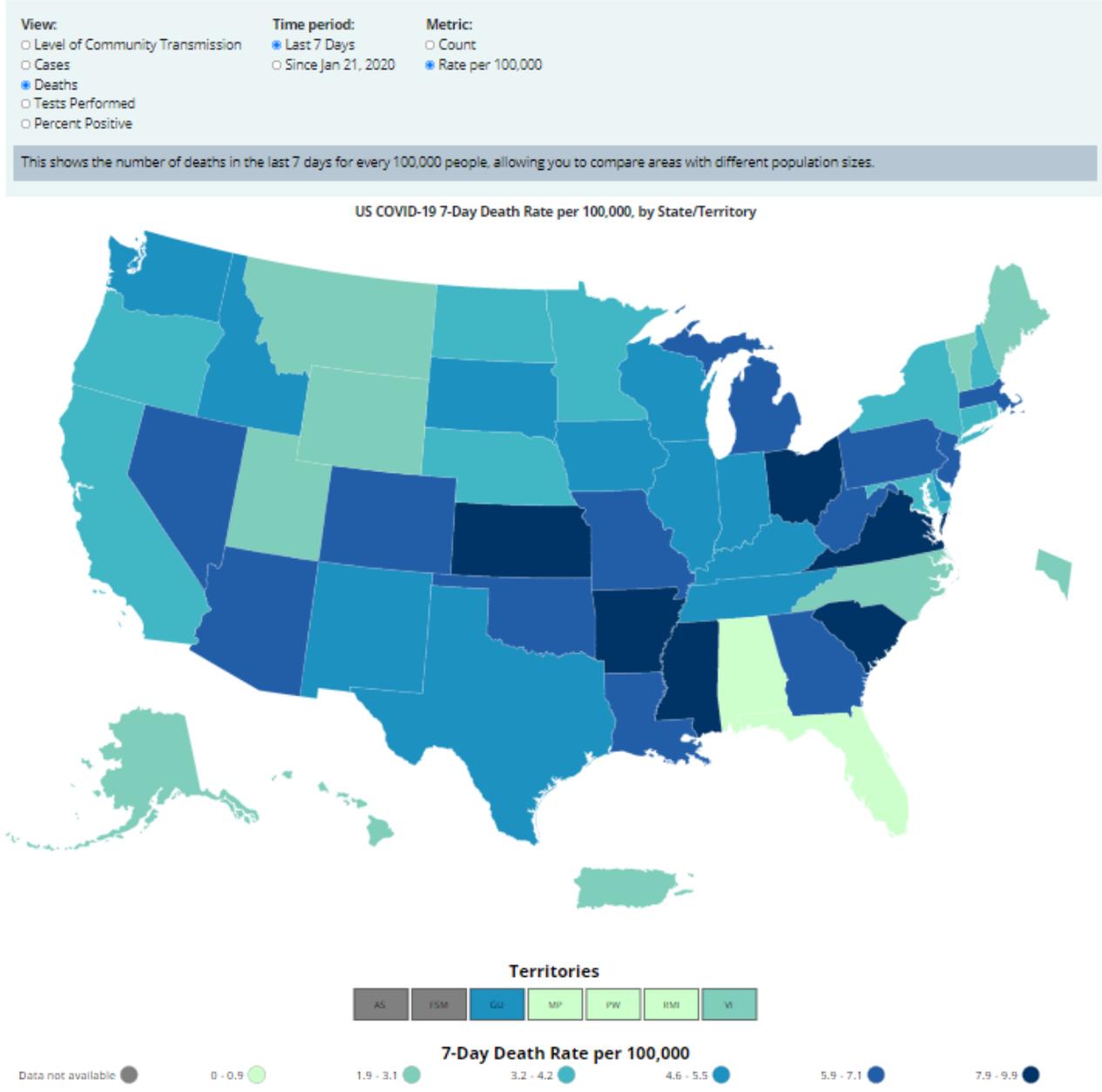
Metric:
 Count
 Rate per 100,000

This shows the number of cases since the pandemic started for every 100,000 people, allowing you to compare areas with different population sizes.



¹⁹⁶ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100k

United States COVID-19 Deaths Per 100K Last 7-days by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of February 10, 2022.¹⁹⁷



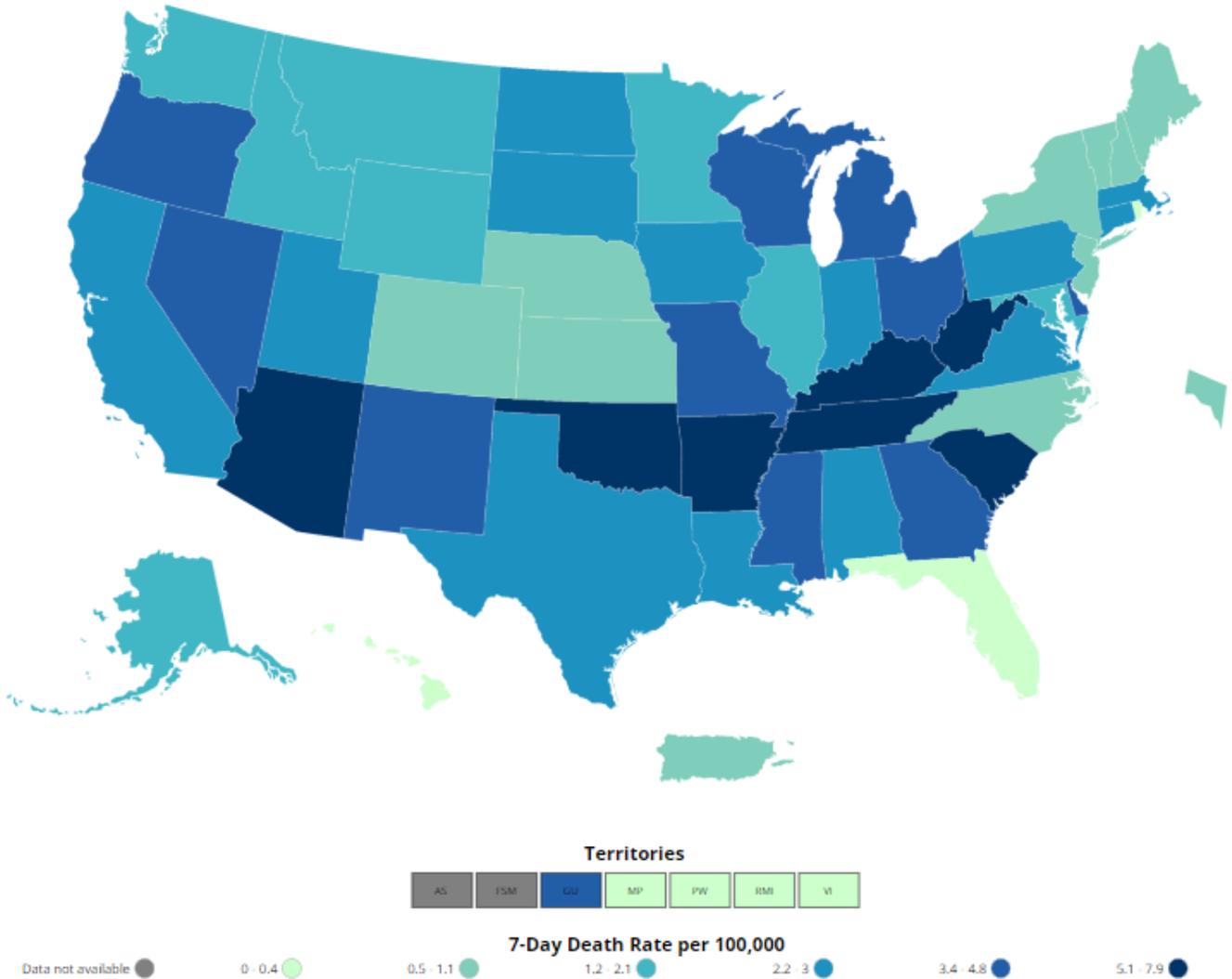
¹⁹⁷ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_deathsper100klast7days

United States COVID-19 Deaths Per 100K Last 7-days by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of March 14, 2022.¹⁹⁸

- View: Cases Deaths Tests Performed Percent Positive
- Time period: Last 7 Days Since Jan 21, 2020
- Metric: Count Rate per 100,000

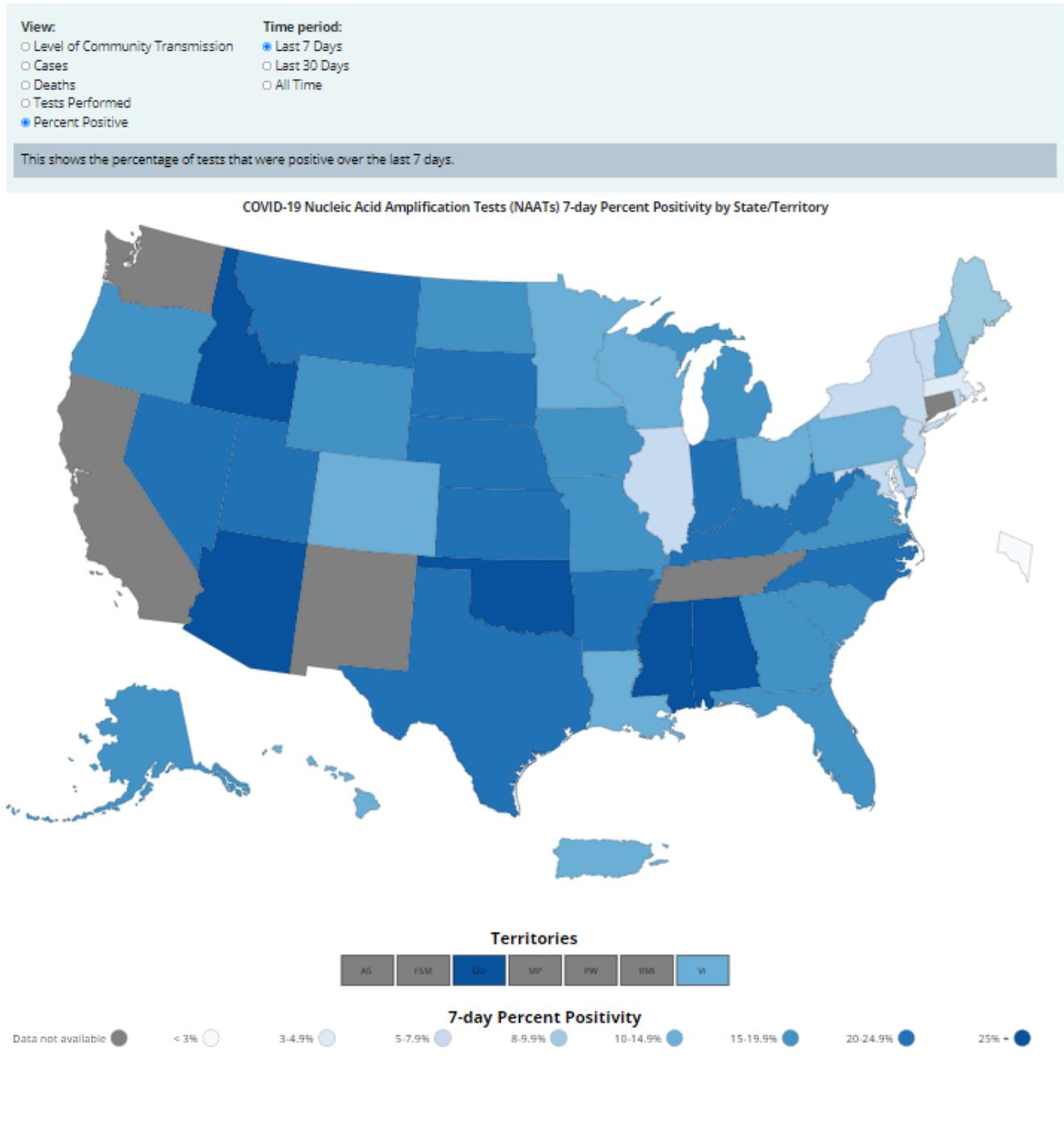
This shows the number of deaths in the last 7 days for every 100,000 people, allowing you to compare areas with different population sizes.

US COVID-19 7-Day Death Rate per 100,000, by State/Territory



¹⁹⁸ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_deathsper100klast7days

United States COVID-19 Percent Positive Laboratory Testing (NAATs) Per 100K Last 7-days by State, Territory, and Jurisdiction as of February 10, 2022.¹⁹⁹



¹⁹⁹ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_positivity7day

Percent of People Fully Vaccinated Reported to the CDC by State/Territory and for Select Federal Entities for the Total Population as of February 10, 2022.²⁰¹

View:
 Total Doses
 People

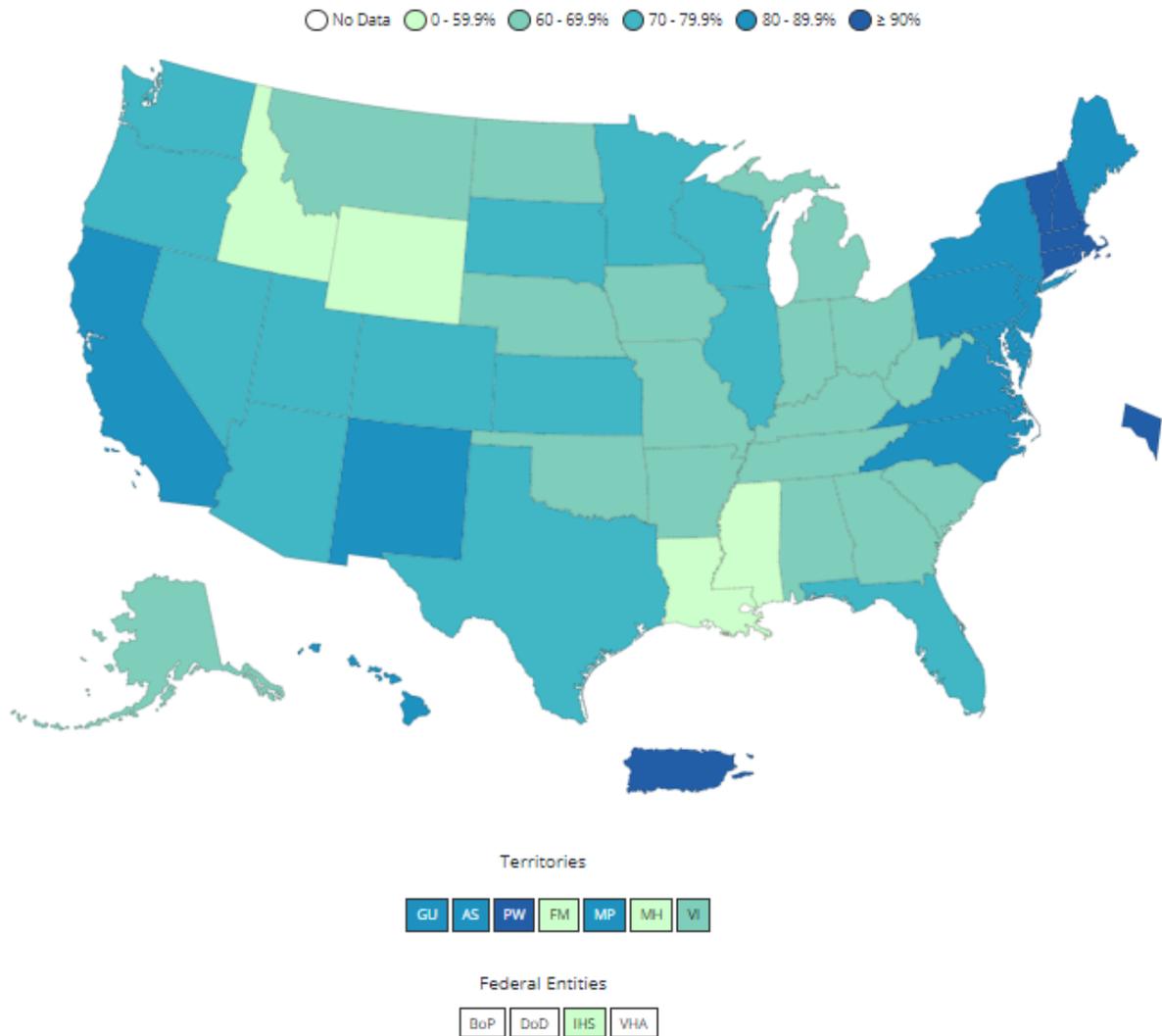
Show:
 At Least One Dose
 Fully Vaccinated
 Booster Dose

Metric:
 Count
 % of the Population

Population:
 Total Population
 Population ≥ 5 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 12 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 18 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 65 Years of Age

This shows the percentage of residents of the state or territory for the total population who received at least one dose of vaccine. Non-residents who received vaccine are attributed to their state of residence.

Percent of People Receiving at Least One Dose Reported to the CDC by State/Territory and for Select Federal Entities for the Total Population



²⁰¹ https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations_vacc-people-fully-percent-total

Percent of People Fully Vaccinated Reported to the CDC by State/Territory and for Select Federal Entities for the Total Population as of March 14, 2022.²⁰²

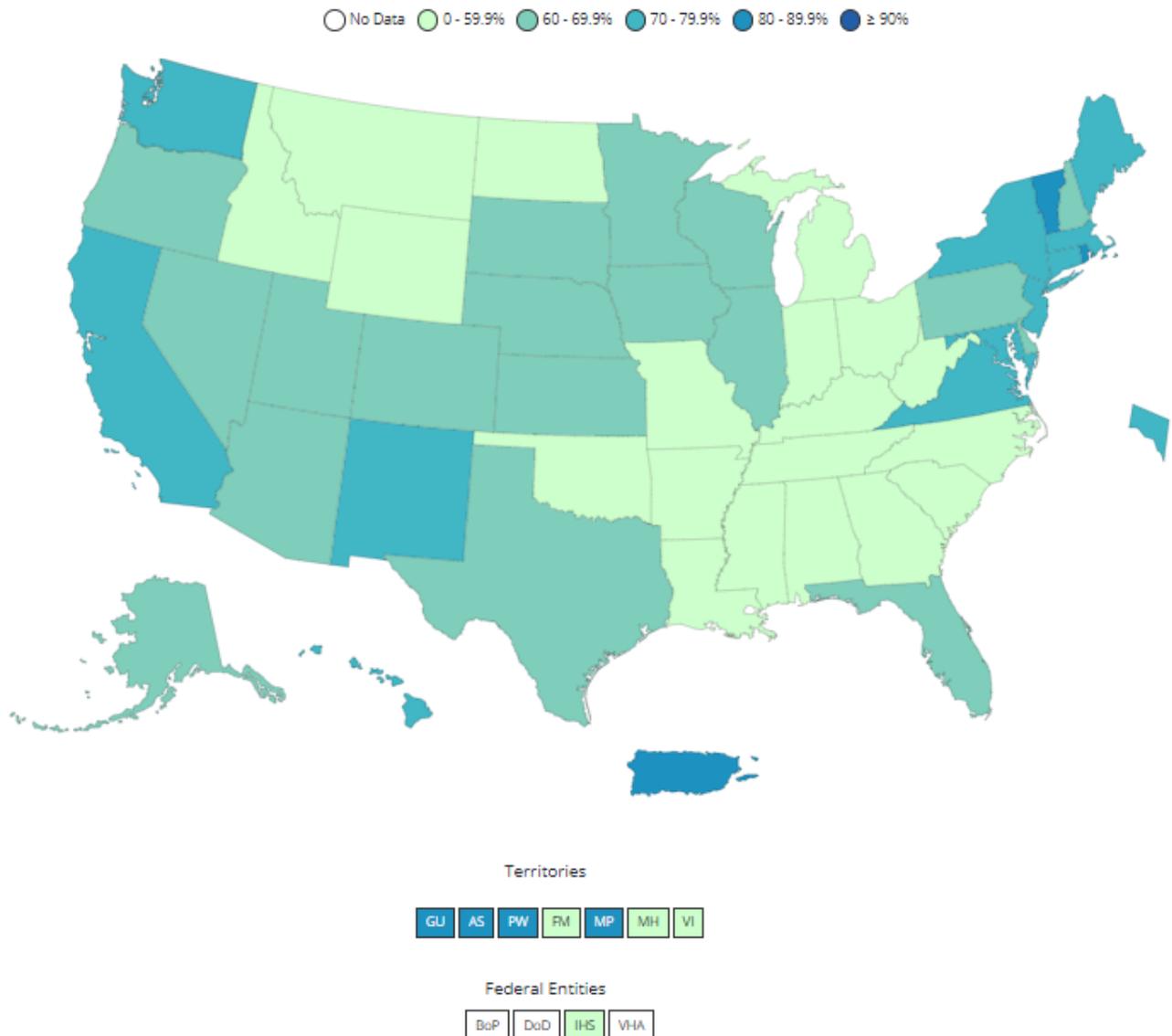
View:
 Total Doses
 People

Show:
 At Least One Dose
 Fully Vaccinated
 Booster Dose

Population:
 Total Population
 Population ≥ 5 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 12 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 18 Years of Age
 Population ≥ 65 Years of Age

This shows the percentage of residents of that state or territory for the total population who are fully vaccinated. Non-residents who received vaccine are attributed to their state of residence

Percent of People Fully Vaccinated Reported to the CDC by State/Territory and for Select Federal Entities for the Total Population



²⁰² https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations_vacc-people-fully-percent-total

Virginia Ranks 7th Among States for the Lowest Estimated COVID-19 Infection Rate²⁰³

1	-	Vermont (17.8%)
2.	-	Hawaii (21.6%)
3	-	Maine (23.2%)
4	-	Oregon (28.2%)
5	-	Washington (30.9%)
6	-	New Hampshire (33.1%)
7	-	Virginia (34.8%)
	-	Maryland (38.3%)
	-	North Carolina (40.0%)
	-	West Virginia (42.4%)
	-	Kentucky (43.8%)
	-	Tennessee (50.7%)

Becker's Hospital Review, March 1, 2022, "43% of Americans have had COVID-19, CDC estimates."²⁰⁴

"More than 140 million Americans — about 43 percent of the nation's population — have had COVID-19, according to CDC estimates cited by The Washington Post.

Every two weeks, the CDC collects thousands of blood tests analyzed by commercial labs for reasons unrelated to COVID-19. Those samples are also tested for coronavirus antibodies. The data is from 72,000 blood samples gathered through Jan. 29, which means the number of Americans infected is likely much higher now. The study counts each person only once and includes only antibodies from natural infection, not from vaccination.

Nevada wasn't included in the estimates, and there was insufficient data for North Dakota, Arizona and Utah.

Five things to know, per the study:

1. Infection rate estimates are much higher for children and younger adults. The study found 58 percent of children age 11 or younger have antibodies from natural infection, along with the same share among ages 12-17.

2. Just under half of adults 49 and younger have been infected. The rate decreases to 37 percent for people 50-64 years and 23 percent among Americans 65 or older.

3. At the end of November — just before omicron began spreading in the U.S. — the study estimated 103 million Americans had been infected. According to that measure, 37 million new people got COVID-19 in the two months ending late January.

4. At least half of the population in 14 states have had COVID-19, with Wisconsin reporting 56 percent of its population at one point infected. The other states with a majority infection rate, in

²⁰³ <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#national-lab>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/public-health/43-of-americans-have-had-covid-19-cdc-estimates.html#national-lab>

descending order, are Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, Wyoming, Texas, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Michigan, New Jersey, Tennessee and Louisiana.

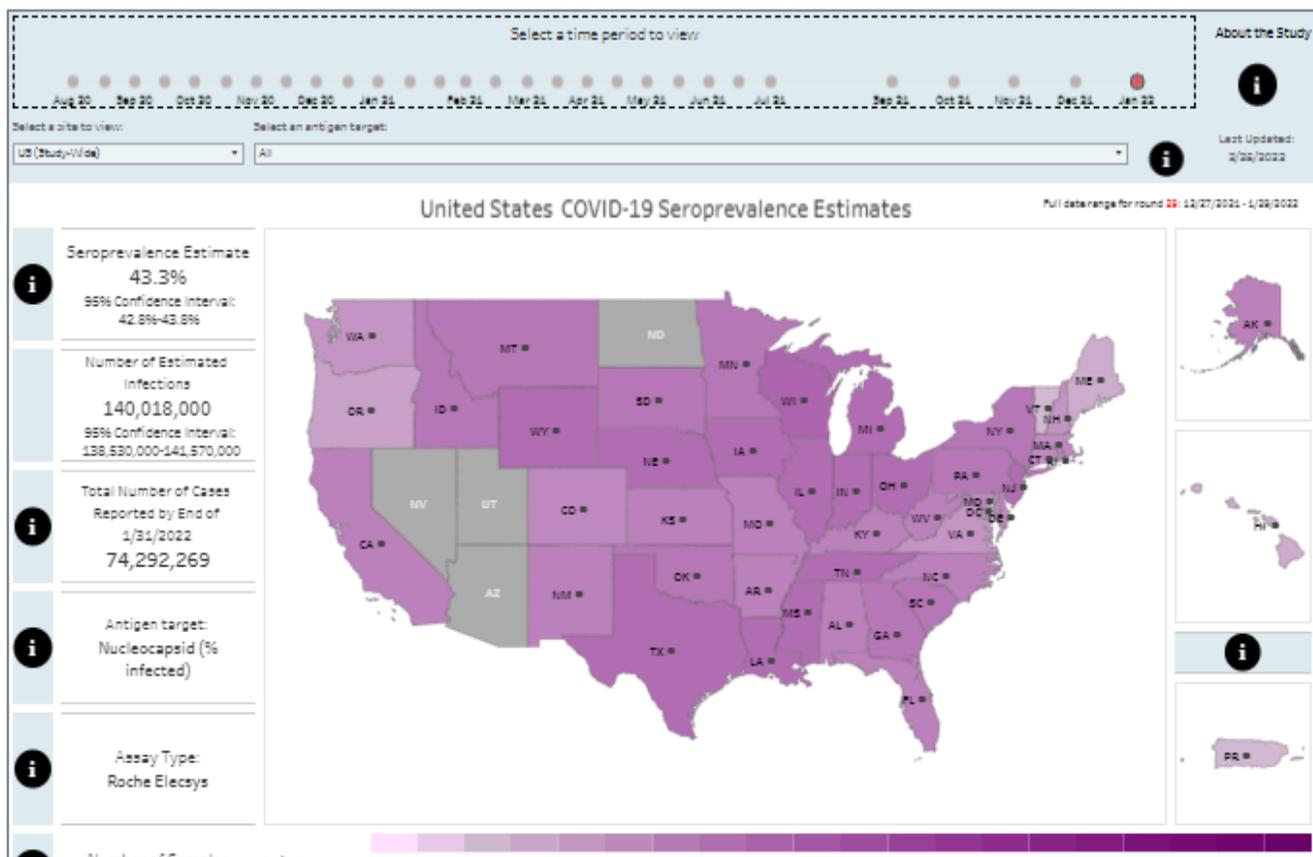
5. Vermont has the lowest estimated infection rate with 18 percent. The next-lowest states in ascending order are Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Washington, New Hampshire, Virginia and Massachusetts."

Nationwide COVID-19 Infection-Induced Antibody Seroprevalence (Commercial laboratories)

The percentage of people with antibodies against a pathogen is known as seroprevalence. [This nationwide antibody seroprevalence survey](#) currently provides estimates of the percentage of people in the United States with **resolving or past infection** with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These percentages do not include people who have been vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2 and have no history of infection. In contrast, the [nationwide blood donor seroprevalence survey](#) estimates the percentage of people ages 16 years and older that have developed antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 from vaccination or infection. Therefore, estimates differ between the two surveys. Note that in response to recent data, 23 jurisdictions in the nationwide antibody seroprevalence survey switched to an assay with increased sensitivity to detect past infection in September 2021, which could impact trends. This survey estimates the percentage of people that have detectable antibody indicating resolving or past infection with SARS-CoV-2, but not how much antibody is present. Therefore, the estimates do not necessarily indicate the percentage of people with sufficient antibody to protect against reinfection. [Detailed methods and limitations of the survey have been published.](#)

[View Footnotes and Additional Information](#)

Hover your mouse over circular information icons for important additional information to correctly interpret these data.



D. SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, General Information, Studies, and Statistics.

1. General Information on Pandemics.²⁰⁵

“Viruses are constantly mutating. Those that trigger pandemics have enough novelty that the human immune system does not quickly recognize them as dangerous invaders. They force the body to create a brand-new defense, involving new antibodies and other immune system components that can react to and attack the foe. Large numbers of people get sick in the short term, and social factors such as crowding and the unavailability of medicine can drive those numbers even higher. Ultimately, in most cases, antibodies developed by the immune system to fight off the invader linger in enough of the affected population to confer longer-term immunity and limit person-to-person viral transmission. But that can take several years, and before it happens, havoc reigns.

....

Containment. The severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic of 2003 was caused not by an influenza virus but by a coronavirus, SARS-CoV, that is closely related to the cause of the current affliction, SARS-CoV-2. Of the seven known human coronaviruses, four circulate widely, causing up to a third of common colds. The one that caused the SARS outbreak was far more virulent. Thanks to aggressive epidemiological tactics such as isolating the sick, quarantining their contacts and implementing social controls, bad outbreaks were limited to a few locations such as Hong Kong and Toronto.

This containment was possible because sickness followed infection very quickly and obviously: almost all people with the virus had serious symptoms such as fever and trouble breathing. And they transmitted the virus after getting quite sick, not before. “Most patients with SARS were not that contagious until maybe a week after symptoms appeared,” says epidemiologist Benjamin Cowling of the University of Hong Kong. “If they could be identified within that week and put into isolation with good infection control, there wouldn’t be onward spread.” Containment worked so well there were only 8,098 SARS cases globally and 774 deaths. The world has not seen a case since 2004.

Vaccine power. When a new H1N1 influenza virus, known as swine flu, caused a pandemic in 2009, “there was an alarm bell because this was a brand-new H1N1,” Cowling says, and it was very similar to the 1918 killer. Swine flu proved less severe than feared. In part, Krammer says, “we were lucky because the pathogenicity of the virus wasn’t very high.” But another important reason was that six months after the virus appeared, scientists developed a vaccine for it.

Unlike measles or smallpox vaccines, which can confer long-term immunity, **flu vaccines offer only a few years of protection. Influenza viruses are slippery, mutating rapidly to escape immunity. As a result, the vaccines must be updated every year and given regularly. But during a pandemic, even a short-term vaccine is a boon.** The 2009 vaccine helped to temper a second wave of cases in the winter. As

²⁰⁵ <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-could-end1/>

a result, the virus much more rapidly went the way of the 1918 virus, becoming a widely circulating seasonal flu, from which many people are now protected either by flu shots or by antibodies from a previous infection.

Projections about how COVID-19 will play out are speculative, but the end game will most likely involve a mix of everything that checked past pandemics: Continued social-control measures to buy time, new antiviral medications to ease symptoms, and a vaccine. The exact formula—how long control measures such as social distancing must stay in place, for instance—depends in large part on how strictly people obey restrictions and how effectively governments respond. For example, containment measures that worked for COVID-19 in places such as Hong Kong and South Korea came far too late in Europe and the U.S. “The question of how the pandemic plays out is at least 50 percent social and political,” Cobey says.

....

It will take a vaccine to stop transmission. That will take time—probably a year from now. Still, there is reason to think a vaccine could work effectively. Compared with flu viruses, coronaviruses don’t have as many ways to interact with host cells.

“If that interaction goes away, [the virus] can’t replicate anymore,” Krammer says. “That’s the advantage we have here.” It is not clear whether a vaccine will confer long-term immunity as with measles or short-term immunity as with flu shots. But “any vaccine at all would be helpful at this point,” says epidemiologist Aubree Gordon of the University of Michigan.

Unless a vaccine is administered to all of the world’s eight billion inhabitants who are not currently sick or recovered, COVID-19 is likely to become endemic. It will circulate and make people sick seasonally—sometimes very sick. But if the virus stays in the human population long enough, it will start to infect children when they are young.” (Emphasis added).

2. Transmission.

Modes of Transmission

“The principal mode by which people are infected with SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is through exposure to respiratory fluids carrying infectious virus. Exposure occurs in three principal ways:

- (1) inhalation of very fine respiratory droplets and aerosol particles,
- (2) deposition of respiratory droplets and particles on exposed mucous membranes in the mouth, nose, or eye by direct splashes and sprays, and
- (3) touching mucous membranes with hands that have been soiled either directly by virus-containing respiratory fluids or indirectly by touching surfaces with virus on them.

People release respiratory fluids during exhalation (e.g., quiet breathing, speaking,

singing, exercise, coughing, sneezing) in the form of droplets across a spectrum of sizes. These droplets carry virus and transmit infection.

- The largest droplets settle out of the air rapidly, within seconds to minutes.
- The smallest very fine droplets, and aerosol particles formed when these fine droplets rapidly dry, are small enough that they can remain suspended in the air for minutes to hours.

Infectious exposures to respiratory fluids carrying SARS-CoV-2 occur in three principal ways (not mutually exclusive):

- Inhalation of air carrying very small fine droplets and aerosol particles that contain infectious virus. Risk of transmission is greatest within three to six feet of an infectious source where the concentration of these very fine droplets and particles is greatest.
- Deposition of virus carried in exhaled droplets and particles onto exposed mucous membranes (i.e., “splashes and sprays”, such as being coughed on). Risk of transmission is likewise greatest close to an infectious source where the concentration of these exhaled droplets and particles is greatest.
- Touching mucous membranes with hands soiled by exhaled respiratory fluids containing virus or from touching inanimate surfaces contaminated with virus.”²⁰⁶

Asymptomatic and Pre-symptomatic Transmission

“Increasing numbers of epidemiologic studies have documented SARS-CoV-2 transmission during the pre-symptomatic incubation period. Studies using RT-PCR detection have reported low cycle thresholds, indicating larger quantities of viral RNA, among people with asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection. Likewise in viral culture, viral growth has been observed in specimens obtained from patients with asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic infection. The proportion of SARS-CoV-2 transmission due to asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic infection compared with symptomatic infection is not entirely clear; however, recent studies do suggest that people who are not showing symptoms may transmit the virus.”²⁰⁷

Superspreaders

Around one in five people are traditionally thought to be super-spreaders. These are people who seem to transmit a given infectious disease significantly more widely than most.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/sars-cov-2-transmission.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fscience%2Fscience-briefs%2Fscientific-brief-sars-cov-2.html

²⁰⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>

²⁰⁸ <https://newatlas.com/health-wellbeing/covid19-case-studies-coronavirus-superspreader-clusters-cdc-report/>

In a December 16, 2021 study of an Omicron variant superspreader event in Norway:

"The closed event was held in a separate room (ca 145 m²) in a restaurant in Oslo from 18:00 to 22:30, after which the venue was opened to the public from 22:30 to 03:00. A pre-party had been arranged for the Christmas party attendees at a separate venue, after which they were transported by private buses to the restaurant. Although there were no restrictions in place for events at the time in Norway, all attendees of the party were reported to be fully vaccinated and had been asked by the organiser to perform a rapid antigen self-test. For other guests visiting the venue and employees working at the restaurant, there were no requirements for vaccination, COVID-19 testing, face-mask use or COVID certificate, and a guest list was not maintained. Attendees of the party mingled at the venue before and after dinner, following which the bar and dance area was opened to the public.

....

In total, 111 out of 117 attendees (95%) participated in the interviews. Respondents had an average age of 39 years (SD: 9.2; median: 38; range: 26–68) and 48 (43%) of them were women. Most respondents (n = 107; 96%) were fully vaccinated. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents (n = 99) had received two doses of mRNA vaccines. None reported having received a booster dose. All respondents reported having a negative rapid antigen self-test taken at home or PCR within 1–2 days before attending the event. Eight (7%) respondents had previously had COVID-19, but none in the previous 4 months, according to information gathered through the interviews.

Of the 111 respondents, 66 (59%) were confirmed cases (26 based on WGS and 40 based on PCR VOC screening) and 15 (14%) were probable cases (PCR-positive only). One PCR-positive attendee was confirmed to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant (Pango lineage B.1.617.2), and subsequently excluded from further analysis. The total attack rate for the Omicron variant was 74% (81/110) (Figure). The cases had an average age of 38 years (SD: 8.6; median 36, range: 26–61) and 35 (43%) were women. The remaining 29 attendees did not have a positive PCR result by 13 December 2021."²⁰⁹

Incubation Period

"The incubation period for COVID-19 is thought to extend to 14 days, with a median time of 4-5 days from exposure to symptoms onset. One study reported that 97.5% of people with COVID-19 who have symptoms will do so within 11.5 days of SARS-CoV-2 infection."²¹⁰

Infectious Period

"Children and adults with mild, symptomatic COVID-19:

²⁰⁹ <https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2021.26.50.2101147>

²¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>

Isolation can end at least 5 days after symptom onset and after fever ends for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving, if these people can continue to properly wear a well-fitted mask around others for 5 more days after the 5-day isolation period. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms.

People who are infected but asymptomatic (never develop symptoms):

Isolation can end at least 5 days after the first positive test (with day 0 being the date their specimen was collected for the positive test), if these people can continue to wear a properly well-fitted mask around others for 5 more days after the 5-day isolation period. However, if symptoms develop after a positive test, their 5-day isolation period should start over (day 0 changes to the first day of symptoms).

People who have moderate COVID-19 illness:

Isolate for 10 days.

People who are severely ill (i.e., requiring hospitalization, intensive care, or ventilation support):

Extending the duration of isolation and precautions to at least 10 days and up to 20 days after symptom onset, and after fever ends (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving, may be warranted.

People who are moderately or severely immunocompromised might have a longer infectious period:

Extend isolation to 20 or more days (day 0 is the first day of symptoms or a positive viral test). Use a test-based strategy and consult with an infectious disease specialist to determine the appropriate duration of isolation and precautions.

Recovered patients:

Patients who have recovered from COVID-19 can continue to have detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA in upper respiratory specimens for up to 3 months after illness onset. However, replication-competent virus has not been reliably recovered from such patients, and they are not likely infectious”²¹¹

Asymptomatic Cases

A December 14, 2021 study among the tested population and individuals with confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis found:

"In this meta-analysis [involving Ninety-five unique eligible studies were

²¹¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>

included, covering 29,776,306 individuals undergoing testing] of the percentage of asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections among populations tested for and with confirmed COVID-19, the pooled **percentage of asymptomatic infections was 0.25% among the tested population and 40.50% among the confirmed population.** The high percentage of asymptomatic infections highlights the potential transmission risk of asymptomatic infections in communities."²¹²

The CDC estimates "the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after."²¹³

Viral Shedding

"Viral shedding by asymptomatic people may represent 40–50% of total infections though some uncertainty remains regarding how much they contribute to totals. Viral shedding may antedate symptoms by up to 3+ days."²¹⁴

"Viral shedding²¹⁵ ...occurs when a virus is released from an infected host. Studying viral shedding is helpful in understanding how infectious diseases like COVID-19 spread.

Researchers often define the term across a spectrum, using modifiers like "low" and "high" to describe levels of viral shedding. Assessing levels of viral shedding helps researchers determine at what point individuals are most infectious.

For example, a study²¹⁶ of 94 patients with COVID-19 suggests that those infected with the new strain of coronavirus have the highest levels of viral shedding right before showing symptoms. Other studies have shown that some individuals may continue shedding the virus even after their symptoms resolve, or subside; one study²¹⁷ found that individuals with mild cases of the virus may continue viral shedding up to eight days after symptom resolution.

From a public health perspective, understanding viral shedding of COVID-19 is necessary to determine appropriate actions for virus mitigation. If viral shedding is indeed highest right before a person starts showing symptoms, robust contact tracing efforts to identify potential exposures is necessary to slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities. Information about viral spread after symptom resolution also allows public health officials to determine appropriate measures for those who have recovered from COVID-19, including guidance on extended quarantine."²¹⁷ (Emphasis added).

²¹² <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2787098>

²¹³ <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

²¹⁴

https://www.hopkinsguides.com/hopkins/view/Johns_Hopkins_ABX_Guide/540747/all/Coronavirus_COVID_19_SA_RS_CoV_2

²¹⁵ <https://achi.net/newsroom/defining-covid-19-terms-viral-shedding/>

²¹⁶ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0869-5>

²¹⁷ <https://www.healio.com/pulmonology/practice-management/news/online/%7B071c6a27-2c50-458f-9558-19b9f501df05%7D/patients-with-covid-19-may-shed-virus-after-symptom-resolution>

British Medical Journal, January 13, 2022 study, "Covid-19: Peak of viral shedding is later with omicron variant, Japanese data suggest,"²¹⁸ found:

"Preliminary data from the National Institute of Infectious Diseases—which conducts disease surveillance in Japan—suggest that the amount of viral RNA is highest three to six days after diagnosis or symptom onset.

....

Previous studies suggest that the peak transmission period for people with other variants was between two days before symptoms emerged and three days afterward, with virus shedding peaking on or before symptom onset.² The Japanese study suggests that with omicron, the peak of virus shedding may be two or three days later, Hunter said."

Basic Reproduction Number

"The basic reproductive ratio or basic reproduction number (R_0) is the average number of infected contacts per infected individual. At a population level, a value of R_0 larger than one means that a virus will continue its propagation among susceptible hosts if no environmental changes or external influences intervene. An R_0 value lower than one means that the virus is doomed to extinction at the epidemiological level under those specific circumstances."²¹⁹

As of June, 2020, a meta-analysis estimated that the initial median R_0 [the basic reproduction number for the virus] for COVID-19 is 2.79 (meaning that one infected person will on average infect 2.79 others), although current estimates might be biased because of insufficient data.²²⁰

As of August 1, 2020, the best estimate of the CDC based on data through August 1, 2020 was an R_0 value of 2.5.²²¹

As of August 9, 2021, a study found "An R_0 of 5.08 [Delta variant] is much higher than the R_0 of the ancestral strain with a R_0 of 2.79, which was the estimated median R_0 in Liu et al.'s review study based on 14 estimates of the ancestral strain. With an R_0 of 5.08, Delta also has a much higher reproductive number compared to other viral infections such SARS, MERS, smallpox, Ebola, seasonal influenza and pandemic influenza. Delta infections are associated with higher viral loads and longer duration of shedding causing higher transmissibility and R_0 , and also lower vaccine effectiveness affecting the effective reproduction number impacted by disease control. Delta variant may possibly also cause more severe disease with higher odds of

²¹⁸ <https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj.o89#:~:text=News-.Covid%2D19%3A%20Peak%20of%20viral%20shedding%20is%20later%20with,omicron%20variant%2C%20Japanese%20data%20suggest&text=Patients%20with%20the%20omicron%20variant,testing%20positive%20could%20be%20shortened.>

²¹⁹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/immunology-and-microbiology/basic-reproduction-number>

²²⁰ https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/6/20-0495_article

²²¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/planning-scenarios.html>

hospitalization, ICU admission and death."²²²

A December 30, 2021 study, "Relative instantaneous reproduction number of Omicron SARS-CoV-2 variant with respect to the Delta variant in Denmark," found:

The Omicron variant of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has become widespread across the world in a flashing manner. As of December 7, 2021, a total of 758 Omicron cases were confirmed in Denmark. Using the nucleotide sequences of the Delta and Omicron variants registered from Denmark in the GISAID database, we found that the effective (instantaneous) reproduction number of Omicron is 3.19 (95% confidence interval [CI]: 2.82-3.61) times greater than that of Delta under the same epidemiological conditions. The proportion of Omicron infections among all SARS-CoV-2 infections in Denmark was expected to exceed 95% on December 28, 2021, with a 95% CI from December 25 to December 31, 2021.

Infectious Dose and Viral Load

“Infectious respiratory diseases spread when a healthy person comes in contact with virus particles expelled by someone who is sick — usually through a cough or sneeze. The amount of particles a person is exposed to can affect how likely they are to become infected and, once infected, how severe the symptoms become.

The amount of virus necessary to make a person sick is called the infectious dose. Viruses with low infectious doses are especially contagious in populations without significant immunity. The minimum infectious dose of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is unknown so far, but researchers suspect it is low. “The virus is spread through very, very casual interpersonal contact,” W. David Hardy, a professor of infectious disease at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, told STAT.²²³

A high infectious dose may lead to a higher viral load, which can impact the severity of COVID-19 symptoms. Viral load is a measure of virus particles. It is the amount of virus present once a person has been infected and the virus has had time to replicate in their cells. With most viruses, higher viral loads are associated with worse outcomes.

One study²²⁴ of COVID-19 patients in China found that those with more severe symptoms tended to have higher viral loads. ‘It’s not proven, but it would make sense that higher inoculating doses will lead to higher viral loads, and higher viral loads would translate into more pathogenic clinical courses,’ said Dan Barouch, director of the Center for Virology and Vaccine Research at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.”²²⁵ (Emphasis added).

National Center for Biotechnology, January 6, 2022, "Omicron Variant (B.1.1.529):

²²² <https://academic.oup.com/jtm/article/28/7/taab124/6346388>

²²³ <https://www.statnews.com/2020/04/14/how-much-of-the-coronavirus-does-it-take-to-make-you-sick/>

²²⁴ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30196-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30196-1/fulltext)

²²⁵ <https://www.statnews.com/2020/04/14/how-much-of-the-coronavirus-does-it-take-to-make-you-sick/>

"The identification of Omicron as a variant of concern (VOC) by the World Health Organization (WHO) has triggered countries around the world to put in place travel restrictions and precautionary measures. At this moment, the scientific community knows little about Omicron's infectivity, vaccine breakthrough, and antibody resistance. Since the spike (S) protein, particularly, its receptor-binding domain (RBD), plays a vital role in viral infection, it has been a key target of vaccines and antibody drugs. Therefore, the study of Omicron's 15 RBD mutations can lead to valuable understanding of Omicron's infectivity, vaccine breakthrough, and antibody resistance.

On the basis of a well-tested and experimentally confirmed deep learning model trained with tens of thousands of experimental data, we investigate the impacts of Omicron's RBD mutations to its infectivity. We show that Omicron is about 10 times more infectious than the original virus or about 2.8 times as infectious as the Delta variant. Using the structures of 185 known antibody-RBD complexes, we reveal that Omicron's vaccine-escape capability is near 14 times as high as that of the Delta variant. We unveil that Omicron may completely abolish the Eli Lilly antibody cocktail. Omicron RBD mutations may also compromise monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) from Regeneron, AstraZeneca, Celltrion, and Rockefeller University. However, mAbs from GlaxoSmithKline might not be affected much. Our results call for the development of a new generation of vaccines and mAbs that will not be easily affected by viral mutations."

3. Infection Fatality Rate.

Though there are limitations on the availability and accuracy of COVID-19 data around the country, researchers are conducting studies to determine a likely range of the "infection mortality rate" (IFR) of COVID-19. The infection fatality rate is the ratio of deaths divided by the number of actual infections with SARS-CoV-2.

A study by the University of Washington using data through April 20, 2020 calculated the U.S. "infection mortality rate" among symptomatic cases (IFR-S) to be 1.3%.²²⁷

²²⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8751645/>

²²⁷ <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00455>; Study assumptions: We make three assumptions for our analysis: (1) Errors in the numerator and the denominator lead to underreporting of true COVID-19 deaths and cases, respectively; error is smaller for deaths than for cases. (2) Both the errors are declining over time. (3) The errors in the denominator are declining at a faster rate than the error in the numerator.

Assumption #1 is self-evident; both the deaths and the actual cases are undercounted during the initial phase of the epidemic. Because deaths are much more visible events than infections, which, in the case of COVID-19, can go asymptomatic during the first few days of infection, we posit that, at any point in time, the errors in the denominator are larger than the errors in the numerator. Hence, this assumption leads to CFR estimates being larger than the IFR-S, which is typically believed to be true based on observed data.

Another study calculated a global IFR of 1.04%.²²⁸

A study by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine estimated the infection fatality rate on the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship to be 1.2%.²²⁹ Nearly the entire cruise ships 3,711 passengers and crew were tested.

A study²³⁰ published in the International Journal of Infectious Diseases in December 2020, concluded: “Based on a systematic review and meta-analysis of published evidence on COVID-19 until July 2020, the IFR of the disease across populations is 0.68% (0.53%–0.82%). However, due to very high heterogeneity in the meta-analysis, it is difficult to know if this represents a completely unbiased point estimate. It is likely that, due to age and perhaps underlying comorbidities in the population, different places will experience different IFRs due to the disease. Given issues with mortality recording, it is also likely that this represents an underestimate of the true IFR figure. More research looking at age-stratified IFR is urgently needed to inform policymaking on this front.”

As of March 19, 2021, the CDC’s best estimate of the infection fatality rate for COVID-19 is 2.5.²³¹

The generally accepted approximate IFR-S of seasonal influenza is 0.1%.²³²

Medrxiv.org, January 11, 2022, "Clinical outcomes among patients infected with Omicron (B.1.1.529) SARS-CoV-2 variant in southern California:"²³³

NOTE: This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed [what does this mean?]. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.

"The Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant of SARS-CoV-2 has rapidly achieved global dissemination, accounting for most infections in the United States by December 2021. Risk of severe outcomes associated with Omicron infections, as compared

Assumption #2 is our central assumption, which states that under some stationary processes of care delivery, health care supply, and reporting, which are all believed to be improving over time, the errors in both the numerator and the denominator are declining. It implies that we are improving in the measurement of both the numerator and denominator over time, albeit at different rates in different jurisdictions.

Assumption #3 posits that the error in the denominator is declining faster than the error in the numerator. This assumption indicates that the CFR rates, based on the number of cumulative COVID-19 deaths and the cumulative reported COVID-19 cases, are declining over time and are confirmed based on our observed data (described in detail below).

²²⁸ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.05.11.20098780v1>

²²⁹ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.03.05.20031773v2>

²³⁰ *A systematic review and meta-analysis of published research data on COVID-19 infection fatality rates,* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1201971220321809?via%3Dihub>

²³¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/planning-scenarios.html>

²³²

https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.00455?utm_campaign=covid19fasttrack&utm_medium=press&utm_content=basu&utm_source=mediaadvisory&

²³³ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.11.22269045v1>

to earlier SARS-CoV-2 variants, remains unclear.

....

We analyzed clinical and epidemiologic data from cases testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection within the Kaiser Permanente Southern California healthcare system from November 30, 2021 to January 1, 2022....

Results

Our analyses included 52,297 cases with SGTF (Omicron) and 16,982 cases with non-SGTF (Delta [B.1.617.2]) infections, respectively. Hospital admissions occurred among 235 (0.5%) and 222 (1.3%) of cases with Omicron and Delta variant infections, respectively. Among cases first tested in outpatient settings, the adjusted hazard ratios for any subsequent hospital admission and symptomatic hospital admission associated with Omicron variant infection were 0.48 (0.36-0.64) and 0.47 (0.35-0.62), respectively. Rates of ICU admission and mortality after an outpatient positive test were 0.26 (0.10-0.73) and 0.09 (0.01-0.75) fold as high among cases with Omicron variant infection as compared to cases with Delta variant infection. Zero cases with Omicron variant infection received mechanical ventilation, as compared to 11 cases with Delta variant infections throughout the period of follow-up (two-sided $p < 0.001$). Median duration of hospital stay was 3.4 (2.8-4.1) days shorter for hospitalized cases with Omicron variant infections as compared to hospitalized patients with Delta variant infections, reflecting a 69.6% (64.0-74.5%) reduction in hospital length of stay.

Conclusions During a period with mixed Delta and Omicron variant circulation, SARS-CoV-2 infections with presumed Omicron variant infection were associated with substantially reduced risk of severe clinical endpoints and shorter durations of hospital stay."

4. COVID-19 Virus Mutations.

Depending on the level of contagiousness of COVID-19 expressed in the R_0 ²³⁴ value, "the threshold for combined [COVID-19] vaccine efficacy and herd immunity needed for disease extinction" is estimated between 55% and 82% "(i.e., >82% of the population has to be immune, through either vaccination or prior infection, to achieve herd immunity to stop transmission).²³⁵

"The new [SARS-CoV-2] coronavirus is an RNA virus: a collection of genetic

²³⁴ "The basic reproduction number (R_0), pronounced "R naught," is intended to be an indicator of the contagiousness or transmissibility of infectious and parasitic agents.... R_0 has been described as being one of the fundamental and most often used metrics for the study of infectious disease dynamics (7–12). An R_0 for an infectious disease event is generally reported as a single numeric value or low–high range, and the interpretation is typically presented as straightforward; an outbreak is expected to continue if R_0 has a value >1 and to end if R_0 is <1 (13). The potential size of an outbreak or epidemic often is based on the magnitude of the R_0 value for that event (10), and R_0 can be used to estimate the proportion of the population that must be vaccinated to eliminate an infection from that population (14,15). R_0 values have been published for measles, polio, influenza, Ebola virus disease, HIV disease, a diversity of vectorborne infectious diseases, and many other communicable diseases (14,16–18).

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/25/1/17-1901_article
²³⁵ https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0282_article#suggestedcitation

material packed inside a protein shell. Once an RNA virus makes contact with a host, it starts to make new copies of itself that can go on to infect other cells.

RNA viruses, like the flu and measles, are more prone to changes and mutations compared with DNA viruses, such as herpes, smallpox, and human papillomavirus (HPV).

‘In the world of RNA viruses, change is the norm. We expect RNA viruses to change frequently. That’s just their nature,’ said Dr. Mark Schleiss, a pediatric infectious disease specialist and investigator with the Institute for Molecular Virology at the University of Minnesota.

SARS-CoV-2 is no exception, and over the past few months it has been mutating. But the virus has mutated at a very slow pace. And when it does mutate, the new copies aren’t far off from the original virus.

‘The sequences of the original isolates from China are very close to those in viruses circulating in the U.S. and the rest of the world,’ said Dr. John Rose, a senior research scientist in the department of pathology at Yale Medicine who’s helping develop a COVID-19 vaccine.

....

Early research from scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory²³⁶ shows that SARS-CoV-2 has mutated into a new form that may be more contagious.

The new strain is responsible for the vast majority of infections reported around the world since mid-March, according to the new study published in the preprint research website BioRxiv Thursday.

In total, the researchers identified 14 strains of COVID-19 and released their findings to help those working on vaccines and treatments.

That being said, the new dominant strain identified does seem to be more infectious in laboratory settings.

But scientists are now trying to understand how the variation behaves in the body — which may be very different from lab settings. Additionally, the study is in preprint, which means it hasn’t yet been fully peer-reviewed.

It’s also unclear whether the new mutation infects and sickens people differently. At this time, the illness and hospitalization rates caused by the new variation seems to be similar.”²³⁷

Delta Variant

CNN.com, June 14, 2021, “A new coronavirus variant is on the rise. Here's why

²³⁶ <https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.04.29.069054v1>

²³⁷ <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/what-to-know-about-mutation-and-covid-19#The-new-coronavirus-is-mutating,-but-very-slowly>

experts are concerned”²³⁸

“The [Delta variant](#)²³⁹ is on its way to becoming the dominant strain of coronavirus in the US, raising concerns that outbreaks could hit unvaccinated people this fall.

And a new study shows the Delta variant is associated with almost double the risk of hospitalization compared to the Alpha variant.

The Alpha (B.1.1.7) variant, which is ["stickier" and more contagious](#)²⁴⁰ than the original strain of novel coronavirus, became [the dominant strain in the US](#)²⁴¹ this spring.

But health experts worry the Alpha variant could be trumped by the Delta variant, which [appears to be even more transmissible and may cause more severe illness](#)²⁴² for those not vaccinated.

As of June 14, 2021, about 10% of Covid-19 cases in the US can be attributed to the Delta variant. But that proportion is doubling every two weeks, Scott Gottlieb, a former commissioner of the US Food and Drug Administration, said in a CBS interview Sunday. He said the Delta variant will probably take over as the dominant strain of coronavirus in the US.

As of June 22, 2021, the Delta variant now makes up about 20% of all new COVID-19 cases in the U.S.²⁴³

"I think in parts of the country where you have less vaccination -- particularly in parts of the South, where you have some cities where vaccination rates are low -- there's a risk that you could see outbreaks with this new variant," Gottlieb said.

While 52.4% of Americans have received at least one dose of vaccine, only 43.4% have been fully vaccinated, according to data Sunday from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Delta variant could pose a serious risk for states lagging in Covid-19 vaccinations, but the good news is Americans can stave off the danger by getting vaccinated.

Studies suggest those who are fully vaccinated have protection against the Delta variant.

²³⁸ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/14/health/us-coronavirus-monday/index.html>

²³⁹ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/10/health/delta-variant-india-explained-coronavirus-intl-cmd/index.html>

²⁴⁰ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/12/health/b117-covid-variant-young-patients/index.html>

²⁴¹ <https://www.cnn.com/videos/health/2021/04/07/walensky-covid-19-uk-variant-sot-cohen-nr-vpx.cnn>

²⁴² <https://www.cnn.com/2021/06/10/health/delta-variant-india-explained-coronavirus-intl-cmd/index.html>

²⁴³ <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/22/fauci-declares-delta-variant-greatest-threat-to-the-nations-efforts-to-eliminate-covid.html>

"We have the tools to control this and defeat it," Gottlieb said. "We just need to use those tools."

New research shows the Delta variant may lead to more hospitalizations. The Delta variant -- or the B.1.617.2 strain first detected in India -- has been linked to about double the risk of hospitalization compared to the Alpha variant first found in the UK, according to the preliminary findings of a Scottish study published Monday in *The Lancet*.

The Alpha variant used to be the dominant strain in the UK. But last week, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the Delta variant had taken over -- making up 91% of new cases in the UK."

Omicron Variant

"On November 26, 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced a new severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) variant Omicron (B.1.1.529), as a variant of concern (VOC). This variant carries an unusually high number of mutations, 32, on the spike (S) protein, the main antigenic target of antibodies generated by either infections or vaccination. In comparison, the devastating Delta variant has only five S protein mutations, which posed a high potential global risk and has spread internationally."²⁴⁴

"The B.1.1.529 (Omicron) variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was first clinically identified in the United States on December 1, 2021, and spread rapidly. By late December, it became the predominant strain, and by January 15, 2022, it represented 99.5% of sequenced specimens in the United States* (1). The Omicron variant has been shown to be more transmissible and less virulent than previously circulating variants...."²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8751645/>

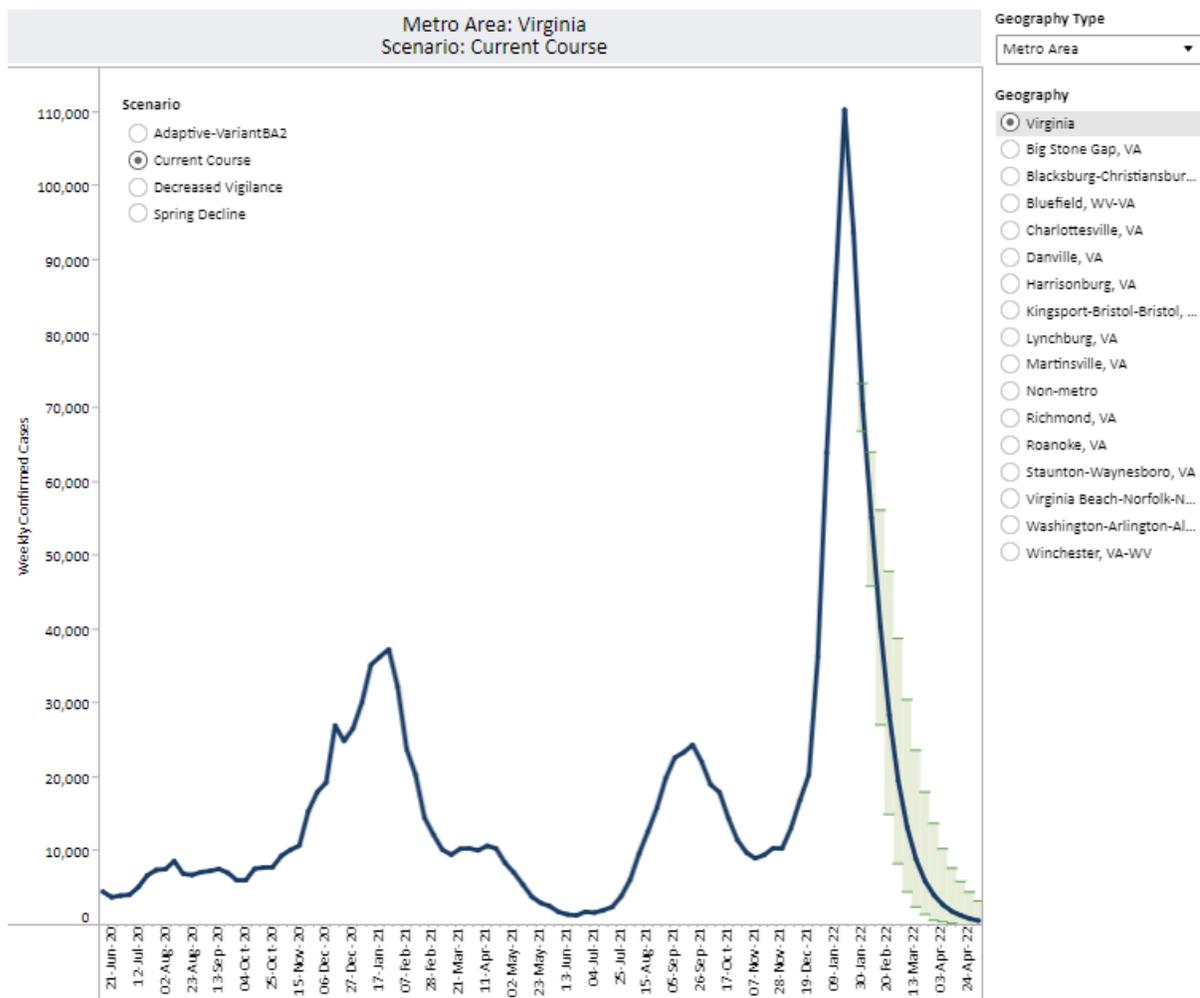
²⁴⁵ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104e4.htm?s_cid=mm7104e4_w

Omicron Modeling in Virginia

UVA [University of Virginia] COVID-19 Model Projections, February 2, 2022.²⁴⁶

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a public health emergency. The future course of COVID-19 depends on all of us. In Virginia, case growth is surging as the Omicron variant moves into Virginia. Based on local conditions and trends, the model estimates new confirmed cases already peaked at 110,225 per week during the week ending January 16, 2022. However, viruses are difficult to forecast and this is just one potential path. One outbreak - or one outbreak avoided - can set us down very different paths. The 95% confidence intervals in the chart below shows the range of potential paths the model currently projects.

Models can help us understand the potential course of COVID-19, but they are not crystal balls. Most models struggle to project policy changes, changes in human behavior, or new or rare events. Seasons, vaccines, new variants or policies may affect COVID-19 spread in ways that are difficult to predict. To provide some insight, the UVA team includes several scenarios. The "Omicron" scenario shows how Omicron may influence cases. The "Surge Control" scenario shows what may occur if we reduce transmission rates by 25%. The "Holiday" scenarios add the potential impact of cooler weather and the holidays.



*Model estimates only, not actual cases. For actual case counts visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

*Cases are calculated by week, so "today," "so far," or any specific date refers to the week end date (Sunday) of the week in which the relevant date falls.

**Estimates are created for the Virginia portion of Metro areas only.

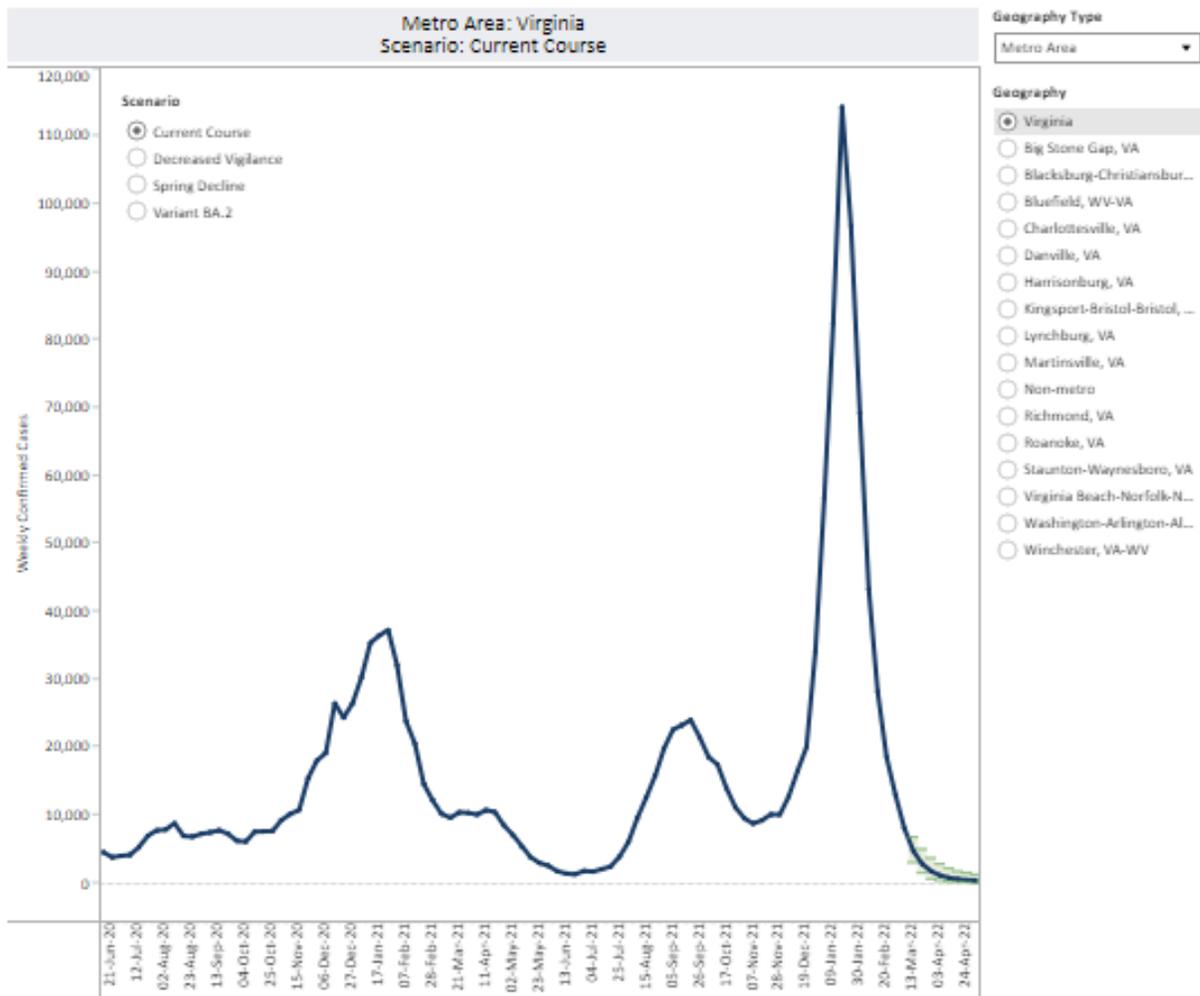
²⁴⁶ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/sec-the-numbers/covid-19-data-insights/uva-covid-19-model/>

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UVA [University of Virginia] COVID-19 Model Projections, March 2, 2022.²⁴⁷

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²⁴⁷Model estimates only, not actual cases. For actual case counts visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

*Cases are calculated by week, so "today," "so far," or any specific date refers to the week end date (Sunday) of the week in which the relevant date falls.

**Estimates are created for the Virginia portion of Metro areas only.

Thehindu.com, March 5, 2022, "Variants do not always evolve to become less virulent."²⁴⁸

"Virulence unpredictable

While the next variant has to necessarily be more infectious than the Omicron variant, whether the variant will be more or less severe cannot be said with certainty. But it is important to remember that right from the very early stage of the pandemic, it became clear that transmission or virus spread begins even before symptoms can show up. That is what makes SARS-CoV-2 very different from the 2002 SARS virus and MERS virus. Since transmission begins even before symptoms set in and well before the disease becomes severe, the transmission characteristic is decoupled from disease. As a result, the natural evolution process selects variants not based on how they cause disease but how they can escape neutralising antibodies.

"Almost all [SARS-CoV-2] transmission happens while people have no or few symptoms, there is no particular reason for severity to play a role in evolutionary selection. NERVTAG [The New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group] thinks Omicron's mildness is likely pure chance and the next one is likely to be more severe again," Dr. William P. Hanage from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, tweeted.

Intrinsic severity

In the second study, a report by the Imperial College COVID-19 response team found 69% reduction in hospitalisation risk in people who have been reinfected compared with primary cases.

"This meaningful but fairly small difference implies that Omicron, Alpha, and wild-type SARS-CoV-2 have similar intrinsic severity," Dr Roby P. Bhattacharyya from Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston and Dr William P. Hanage from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston write in The New England Journal of Medicine.

"Viruses don't inevitably evolve toward being less virulent; evolution simply selects those that excel at multiplying. In the case of COVID-19, in which the vast majority of transmission occurs before disease becomes severe, reduced severity may not be directly selected for at all," Dr. Bhattacharyya and Dr. Hanage write. "Indeed, previous SARS-CoV-2 variants with enhanced transmissibility (e.g., Alpha and Delta) appear to have greater intrinsic severity than their immediate ancestors or the previously dominant variant."

"It is also not true that variants are becoming milder. Delta was more severe than Alpha which was more severe than the original [virus]. Omicron is

²⁴⁸ <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/variants-do-not-always-evolve-to-become-less-virulent/article65192822.ece>

milder than Delta but likely not milder than original [virus]... and it's not part of a steady progression to mildness." Dr. Hanage tweeted."

5. COVID-19 Vaccine Development and Deployment.

How COVID-19 Vaccines Work²⁴⁹

“COVID-19 vaccines help our bodies develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without us having to get the illness. Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection, but with all types of vaccines, the body is left with a supply of “memory” T-lymphocytes as well as B-lymphocytes that will remember how to fight that virus in the future.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to produce T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes after vaccination. Therefore, it is possible that a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and then get sick because the vaccine did not have enough time to provide protection.

Sometimes after vaccination, the process of building immunity can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity.”

Authorized Vaccines

Currently, three vaccines are authorized and recommended to prevent COVID-19.²⁵⁰

Pfizer-BioNTech ^[1]	Moderna ^[1]	Johnson & Johnson's Janssen ^[1,2]
Ages Recommended 5+ years old	Ages Recommended 18+ years old	Ages Recommended 18+ years
Primary Series 2 doses Given 3 weeks (21 days) apart ^[3]	Primary Series 2 doses Given 4 weeks (28 days) apart ^[3]	Primary Series 1 dose
Booster Dose Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 vaccines) 5 months after the last dose in their primary series. Teens 12-17 years old should get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine booster 5 months after the last dose in their primary series.	Booster Dose Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 vaccines) 5 months after the last dose in their primary series.	Booster Dose Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) at least 2 months after the first dose of J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. You may get J&J/Janssen in some situations .
When Fully Vaccinated⁴ 2 weeks after 2 nd dose	When Fully Vaccinated⁴ 2 weeks after 2 nd dose	When Fully Vaccinated⁴ 2 weeks after 1 st dose

²⁴⁹ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/how-they-work.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvaccines%2Fabout-vaccines%2Fhow-they-work.html

²⁵⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html>

Booster Shot

"Everyone ages 16 years and older can get a [booster shot](#) after they have completed their COVID-19 vaccine primary series. People ages 16 to 17 years old can get the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 booster shot.

People ages 18 years and older have the option to either get the same COVID-19 vaccine product as their primary series, or to get a different COVID-19 vaccine. People may have a preference for the vaccine type that they originally received, or they may prefer to get a different booster. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or J&J/Janssen) for people ages 18 years and older. You may consider the benefits and risks of each product and discuss with your healthcare provider which COVID-19 vaccine product is the most appropriate booster for you.

Currently, a booster shot is not recommended for [children younger than 16 years old](#).²⁵¹

Cost is not an obstacle to getting vaccinated against COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccines are available for everyone at no cost. Vaccines were paid for with taxpayer dollars and will be given to all people living in the United States, regardless of insurance or immigration status.²⁵²

Previously infected people, natural immunity and access to a COVID-19 vaccine

Can people with a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccination for all people with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection. However, the timing of the vaccination depends on when a person had SARS-CoV-2 infection and/or when they received treatment.

People with a prior infection: Offer vaccination regardless of history of prior symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection, including to people with prolonged post-COVID-19 symptoms and people who experienced a [breakthrough infection](#).

People with a current infection: Defer vaccination of people with known current SARS-CoV-2 infection until the person has recovered from acute illness (if the person has symptoms) and until [criteria](#) have been met for them to discontinue isolation. This recommendation applies to any vaccine, including the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

"Getting COVID-19 may offer some natural protection, known as immunity. Current evidence suggests that reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19 is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. However, experts don't know for sure how long

²⁵¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>

²⁵² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/no-cost.html>

this protection lasts, and the risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity.”²⁵³ ²⁵⁴

You should be vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19. That’s because experts do not yet know how long you are protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. Studies have shown that in people who have recovered from COVID-19, vaccination provides a strong boost in protection. Learn more about [why getting vaccinated is a safer way to build protection](#) than getting infected.

A study²⁵⁵ published in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report on August 13, 2021 found that:

"Although laboratory evidence suggests that antibody responses following COVID-19 vaccination provide better neutralization of some circulating variants than does natural infection,²⁵⁶ few real-world epidemiologic studies exist to support the benefit of vaccination for previously infected persons. This report details the findings of a case-control evaluation of the association between vaccination and SARS-CoV-2 reinfection in Kentucky during May–June 2021...."

....

"Among Kentucky residents infected with SARS-CoV-2 in 2020, vaccination status of those reinfected during May–June 2021 was compared with that of residents who were not reinfected. In this case-control study, being unvaccinated was associated with 2.34 times the odds of reinfection compared with being fully vaccinated."

NEJM.com, New England Journal of Medicine, February 9, 2022, "Protection against the Omicron Variant from Previous SARS-CoV-2 Infection."²⁵⁷

"Natural infection with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) elicits strong protection against reinfection with the B.1.1.7 (alpha),^{1,2} B.1.351 (beta),¹ and B.1.617.2 (delta)³ variants. However, the B.1.1.529 (omicron) variant harbors multiple mutations that can mediate immune evasion. We estimated the effectiveness of previous infection in preventing symptomatic new cases caused by omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants in Qatar. In this study, we extracted data regarding coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) laboratory testing, vaccination, clinical infection data, and related demographic details from the national SARS-CoV-2 databases, which include all results of polymerase-chain-reaction (PCR) testing, vaccinations, and hospitalizations and deaths for

²⁵³ <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/answering-questions.html>

²⁵⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/immunity-types.htm>

²⁵⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7032e1.htm>

²⁵⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fvaccines%2F%2Fclinical-considerations.html#CoV-19-vaccination and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/testing-overview.html>

²⁵⁷ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2200133>

Covid-19 in Qatar since the start of the pandemic.

....

The effectiveness of previous infection in preventing reinfection was estimated to be 90.2% (95% confidence interval [CI], 60.2 to 97.6) against the alpha variant, 85.7% (95% CI, 75.8 to 91.7) against the beta variant, 92.0% (95% CI, 87.9 to 94.7) against the delta variant, and 56.0% (95% CI, 50.6 to 60.9) against the omicron variant (Table 1). Sensitivity analyses confirmed the study results, as expected for this study design, which is robust regardless of the approach that is used to control for vaccine-induced immunity.⁴ An additional analysis that was adjusted for the interval since previous infection also confirmed the study results (Table S4).

Among the patients with reinfection, progression to severe Covid-19 occurred in one patient with the alpha variant, in two patients with the beta variant, in no patients with the delta variant, and in two patients with the omicron variant. None of the reinfections progressed to critical or fatal Covid-19. The effectiveness with respect to severe, critical, or fatal Covid-19 was estimated to be 69.4% (95% CI, -143.6 to 96.2) against the alpha variant, 88.0% (95% CI, 50.7 to 97.1) against the beta variant, 100% (95% CI, 43.3 to 100) against the delta variant, and 87.8% (95% CI, 47.5 to 97.1) against the omicron variant. (For the delta variant, the calculation of the 95% confidence interval is clarified in a footnote in Table 1.) Limitations of the estimations (e.g., the relatively young population of Qatar) are discussed in Section S1.

Overall, in a national database study in Qatar, we found that the effectiveness of previous infection in preventing reinfection with the alpha, beta, and delta variants of SARS-CoV-2 was robust (at approximately 90%), findings that confirmed earlier estimates.¹⁻³ Such protection against reinfection with the omicron variant was lower (approximately 60%) but still considerable. In addition, the protection of previous infection against hospitalization or death caused by reinfection appeared to be robust, regardless of variant."

Continued need to wear face masks and practice physical distancing after vaccination

CDC Guidance on Face Coverings/Face Masks regardless of vaccination status²⁵⁸:

Use Masks to Slow the Spread of COVID-19

Updated Aug. 12, 2021 Languages Print

Types of Masks

To protect yourself and others from COVID-19, CDC continues to recommend that you wear the most protective mask you can, that fits well and that you will wear consistently. [Learn about the types of masks.](#)

Who Should Wear a Mask?

- People, including children older than 2, should wear a mask in indoor public places if they are:
 - Not fully vaccinated
 - Fully vaccinated and in an area with substantial or high transmission
 - Fully vaccinated and with weakened immune systems
- In general, you do not need to wear a mask in outdoor settings.
 - In areas with [high numbers of COVID-19 cases](#), consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with [close contact](#) with others who are not fully vaccinated.



Effectiveness of wearing masks to mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus

With regard to the efficacy of face masks/face coverings, the CDC states:²⁵⁹

"SARS-CoV-2 infection is transmitted predominately by inhalation of respiratory droplets generated when people cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe. CDC recommends community use of masks, specifically non-valved multi-layer cloth masks, to prevent transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus-laden droplets ("source control"), which is especially relevant for asymptomatic or presymptomatic infected wearers who feel well and may be unaware of their infectiousness to others, and who are estimated to account for more than 50% of transmissions.^{1,2} Masks also help reduce inhalation of these droplets by the wearer ("filtration for wearer protection"). The community benefit of masking for SARS-CoV-2 control is due to the combination of these effects; individual prevention benefit increases with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly.

²⁵⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html>

²⁵⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

Source Control to Block Exhaled Virus

Multi-layer cloth masks block release of exhaled respiratory particles into the environment,³⁻⁶ along with the microorganisms these particles carry.^{7,8} Cloth masks not only effectively block most large droplets (i.e., 20-30 microns and larger)⁹ but they can also block the exhalation of fine droplets and particles (also often referred to as aerosols) smaller than 10 microns ;^{3,5} which increase in number with the volume of speech¹⁰⁻¹² and specific types of phonation.¹³ Multi-layer cloth masks can both block up to 50-70% of these fine droplets and particles^{3,14} and limit the forward spread of those that are not captured.^{5,6,15,16} Upwards of 80% blockage has been achieved in human experiments that have measured blocking of all respiratory droplets,⁴ with cloth masks in some studies performing on par with surgical masks as barriers for source control.

Filtration for Wearer Protection

Studies demonstrate that cloth mask materials can also reduce wearers' exposure to infectious droplets through filtration, including filtration of fine droplets and particles less than 10 microns. The relative filtration effectiveness of various masks has varied widely across studies, in large part due to variation in experimental design and particle sizes analyzed. Multiple layers of cloth with higher thread counts have demonstrated superior performance compared to single layers of cloth with lower thread counts, in some cases filtering nearly 50% of fine particles less than 1 micron .^{14,17-29} Some materials (e.g., polypropylene) may enhance filtering effectiveness by generating triboelectric charge (a form of static electricity) that enhances capture of charged particles^{18,30} while others (e.g., silk) may help repel moist droplets³¹ and reduce fabric wetting and thus maintain breathability and comfort. In addition to the number of layers and choice of materials, other techniques can improve wearer protection by improving fit and thereby filtration capacity. Examples include but are not limited to mask fitters, knotting-and-tucking the ear loops of medical procedure masks, using a cloth mask placed over a medical procedure mask, and nylon hosiery sleeves."

Human Studies of Masking and SARS-CoV-2 Transmission

A study of an outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt, an environment notable for congregate living quarters and close working environments, found that use of face coverings on-board was associated with a 70% reduced risk of infection.

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6923e4.htm>

From: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>:

"At least ten studies have confirmed the benefit of universal masking in community level analyses: in a unified hospital system,⁴⁷ a German city,⁴⁸ two U.S. states,⁴⁹ 50 a panel of 15 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.,^{51, 52} as well as both Canada⁵³ and the U.S.⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶ nationally. Each analysis demonstrated that, following directives

from organizational and political leadership for universal masking, new infections fell significantly.

Two of these studies^{51, 52} and an additional analysis of data from 200 countries that included the U.S.⁵⁶ also demonstrated reductions in mortality. Another 10-site study showed reductions in hospitalization growth rates following mask mandate implementation.⁵⁴ A separate series of cross-sectional surveys in the U.S. suggested that a 10% increase in self-reported mask wearing tripled the likelihood of stopping community transmission.⁵⁷

An economic analysis using U.S. data found that, given these effects, increasing universal masking by 15% could prevent the need for lockdowns and reduce associated losses of up to \$1 trillion or about 5% of gross domestic product.⁵²

Two studies have been improperly characterized by some sources as showing that surgical or cloth masks offer no benefit.^{58,59} A community-based randomized control trial in Denmark during 2020 assessed whether the use of surgical masks reduced the SARS-CoV-2 infection rate among wearers (personal protection) by more than 50%.⁵⁸ Findings were inconclusive,⁵⁸ most likely because the actual reduction in infections was lower. The study was too small (i.e., enrolled about 0.1% of the population) to assess whether masks could decrease transmission from wearers to others (source control).

A second study of 14 hospitals in Vietnam during 2015 found that cloth masks were inferior to surgical masks for protection against clinical upper respiratory illness or laboratory-confirmed viral infection.⁵⁹ The study had a number of limitations including the lack of a true control (no mask) group for comparison, limited source control as hospitalized patients and staff were not masked, unblinded study arm assignments potentially biasing self-reporting of illness, and the washing and re-use of cloth masks by users introducing the risk of infection from self-washing. A follow up study in 2020 found that healthcare workers whose cloth masks were laundered by the hospital were protected equally as well as those that wore medical masks.⁶⁰²⁶⁰

²⁶⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

Table. Studies of the Effect of Mask Wearing on SARS-CoV-2 Infection Risk^a

Table. Studies of the Effect of Mask Wearing on SARS-CoV-2 Infection Risk^a

Source	Location	Population studied	Intervention	Outcome
Hendrix et al	Hair salon in Springfield, Missouri	139 Patrons at a salon with 2 infected and symptomatic stylists	Universal mask wearing in salon (by local ordinance and company policy)	No COVID-19 infections among 67 patrons who were available for follow-up
Payne et al	USS Theodore Roosevelt, Guam	382 US Navy service members	Self-reported mask wearing	Mask wearing reduced risk of infection by 70% (unadjusted odds ratio, 0.30 [95% CI, 0.17-0.52])
Wang Y et al	Households in Beijing, China	124 Households of diagnosed cases comprising 335 people	Self-reported mask wearing by index cases or ≥1 household member prior to index case's diagnosis	Mask wearing reduced risk of secondary infection by 79% (adjusted odds ratio, 0.21 [95% CI, 0.06-0.79])
Doung-ngern et al	Bangkok, Thailand	839 Close contacts of 211 index cases	Self-reported mask wearing by contact at time of high-risk exposure to case	Always having used a mask reduced infection risk by 77% (adjusted odds ratio, 0.23 [95% CI, 0.09-0.60])
Galloway et al	Arizona	State population	Mandatory mask wearing in public	Temporal association between institution of mask wearing policy and subsequent decline in new diagnoses
Rader et al	US	374 021 Persons who completed web-based surveys	Self-reported mask wearing in grocery stores and in the homes of family or friends	A 10% increase in mask wearing tripled the likelihood of stopping community transmission (adjusted odds ratio, 3.53 [95% CI, 2.03-6.43])
Wang X et al	Boston, Massachusetts	9850 Health care workers (HCWs)	Universal masking of HCWs and patients in the Mass General Brigham health care system	Estimated weekly decline in new diagnoses among HCWs of 3.4% after full implementation of the mask wearing policy
Mitze et al	Jena (Thuringia), Germany	City population aged ≥15 y	Mandatory mask wearing in public spaces (eg, public transport, shops)	Estimated daily decline in new diagnoses of 1.32% after implementation of the mask mandate
Van Dyke et al	Kansas	State population	Mandatory mask wearing in public spaces	Estimated case rate per 100 000 persons decreased by 0.08 in counties with mask mandates but increased by 0.11 in those without
Lyu and Wehby	15 US states and Washington, DC	State populations	Mandatory mask wearing in public	Estimated overall initial daily decline in new diagnoses of 0.9% grew to 2.0% at 21 days following mandates
Karaivanov et al	Canada	Country population	Mandatory mask wearing indoors	Estimated weekly 25%-40% decline in new diagnoses following mask mandates

^a See the Supplement for the complete table.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2776536>

Unvaccinated and Not Fully Vaccinated People

APNews.com, June 24, 2021, "Nearly all COVID deaths in US are now among unvaccinated."²⁶¹

" Nearly all COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. now are in people who weren't vaccinated, a staggering demonstration of how effective the shots have been and an indication that deaths per day — now down to under 300 — could be practically zero if everyone eligible got the vaccine.

An Associated Press analysis of available government data from May shows that “breakthrough” infections in fully vaccinated people accounted for fewer than 1,200 of more than 853,000 COVID-19 hospitalizations. That’s about 0.1%.

²⁶¹ <https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-941fcf43d9731c76c16e7354f5d5e187>

And only about 150 of the more than 18,000 COVID-19 deaths in May were in fully vaccinated people. That translates to about 0.8%, or five deaths per day on average.

The AP analyzed figures provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC itself has not estimated what percentage of hospitalizations and deaths are in fully vaccinated people, citing limitations in the data.

Among them: Only about 45 states report breakthrough infections, and some are more aggressive than others in looking for such cases. So the data probably understates such infections, CDC officials said.

Still, the overall trend that emerges from the data echoes what many health care authorities are seeing around the country and what top experts are saying.

Earlier this month, Andy Slavitt, a former adviser to the Biden administration on COVID-19, suggested that 98% to 99% of the Americans dying of the coronavirus are unvaccinated.

And CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said on Tuesday that the vaccine is so effective that “nearly every death, especially among adults, due to COVID-19, is, at this point, entirely preventable.” She called such deaths ‘particularly tragic.’”

How Long Does Vaccine Immunity Last

USAToday.com, August 19, 2021, "Vaccine effectiveness declines over time, studies say"

Protection provided by COVID-19 vaccines declines over time, but protection against the most severe effects of the disease — including hospitalization and death — remains strong, according to three studies published Wednesday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), August 18, 2021, "New COVID-19 Cases and Hospitalizations Among Adults, by Vaccination Status — New York, May 3–July 25, 2021"²⁶²

In this study, current COVID-19 vaccines were highly effective against hospitalization ([vaccine effectiveness] VE >90%) for fully vaccinated New York residents, even during a period during which prevalence of the Delta variant increased from <2% to >80% in the U.S. region that includes New York, societal public health restrictions eased,^{§§} and adult full-vaccine coverage in New York neared 65%. However, during the assessed period, rates of new cases increased among both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated adults,

²⁶² https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e1.htm?s_cid=mm7034e1_w

with lower relative rates among fully vaccinated persons. Moreover, VE against new infection declined from 91.7% to 79.8%. To reduce new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, these findings support the implementation of a layered approach centered on vaccination, as well as other prevention strategies.

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), August 18, 2021, " Effectiveness of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Vaccines in Preventing SARS-CoV-2 Infection Among Nursing Home Residents Before and During Widespread Circulation of the SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 (Delta) Variant — National Healthcare Safety Network, March 1–August 1, 2021"²⁶³

Analysis of nursing home COVID-19 data from NHSN indicated a significant decline in effectiveness of full mRNA COVID-19 vaccination against laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, from 74.7% during the pre-Delta period (March 1–May 9, 2021) to 53.1% during the period when the Delta variant predominated in the United States. This study could not differentiate the independent impact of the Delta variant from other factors, such as potential waning of vaccine-induced immunity. Further research on the possible impact of both factors on VE among nursing home residents is warranted. Because nursing home residents might remain at some risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection despite vaccination, multipronged COVID-19 prevention strategies, including infection control, testing, and vaccination of nursing home staff members, residents, and visitors are critical.

Medrxiv.org, August 8, 2021, "Comparison of two highly-effective mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 during periods of Alpha and Delta variant prevalence"²⁶⁴

Although clinical trials and real-world studies have affirmed the effectiveness and safety of the FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines, reports of breakthrough infections and persistent emergence of new variants highlight the need to vigilantly monitor the effectiveness of these vaccines. Here we compare the effectiveness of two full-length Spike protein-encoding mRNA vaccines from Moderna (mRNA-1273) and Pfizer/BioNTech (BNT162b2) in the Mayo Clinic Health System over time from January to July 2021, during which either the Alpha or Delta variant was highly prevalent. We defined cohorts of vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals from Minnesota (n = 25,589 each) matched on age, sex, race, history of prior SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing, and date of full vaccination.

Both vaccines were highly effective during this study period against SARS-CoV-2 infection (mRNA-1273: 86%, 95%CI: 81-90.6%; BNT162b2: 76%, 95%CI: 69-81%) and COVID-19 associated hospitalization (mRNA-1273: 91.6%, 95% CI: 81-97%; BNT162b2: 85%, 95% CI: 73-93%).

²⁶³ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e3.htm?s_cid=mm7034e3_w

²⁶⁴ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.08.06.21261707v1>

However, in July, the effectiveness against infection was considerably lower for mRNA-1273 (76%, 95% CI: 58-87%) with an even more pronounced reduction in effectiveness for BNT162b2 (42%, 95% CI: 13-62%).

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), August 18, 2021, Sustained Effectiveness of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Vaccines Against COVID-19 Associated Hospitalizations Among Adults — United States, March–July 2021²⁶⁵

In a multistate network that enrolled adults hospitalized during March–July 2021, effectiveness of 2 doses of mRNA vaccine against COVID-19–associated hospitalization was sustained over a follow-up period of 24 weeks (approximately 6 months). These findings of sustained VE [vaccine effectiveness] were consistent among subgroups at highest risk for severe outcomes from COVID-19, including older adults, adults with three or more chronic medical conditions, and those with immunocompromising conditions. Overall VE in adults with immunocompromising conditions was lower than that in those without immunocompromising conditions but was sustained over time in both populations.

These data provide evidence for sustained high protection from severe COVID-19 requiring hospitalization for up to 24 weeks among fully vaccinated adults, which is consistent with data demonstrating mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have the capacity to induce durable immunity, particularly in limiting the severity of disease. Alpha variants were the predominant viruses sequenced, although Delta variants became dominant starting in mid-June, consistent with national surveillance data. Because of limited sequenced virus, Delta-specific VE was not assessed. VE was similar during June–July when circulation of Delta increased in the United States compared with VE during March–May when Alpha variants predominated, although further surveillance is needed.

CDC, October 29, 2021, "Science Brief: SARS-CoV-2 Infection-induced and Vaccine-induced Immunity."²⁶⁶

Available evidence shows that fully vaccinated individuals and those previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 each have a low risk of subsequent infection for at least 6 months. Data are presently insufficient to determine an antibody titer threshold that indicates when an individual is protected from infection. At this time, there is no FDA-authorized or approved test that providers or the public can use to reliably determine whether a person is protected from infection.

6. Virginia Vaccination Data

²⁶⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7034e2.htm>

²⁶⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/vaccine-induced-immunity.html>

Virginia has one of the highest vaccination rates in the country (10th among states and the District of Columbia as of February 5, 2022²⁶⁷).

Virginia Vaccination Summary as of February 10, 2022.²⁶⁸

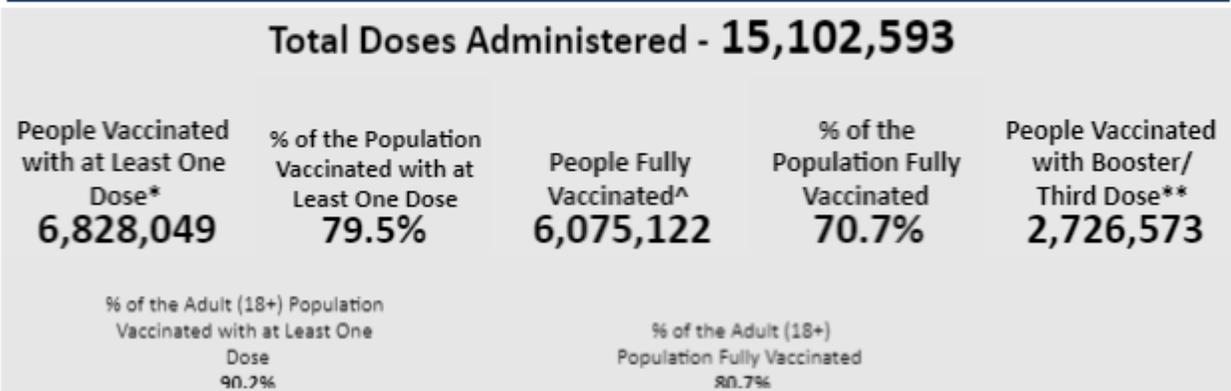


COVID-19 in Virginia: Vaccine Summary



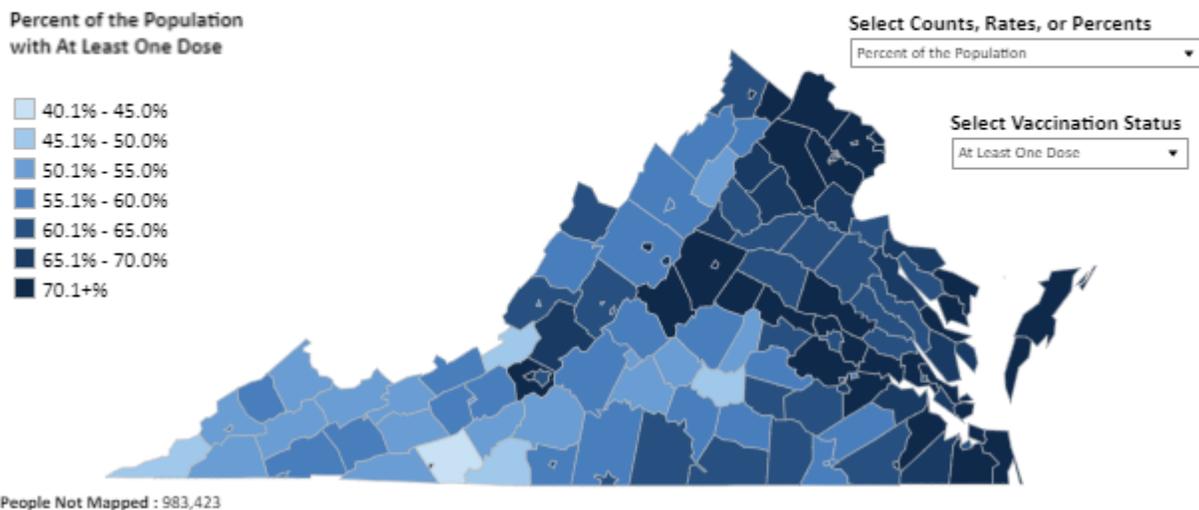
Dashboard Updated: 2/10/2022

COVID-19 Vaccinations in Virginia



* People vaccinated with one dose of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.
[^] People vaccinated with two doses of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.
 ** People vaccinated with a booster or third dose after the primary vaccine series, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are not included.

People Vaccinated by Locality of Residence and Vaccination Status - Percent of the Population



²⁶⁷ <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/public-health/states-ranked-by-percentage-of-population-vaccinated-march-15.html>

²⁶⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

Virginia Vaccination Summary as of March 14, 2022.²⁶⁹



COVID-19 in Virginia: Vaccine Summary



Dashboard Updated: 3/14/2022

COVID-19 Vaccinations in Virginia

Total Doses Administered - 15,487,071

People Vaccinated with at Least One Dose* 6,966,311	% of the Population Vaccinated with at Least One Dose 81.1%	People Fully Vaccinated^ 6,208,908	% of the Population Fully Vaccinated 72.3%	People Vaccinated with Booster/ Third Dose** 2,847,103
% of the Adult (18+) Population Vaccinated with at Least One Dose 97.0%		% of the Adult (18+) Population Fully Vaccinated 87.7%		

* People vaccinated with one dose of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single-dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.

^ People vaccinated with two doses of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single-dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.

** People vaccinated with a booster or third dose after the primary vaccine series, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are not included.

People Vaccinated by Locality of Residence and Vaccination Status - Percent of the Population

Percent of the Population with At Least One Dose

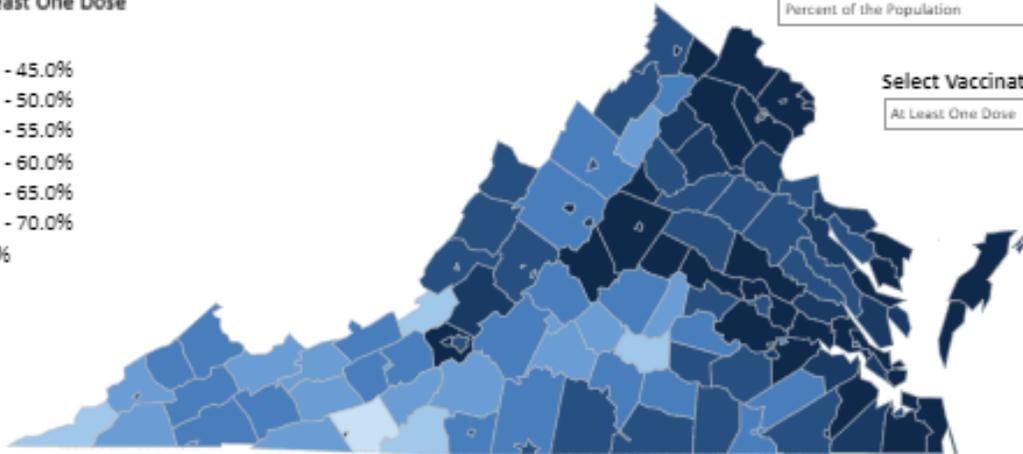
- 40.1% - 45.0%
- 45.1% - 50.0%
- 50.1% - 55.0%
- 55.1% - 60.0%
- 60.1% - 65.0%
- 65.1% - 70.0%
- 70.1+%

Select Counts, Rates, or Percents

Percent of the Population

Select Vaccination Status

At Least One Dose



People Not Mapped : 1,070,794

7. Community and Workplace Transmission

Although U. S. and Virginia vaccination rates and case rates are very promising and heading in the right directions, most scientific sources indicate that COVID-19

²⁶⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

exposures in the workplace will not be going away anytime soon:

An uneven vaccine rollout could eventually make coronavirus outbreaks look a bit like measles outbreaks,...A single person carrying the measles virus can infect 12 or more people, but the spread of the virus is mostly contained through high vaccination rates. There are, however, still outbreaks in communities where immunization rates are low...Occasionally, those outbreaks spill out into the wider community...it's unlikely we'll ever eradicate the coronavirus — not any time soon, anyway. There's only one virus scientists have wiped out with a vaccine: smallpox. The World Health Organization began that effort in 1959, declaring the disease eradicated by 1980.²⁷⁰

CDC modeling of “Projected Incident Cases by Epidemiological Week and by Scenario for Round 5” shows a wide variance of future incident cases depending on the prevalence of vaccinations and the use of NPI (NonPharmaceutical Interventions such as face coverings and physical distancing)).²⁷¹

"Community transmission," also called "community spread," means people have been infected with SARS-CoV-2 in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected. The level of community transmission may be obtained from the VDH website and is assessed using, at a minimum, two metrics: new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 persons in the last 7 days and percentage of positive SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic nucleic acid amplification tests in the last 7 days. For each of these metrics, CDC classifies transmission values as low, moderate, substantial, or high. If the values for each of these two metrics differ (e.g., one indicates moderate and the other low), then the higher of the two should be used for decision-making.²⁷²

CDC core indicators of and thresholds for community transmission levels of SARS-CoV-2:

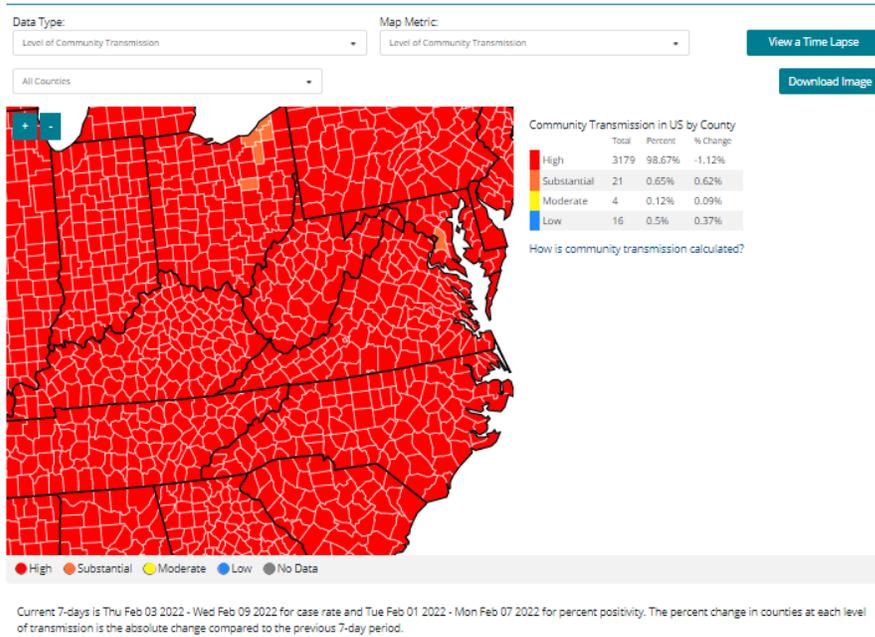
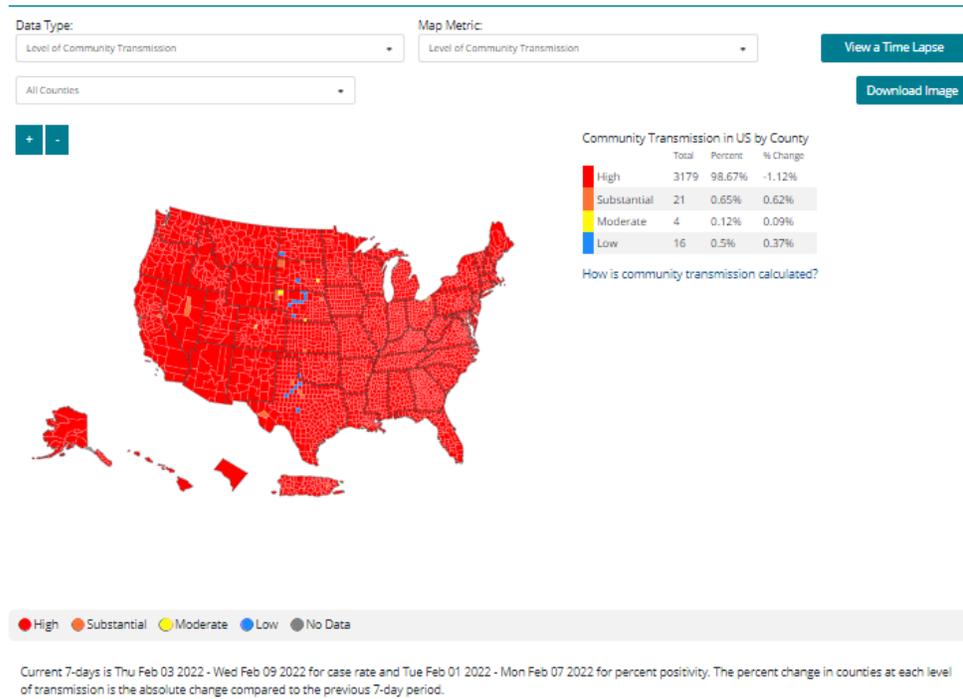
<u>Indicator Level</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Substantial</u>	<u>High</u>
<u>New COVID-19 cases per 100,000 the last 7 days</u>	<u>0–9.99</u>	<u>10.00–49.99</u>	<u>50.00–99.99</u>	<u>≥100.00</u>
<u>Percentage of positive SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic nucleic acid amplification tests in the last 7 days</u>	<u>≤5.00</u>	<u>5.00–7.99</u>	<u>8.00–9.99</u>	<u>≥10.00</u>

²⁷⁰ <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/health/story/2021-05-22/the-pandemic-will-end-but-the-coronavirus-is-probably-here-to-stay-heres-why>

²⁷¹ <https://covid19scenariomodelinghub.org/viz.html>

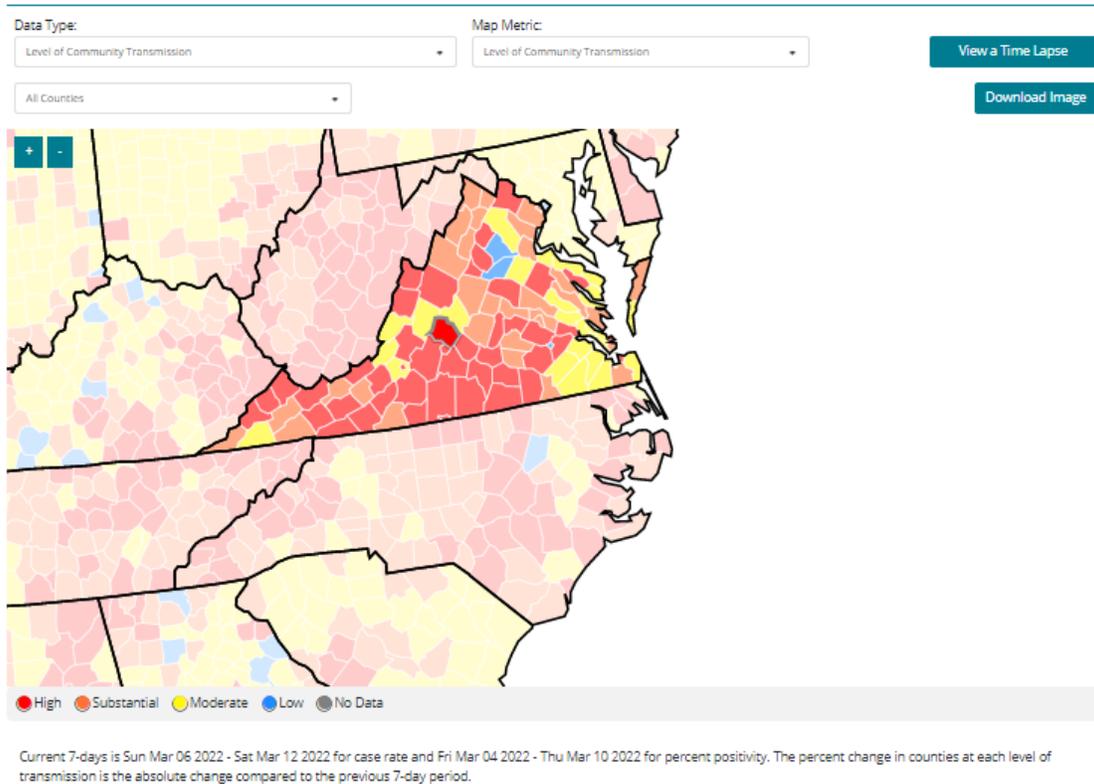
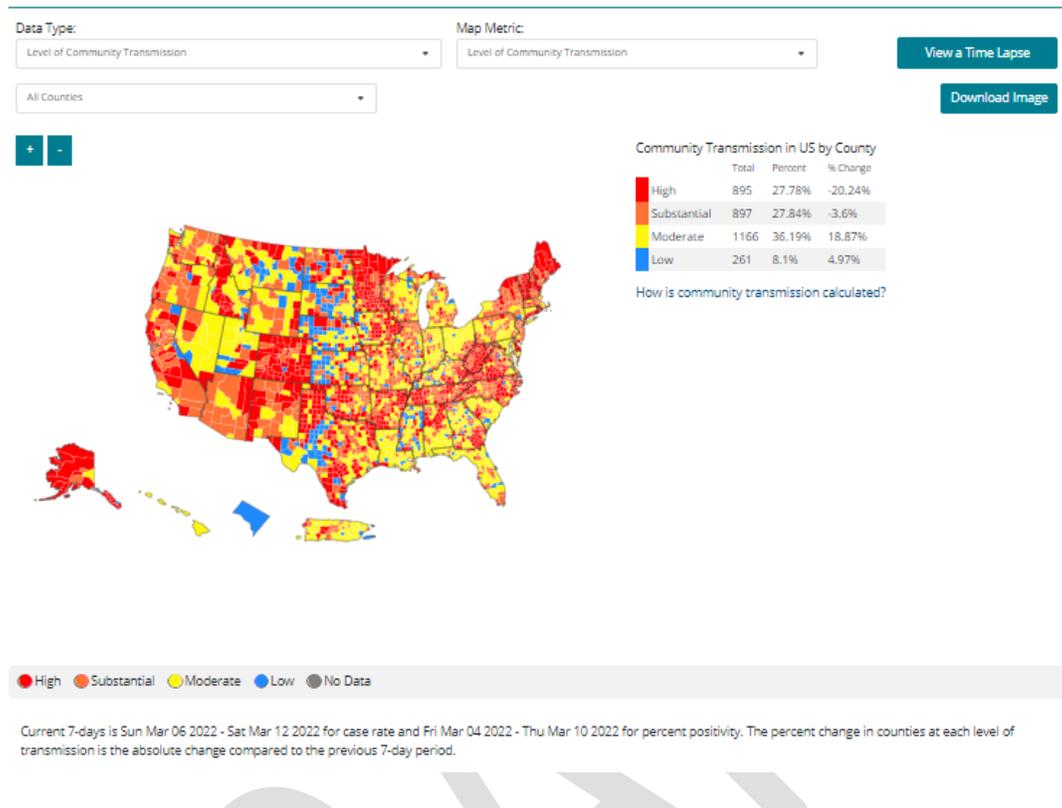
²⁷² <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Revisions-to-Proposed-Amendments-to-the-FPS-for-COVID-19-16VAC25-220-Adopted-06.29.2021.pdf> and https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7030e2.htm#T1_down

Community transmission levels as of February 10, 2022.²⁷³



²⁷³ <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

Community transmission levels as of March 14, 2022.²⁷⁴



²⁷⁴ <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

Weekly VOSH COVID-19 Response report for June 11, 2021:

SUMMARY VOSH COVID-19 RESPONSE									
Dates	4/23/21	4/30/21	5/7/21	5/14/21	5/21/21	5/28/21	6/4/21	6/11/21	Total
Phone Calls									
Total Phone Calls	94	69	64	110	113	92	78	70	12948
UPAs Complaints OIS Statewide	19	8	12	7	4	1	4	1	1943 *
# Inspections	6	1	3	3	0	2	0	0	208 **
<i>Complaints, Referrals, Hospitalizations & Fatalities</i>									
<i>Inspections w/ Violations</i>	57	57	57	58	61	63	66	70	70
<i>Inspections Closed</i>	99	104	105	109	117	118	119	125	125
<i># of Violations Issued - Final Order Cases (Willful, Serious, OTS)</i>	148	198	198	202	207	211	221	232	232
<i>#EEs Exposed</i>	7065	12316	12316	12364	12519	12584	12690	12806	12806
# Hospitalizations	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	78 ***
Fatalities/Workplace deaths	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	44
# of Emails forwarded to Regional/Field Offices from MF									
<i>COVID-19 positive Cases Reports (ETS) Complaints</i> <i>(does not include reports submitted by phone in the Regional Offices).</i>	3	3	2	2	0	2	0	0	669
# REDCAP Notifications (Launched 09/28/20)	283	267	201	126	88	93	45	48	25832
# REDCAP Notifications (3 or more cases reported)	80	50	30	33	14	14	9	5	6714
<i>* Time Range: 01/01/2020 to 06/11/2021 UPA numbers may change as Regions update the system.</i>									
<i>**Inspections opened (Total: 208 - Draft + Final)</i>									
<i>% of COVID-19 Inspections closed - 60% (125)</i>									
<i>% of COVID-19 Inspections with violations - 34% (70)</i>									
<i>***There are Employers submitting multiple notifications. Some of the hospitalizations reported to VOSH later resulted in fatalities.</i>									

Fatalities - Calendar Year	2020	2021	% [2021]
Total	57	24	33
COVID-19	31	13	54%
Fall	8	6	25%
Struck-By	12	4	17%
Caught-in	5	1	4%
Electrocution	1		0%

NOTE: The “REDCAP Notifications” row has statistics for employer reported outbreaks to VDH of 2 or more positive COVID-19 employee cases within a 14 day period of employees who were at the facility within the previous 14 days.

The “REDCAP Notifications (3 or more cases reported) row has statistics for employer reported outbreaks to DOLI of 3 or more positive COVID-19 employee cases within a 14 day period of employees who were at the facility within the previous 14 days. (During the week of 6/4/2021, the 5 reports of 3 or more cases to DOLI are included in the total of 48 REDCAP notifications overall).

NOTE: “UPA” means unprogrammed activity (complaints, referrals, fatalities, hospitalizations). “MF” means Occupational Safety Compliance Director Marta Fernandes

Weekly VOSH COVID-19 Response report for February 4, 2022:

SUMMARY VOSH COVID-19 RESPONSE											
Dates	11/26/21	12/3/21	12/10/21	12/17/21	12/31/21	1/7/22	1/14/22	1/21/22	1/28/22	2/4/22	Total
Phone Calls											
Total Phone Calls	35	56	70	50	81	133	113	131	114	72	15483
UPAs Complaints OIS Statewide	2	13	16	15	34	45	22	9	31	10	2455 *
# Inspections	0	0	1	3	8	3	2	0	2	5	274 **
<i>Complaints, Referrals, Hospitalizations & Fatalities</i>											
<i>Inspections w/ Violations</i>	106	106	106	106	106	106	107	110	112	117	117
<i>Inspections Closed</i>	185	186	187	187	187	189	190	190	191	192	192
<i># of Violations Issued - Final Order Cases (Willful, Serious, OTS)</i>	362	358	358	358	358	358	367	374	379	401	379
<i>#EEs Exposed</i>	16595	16588	16588	16588	16588	16588	16603	17907	17995	18993	18993
<i>Initial Penalty (\$)</i>	\$ 840,125	\$ 840,125	\$ 840,125	\$ 840,125	\$ 840,125	\$ 840,125	\$ 853,815	\$ 866,649	\$ 872,704	\$ 883,759	\$ 883,759
# Hospitalizations	0	1	1	3	4	0	2	0	2	4	118 ***
Fatalities/Workplace deaths	0	0	0	1	5	2	1	0	1	1	61
# of Emails forwarded to Regional/Field Offices from MF											
COVID-19 positive Cases Reports (ETS) Complaints (does not include reports submitted by phone in the Regional Offices).	1	0	4	2	4	7	10	3	3	2	743
# REDCAP Notifications (Launched 09/28/20)	207	461	531	641	2487	3228	3949	2728	2174	1239	52,176
# REDCAP Notifications (3 or more cases reported 2 or more - Since 09/10/21)	133	293	347	429	1881	2457	2967	1939	1441	782	23,717

* Time Range: 01/01/2020 to 02/04/2022 | UPA numbers may change as Regions update the system.

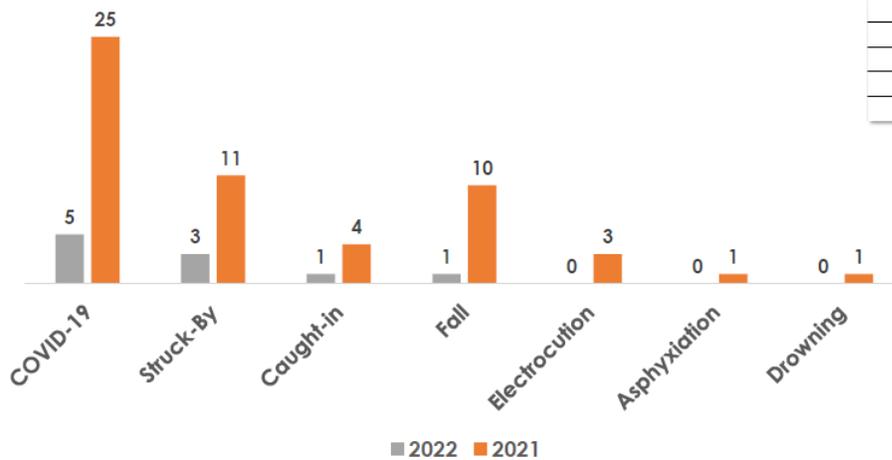
**Inspections opened (Total: 274 - Draft + Final)

% of COVID-19 Inspections closed - 70% (192)

% of COVID-19 Inspections with violations - 43% (117)

***There are Employers submitting multiple notifications. Some of the hospitalizations reported to VOSH later resulted in fatalities.

CY 22 vs 21 | Fatalities – 02/04/22



Fatalities Calendar Year	2020	2021	2022
Total	57	55	10
COVID-19	31	25	5
Struck-By	12	11	3
Caught-in	5	4	1
Fall	8	10	1
Electrocution	1	3	0
Asphyxiation	0	1	0
Drowning	0	1	0

Weekly VOSH COVID-19 Response report for March 11, 2022:

SUMMARY VOSH COVID-19 RESPONSE											
Dates	1/7/22	1/14/22	1/21/22	1/28/22	2/4/22	2/11/22	2/18/22	2/25/22	3/4/22	3/11/22	Total
Phone Calls											
Total Phone Calls	133	113	131	114	72	50	52	42	36	32	15695
UPAs Complaints OIS Statewide	45	22	9	31	10	5	4	5	3	4	2473 *
# Inspections	3	2	0	2	5	4	1	1	0	0	282 **
<i>Complaints, Referrals, Hospitalizations & Fatalities</i>											
<i>Inspections w/ Violations</i>	106	107	110	112	117	121	125	127	129	133	133
<i>Inspections Closed</i>	189	190	190	191	192	196	201	202	207	207	207
<i># of Violations Issued - Final Order Cases (Willful, Serious, OIS)</i>	358	367	374	379	401	415	428	440	443	461	461
<i>#EES Exposed</i>	16588	16603	17907	17995	18993	19197	19318	19373	20384	20881	20881
<i>Initial Penalty (\$)</i>	\$ 840,125	\$ 853,815	\$ 866,649	\$ 872,704	\$ 883,759	\$ 901,176	\$ 937,574	\$ 941,104	\$ 941,104	\$ 968,489	\$ 968,489
# Hospitalizations	0	2	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	118 ***
Fatalities/Workplace deaths	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	62
# of Emails forwarded to Regional/Field Offices from MF											
COVID-19 positive Cases Reports (ETS) Complaints <i>(does not include reports submitted by phone in the Regional Offices).</i>	7	10	3	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	745
# REDCAP Notifications (Launched 09/28/20)	3228	3949	2728	2174	1362	937	714	384	242	178	54,754
# REDCAP Notifications (3 or more cases reported 2 or more - Since 09/10/21)	2457	2967	1939	1441	875	567	479	209	136	97	25,298

* Time Range: 01/01/2020 to 03/11/2022 | UPA numbers may change as Regions update the system.

**Inspections opened (Total: 282 - Draft + Final)

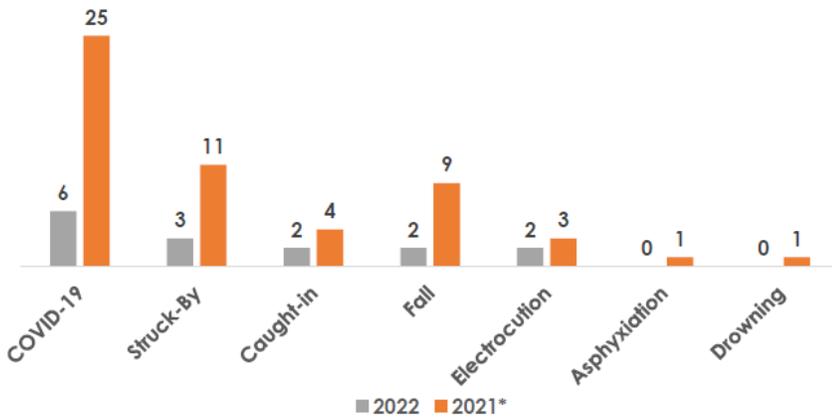
% of COVID-19 Inspections closed - 73% (207)

% of COVID-19 Inspections with violations - 47% (133)

***There are Employers submitting multiple notifications. Some of the hospitalizations reported to VOSH later resulted in fatalities.

CY 22 vs 21 | Fatalities – 03/11/22

Fatalities Calendar Year	2020	2021*	2022
Total	57	54	15
COVID-19	31	25	6
Struck-By	12	11	3
Caught-in	5	4	2
Fall	8	9	2
Electrocution	1	3	2
Asphyxiation	0	1	0
Drowning	0	1	0



*Provisional – Investigations still ongoing.

E. Virginia VWCC and VOSH Statistics.

1. Virginia Workers Compensation Statistics as of May 31, 2020.²⁷⁵

Since February, 2020, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission received 3,154 COVID-19 related claims as of May 31, 2020 in a wide variety of occupational settings, representing a nearly 44.5% increase in claims over a 20 day period since May 11, 2020 (2,182 claims).

NOTE 1: Individual private self-insurers are not included in these statistics.

NOTE 2: Most but not all claims are assigned a NAICS code (North American Industrial Classification Code). As of May 31, 2020, 18.4 % (581 claims) of claims were not assigned a NAICS code. A cursory review of the non-NAICS claims revealed that a significant number were in healthcare or long term care environments.

NOTE 3: Workers classified as independent contractors are not included in these statistics. There is a practice known as "misclassification"²⁷⁶ of employees as independent contractors that has been found to be prevalent in certain industries²⁷⁷ in Virginia that impacts the ability to obtain accurate workers' compensation data.

2. Virginia Workers Compensation Statistics as of November 30, 2020.

Since February, 2020, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission received 9,773 COVID-19 related claims as of November 30, 2020.

3. Virginia Workers Compensation Statistics as of June 15, 2021.

Since February, 2020, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission received 15,770 COVID-19 related claims as of June 15, 2021.

²⁷⁵ Virginia Department of Human Resources Workers' Compensation Statistics as of May 31, 2020.

As of May 31, 2020, the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Workers' Compensation Division has received 42 claims involving COVID-19 exposure. Agencies involved included: Library of Virginia, State Corporation Commission, Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Virginia Department of Corrections, Virginia Department of Forestry, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, Virginia Department of Military Affairs, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, and Virginia State Police.

²⁷⁶ <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/vosh-programs/misclassification-in-the-workplace/>

²⁷⁷

[http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/MainSite/Content/Licensees/JLARC_Employee%20Misclassification%20Report%20\(2012\).pdf](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/MainSite/Content/Licensees/JLARC_Employee%20Misclassification%20Report%20(2012).pdf)

VWCC Reports Thirty-three (33) Employee Deaths as of June 15, 2021

4. Virginia Workers Compensation Statistics as of January 24, 2022.

Since February, 2020, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission received 20,266 COVID-19 related claims as of January 24, 2022.

VWCC Reports forty-nine (49) COVID-19 associated Employee Deaths as of January 24, 2022.

3. Deaths, Hospitalizations, and Employee Complaints reported to the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry.

Pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-51.1.D,²⁷⁸ employers must report employee deaths and hospitalizations to DOLI.

NOTE: The VOSH Program has investigated an average of 37 annual work-related²⁷⁹ employee deaths over the last five calendar years. The 31 COVID-19 death notifications in 2020 would represent 84% of the deaths investigated by VOSH in an average year.

The 13 COVID-19 death notifications in 2021 would represent 35% of the deaths investigated by VOSH in an average year.

Total fatalities and hospitalizations related to COVID-19 reported to VOSH through February 4, 2022 are 61 and 118 respectively.

4. VOSH Inspection and Citation History.

NOTE: See ATTACHMENT F for VOSH Investigation and Inspection Procedures.

See ATTACHMENT H for a list of VOSH Violations Issued in COVID-19 Cases Opened from February 1, 2020 to January 21, 2022.

Inspections for All COVID-19 Inspections through January 28, 2022:

Inspections in Progress	25
Inspections Closed with No Violations	106
Inspections with Violations	102

²⁷⁸ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-51.1/>

²⁷⁹ NOTE: The VOSH Program will ultimately make a determination as to whether an employee's death due to COVID-19 was work-related or not. An infectious disease such as COVID-19 presents additional difficulties to investigators when it comes to determining work-relatedness.

Total Inspections 233²⁸⁰

Violation Types (current)

Serious	204	(61.8%)
Other-than-serious	119	(36.1%)
Willful	7	(2.1%)
Repeat	0	(0%)

Total Violations 330²⁸¹

Initial Penalties Issued: \$781,010.00

F. Workplace exposures to SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 no longer constitute a grave danger to employees and employers in Virginia pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

1. Statutory Construction of Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

Va. Code §40.1-22(6) provides the Board procedures for adopting an Emergency Temporary Standard and Permanent Standard:

§ 40.1-22. Safety and Health Codes Commission continued as Safety and Health Codes Board.

....

(6) Chapter 40 (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) of Title 2.2 shall apply to the adoption of rules and regulations under this section and to proceedings before the Board.

(6a) The Board shall provide, without regard to the requirements of Chapter 40 (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) of Title 2.2, for an emergency temporary standard to take immediate effect upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation, published in the City of Richmond, Virginia, **if it determines that employees are exposed to grave danger from exposure to substances or agents determined to be toxic or physically harmful or from new hazards**, and that such emergency standard is necessary to protect employees from such danger. The publication mentioned herein shall constitute notice that the Board intends to adopt such standard within a period of six months. **The Board by similar publication shall prior to the expiration of six months give notice of the time and date of, and conduct a hearing on, the adoption of a permanent standard.** The emergency temporary standard shall expire within six months or when superseded by a permanent standard, whichever occurs first, or when repealed by the Board.
(Emphasis added).

²⁸⁰ OSHA Information System Scan Summary Report for COVID-19 Inspections From January 1, 2020 to January 28, 2022

²⁸¹ OSHA Information Violation Detail Data Report for COVID-19 Violation Issued From January 1, 2020 to January 28, 2022

The term “grave danger” is not defined in the statute, but has been addressed in federal court cases surrounding federal OSHA’s similar statutory requirement in the OSH Act, §6(c), 29 U.S.C. § 655(c)²⁸² (See case law discussion above).

From *International Union, United Auto., Aerospace, and Agr. Implement Workers of America, UAW v. Donovan*, 590 F. Supp. 747 (D.D.C. 1984), where OSHA declined to promulgate an ETS on formaldehyde in the workplace. The court action was brought in district court challenging decision under the federal APA:

“The ‘grave danger’ and ‘necessity’ findings must be based on evidence of actual, prevailing industrial conditions, i.e., current levels of employee exposure to the substance in question.” *Id.* at 751.

The Court also agreed with the defendant's position that “A danger rises to the level of ‘grave’ when, based on actual workplace conditions, employees are faced with a risk of contracting serious disease which is substantially greater than a ‘significant risk [a finding by OSHA of “significant risk of material health impairment”²⁸³ to employees from an occupational health hazard is necessary to support the adoption of a health standard]. *Id.* at 755.

2. Finding that SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in Virginia that necessitates the continued existence of the Virginia Standard to protect employees from such danger.

Staff of the Department of Labor and Industry recommends that the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board make a finding that there is no longer a continued need for the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, based on emerging scientific and medical evidence that the current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a), and as discussed in the U. S. Supreme Court’s decision in *National Federation of*

²⁸² https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section_6

²⁸³ “Before OSHA promulgates any permanent health or safety standard, it must make a “threshold finding” that “it is at least more likely than not that long-term exposure” to the regulated substance at current exposure levels “presents a significant risk of material impairment” that “can be eliminated or lessened by a change in practices.” *Industrial Union Department, AFLCIO v. American Petroleum Institute (Benzene)*, 448 U.S. 607, 642, 653 (1980) (plurality) The Supreme Court has provided the guidepost that OSHA follows: a one-in-a-thousand risk that exposure to the regulated substance will be fatal can reasonably be considered significant but a one-in-a-billion risk is likely not significant. *Id.* at 655–56.

OSHA must support its significant risk finding with substantial evidence. *Id.* at 653. Although it must rely on a “body of reputable scientific thought” when assessing risk, *id.* at 656, OSHA does not have to “calculate the exact probability of harm” or support its finding “with anything approaching scientific certainty,” *id.* at 655–56. OSHA is entitled to “some leeway” when its “findings must be made on the frontiers of scientific knowledge.” *Id.* at 656. We “do not reweigh the evidence and come to our own conclusion[s]; rather, we assess the reasonableness of OSHA’s conclusion.” *Public Citizen Health Research Group v. Tyson (Ethylene Oxide)*, 796 F.2d 1479, 1495 (D.C. Cir. 1986).

North America’s Building Trades Unions v. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and United States Department of Labor, No. 16-1105, [https://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/03C747A5AB141C90852581FE0055A642/\\$file/16-1105-1710179.pdf](https://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/03C747A5AB141C90852581FE0055A642/$file/16-1105-1710179.pdf)

NOTE: Please note that by recommending the Board make a finding that SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 work-related hazards no longer constitute a grave danger to employees, the Department is not saying that the virus does not constitute a "significant risk" to employees, which would be the basis for adopting an OSHA standard. However, if the Board wished to undertake such a rulemaking, it would have to proceed under the requirements of Va. Code §40.1-22(5) and -22(6)²⁸⁵ and the notice and comment procedures of the Virginia Administrative Process Act.²⁸⁶

The Board has previously found that the Alpha variants presented a grave danger to employees in support of its adoption of the original Virginia Emergency Temporary Standard (Virginia ETS) effective July 27, 2020 and the permanent standard adopted effective January 27, 2021. The Board also found that the emerging Delta variant presented a grave danger to employees in support of its adoption of amendments to the permanent standard effective September 8, 2021. At those times, the Board was presented with supporting information including, but not limited to:

- that complications from the Alpha and Delta variants included "pneumonia and trouble breathing, organ failure in several organs, heart problems, a severe lung condition that causes a low amount of oxygen to go through your bloodstream to your organs (acute respiratory distress syndrome), blood clots, acute kidney injury, additional viral and bacterial infections, permanent long term injury to the body, and death."²⁸⁷
- that the Alpha variant was highly transmissible
- no vaccines were available during the date range of the Virginia ETS
- the infection fatality rate (IFR) for the Alpha variant was significantly higher than that posed by seasonal influenza²⁸⁸
- studies indicated that the Delta variant was more transmissible than the Alpha variant²⁸⁹
- studies indicated that the Delta variant was linked to higher risk of hospitalizations than the Alpha variant²⁹⁰

As is supported by the information presented below and in the administrative record presented to the Board, based on emerging scientific and medical evidence, in contrast to the grave danger posed by the Alpha and Delta variants, it is the Department's position that it appears that there is no longer a basis for concluding that the current widespread variant of the virus (Omicron) constitutes a grave danger to employees in the workplace:

²⁸⁴ https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/21a244_hgci.pdf

²⁸⁵ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-22/>

²⁸⁶ <http://register.dls.virginia.gov/process.shtml>

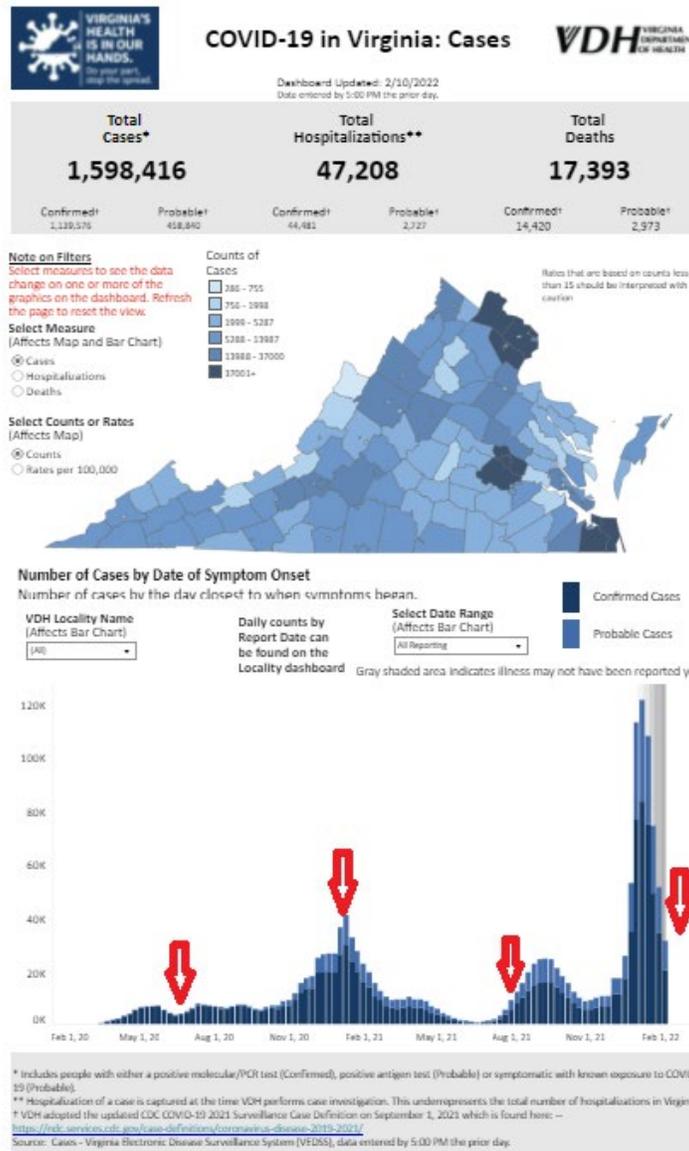
²⁸⁷ Page 208, https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\32907\Agenda_DOLI_32907_v6.pdf

²⁸⁸ *Id.* at 62-63.

²⁸⁹ *Id.* at 81.

²⁹⁰ *Id.* at page 82.

- the Omicron variant is more transmissible than the Delta variant and quickly replaced the Delta variant as the dominant cause of infections in the United States and Virginia (the first case of Omicron in Virginia was reported December 9, 2021²⁹¹ and as of January 7, 2022, Omicron accounted for 94% of new cases in Virginia^{292 293}
- the extremely rapid spread of the Omicron variant combined with its higher transmissibility rate resulted in Virginia daily case reported peaks 300-400% higher statewide than those for the Alpha and Delta variants (**February 10, 2022 data**):²⁹⁴



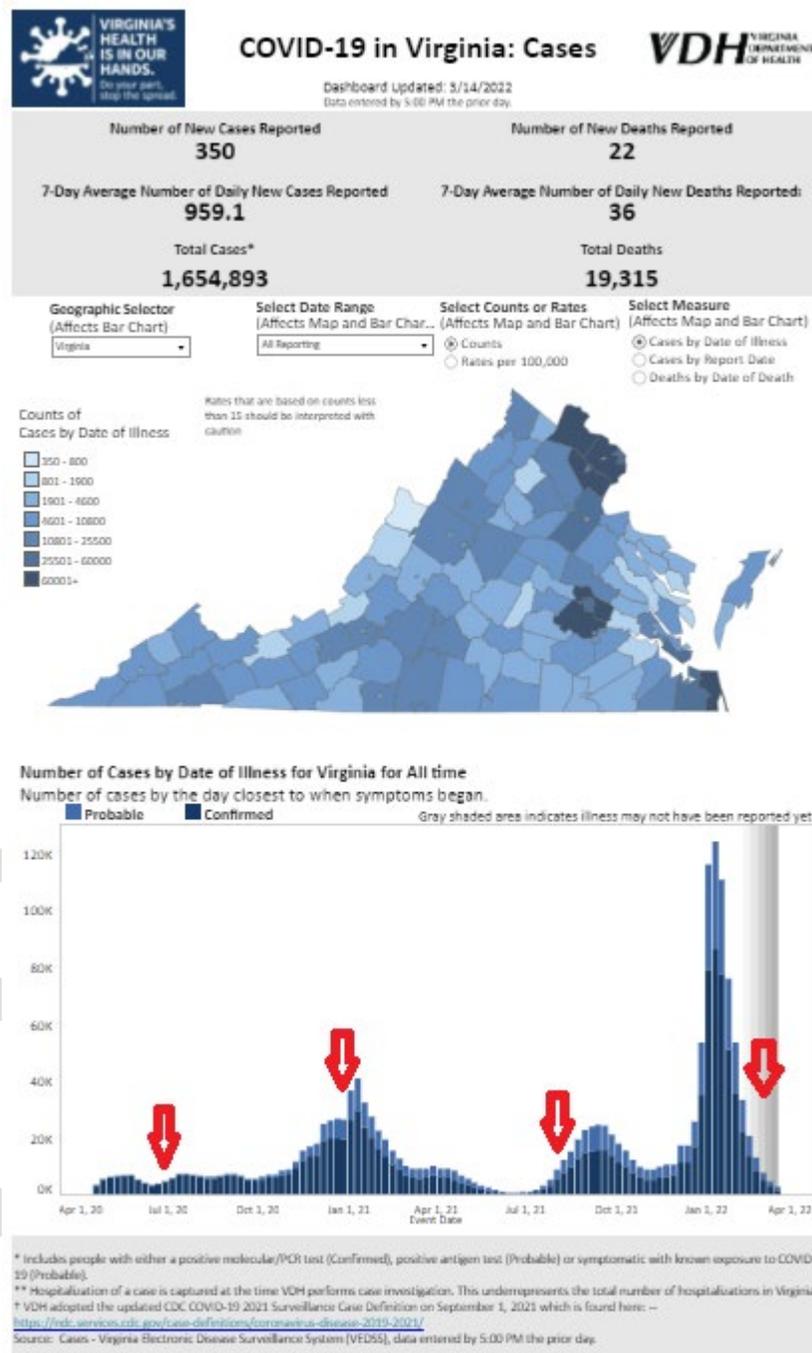
²⁹¹ <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/virginia/articles/2021-12-09/first-case-of-omicron-variant-confirmed-in-virginia>

²⁹² <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/2022/01/07/uva-covid-19-modeling-weekly-update-42/>

²⁹³ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-data-insights/variants/>

²⁹⁴ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

March 14, 2022 data:²⁹⁵



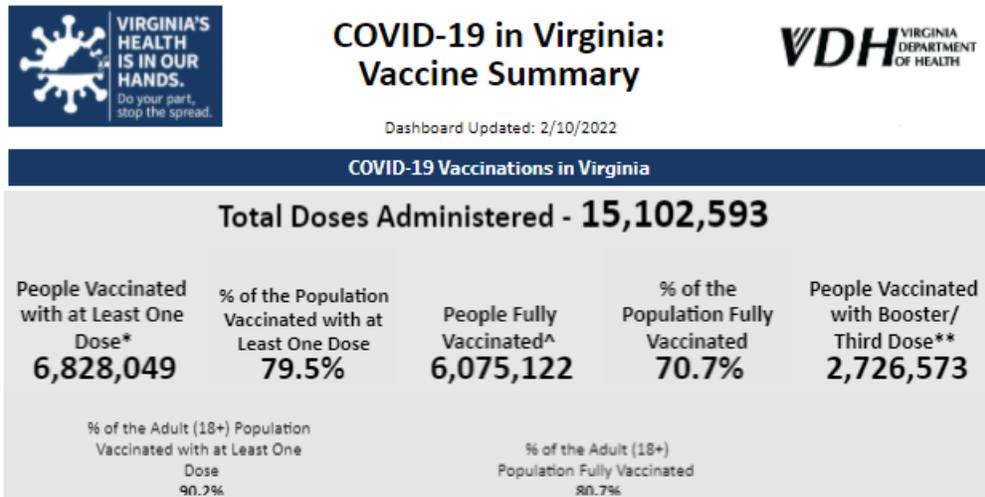
- The CDC reports that "Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. However, breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are likely to occur. With other variants, like Delta, vaccines have remained effective at

²⁹⁵ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. The recent emergence of Omicron further emphasizes the importance of vaccination and boosters."²⁹⁶

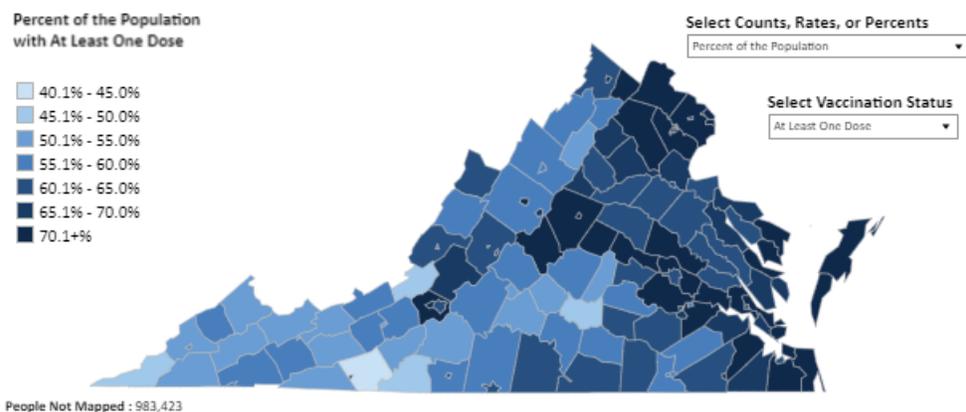
- The Omicron's variant's extremely rapid displacement of the Delta variant in Virginia has essentially eliminated the grave dangers associated with the Delta variant, particularly for vaccinated workers.
- Virginia has one of the highest vaccination rates in the country (10th among states and the District of Columbia as of February 5, 2022²⁹⁷) with 79.0% of the population vaccinated with at least one dose and 70.2% of the population fully vaccinated:

Virginia Vaccination Summary as of February 10, 2022.²⁹⁸



* People vaccinated with one dose of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.
 ^ People vaccinated with two doses of a two-dose vaccine and one dose of a single dose vaccine, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are included.
 ** People vaccinated with a booster or third dose after the primary vaccine series, including doses administered through the Federal CDC Pharmacy Partnership. Doses on the Federal Doses Administered dashboard are not included.

People Vaccinated by Locality of Residence and Vaccination Status - Percent of the Population

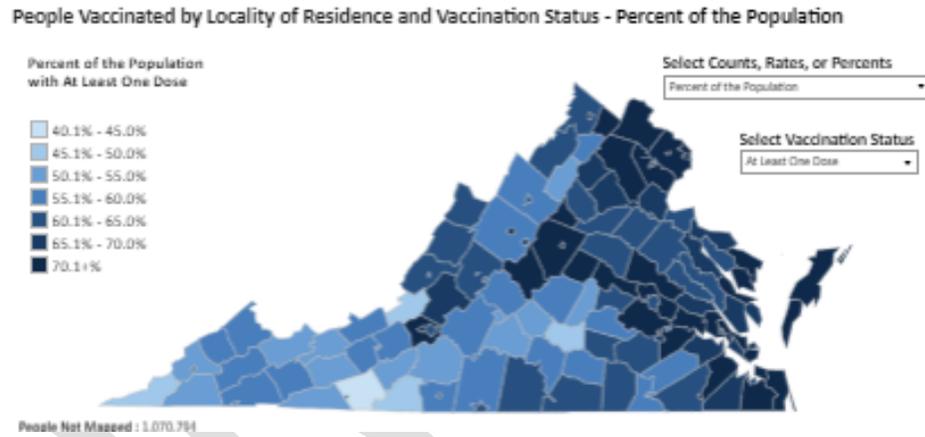
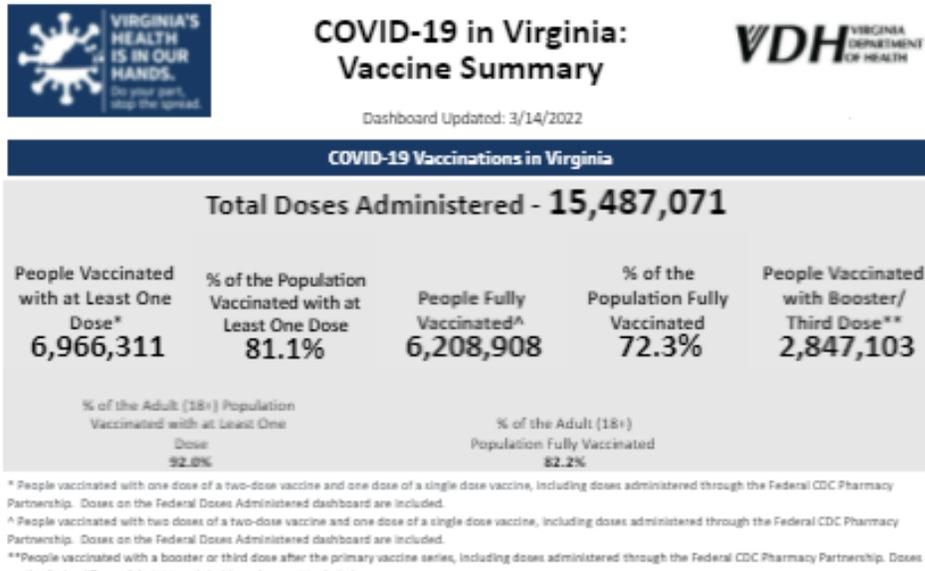


²⁹⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html?s_cid=11734:omicron%20vaccine:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY22

²⁹⁷ <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/public-health/states-ranked-by-percentage-of-population-vaccinated-march-15.html>

²⁹⁸ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

Virginia Vaccination Summary as of March 14, 2022.²⁹⁹



- NEJM.com, New England Journal of Medicine, February 9, 2022, "Protection against the Omicron Variant from Previous SARS-CoV-2 Infection."³⁰⁰

"Natural infection with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) elicits strong protection against reinfection with the B.1.1.7 (alpha),^{1,2} B.1.351 (beta),¹ and B.1.617.2 (delta)³ variants. However, the B.1.1.529 (omicron) variant harbors multiple mutations that can mediate immune evasion. We estimated the effectiveness of previous infection in preventing symptomatic new cases caused by omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants in Qatar. In this study, we extracted data regarding coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) laboratory testing, vaccination, clinical infection data, and related demographic details from the national SARS-CoV-2 databases, which include all results of polymerase-chain-reaction (PCR) testing, vaccinations, and hospitalizations and deaths for Covid-19 in Qatar since the start of the pandemic.

²⁹⁹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/covid-19-vaccine-summary/>

³⁰⁰ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2200133>

....

The effectiveness of previous infection in preventing reinfection was estimated to be 90.2% (95% confidence interval [CI], 60.2 to 97.6) against the alpha variant, 85.7% (95% CI, 75.8 to 91.7) against the beta variant, 92.0% (95% CI, 87.9 to 94.7) against the delta variant, and 56.0% (95% CI, 50.6 to 60.9) against the omicron variant (Table 1). Sensitivity analyses confirmed the study results, as expected for this study design, which is robust regardless of the approach that is used to control for vaccine-induced immunity.⁴ An additional analysis that was adjusted for the interval since previous infection also confirmed the study results (Table S4).

Among the patients with reinfection, progression to severe Covid-19 occurred in one patient with the alpha variant, in two patients with the beta variant, in no patients with the delta variant, and in two patients with the omicron variant. None of the reinfections progressed to critical or fatal Covid-19. The effectiveness with respect to severe, critical, or fatal Covid-19 was estimated to be 69.4% (95% CI, -143.6 to 96.2) against the alpha variant, 88.0% (95% CI, 50.7 to 97.1) against the beta variant, 100% (95% CI, 43.3 to 100) against the delta variant, and 87.8% (95% CI, 47.5 to 97.1) against the omicron variant. (For the delta variant, the calculation of the 95% confidence interval is clarified in a footnote in Table 1.) Limitations of the estimations (e.g., the relatively young population of Qatar) are discussed in Section S1.

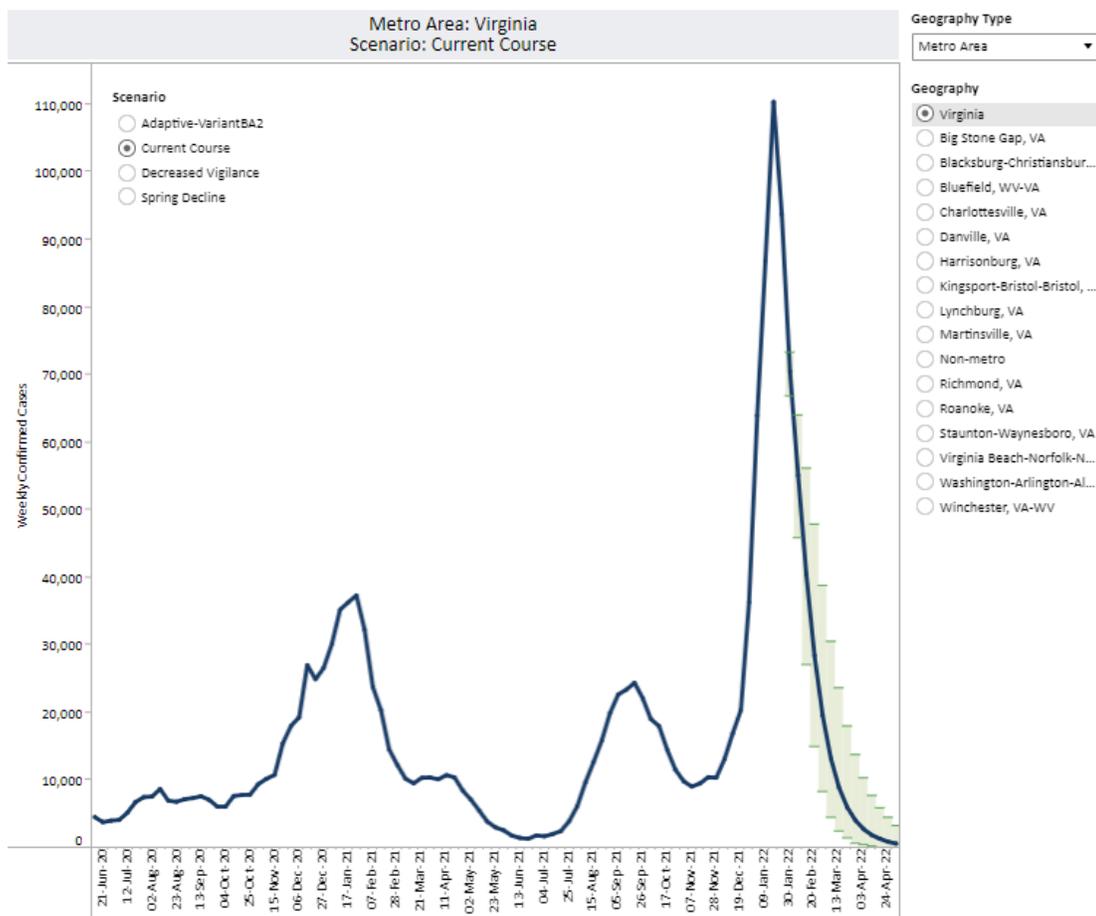
Overall, in a national database study in Qatar, we found that the effectiveness of previous infection in preventing reinfection with the alpha, beta, and delta variants of SARS-CoV-2 was robust (at approximately 90%), findings that confirmed earlier estimates.¹⁻³ Such protection against reinfection with the omicron variant was lower (approximately 60%) but still considerable. In addition, the protection of previous infection against hospitalization or death caused by reinfection appeared to be robust, regardless of variant."

- Omicron variant infections are rapidly decreasing in Virginia and the trend is expected to continue in the near term through April, 2022:

Omicron Modeling in Virginia: UVA [University of Virginia] COVID-19 Model Projections, February 2, 2022.³⁰¹

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a public health emergency. The future course of COVID-19 depends on all of us. In Virginia, case growth is surging as the Omicron variant moves into Virginia. Based on local conditions and trends, the model estimates new confirmed cases already peaked at 110,225 per week during the week ending January 16, 2022. However, viruses are difficult to forecast and this is just one potential path. One outbreak - or one outbreak avoided - can set us down very different paths. The 95% confidence intervals in the chart below shows the range of potential paths the model currently projects.

Models can help us understand the potential course of COVID-19, but they are not crystal balls. Most models struggle to project policy changes, changes in human behavior, or new or rare events. Seasons, vaccines, new variants or policies may affect COVID-19 spread in ways that are difficult to predict. To provide some insight, the UVA team includes several scenarios. The "Omicron" scenario shows how Omicron may influence cases. The "Surge Control" scenario shows what may occur if we reduce transmission rates by 25%. The "Holiday" scenarios add the potential impact of cooler weather and the holidays.



*Model estimates only, not actual cases. For actual case counts visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

**Cases are calculated by week, so "today," "so far," or any specific date refers to the week end date (Sunday) of the week in which the relevant date falls.

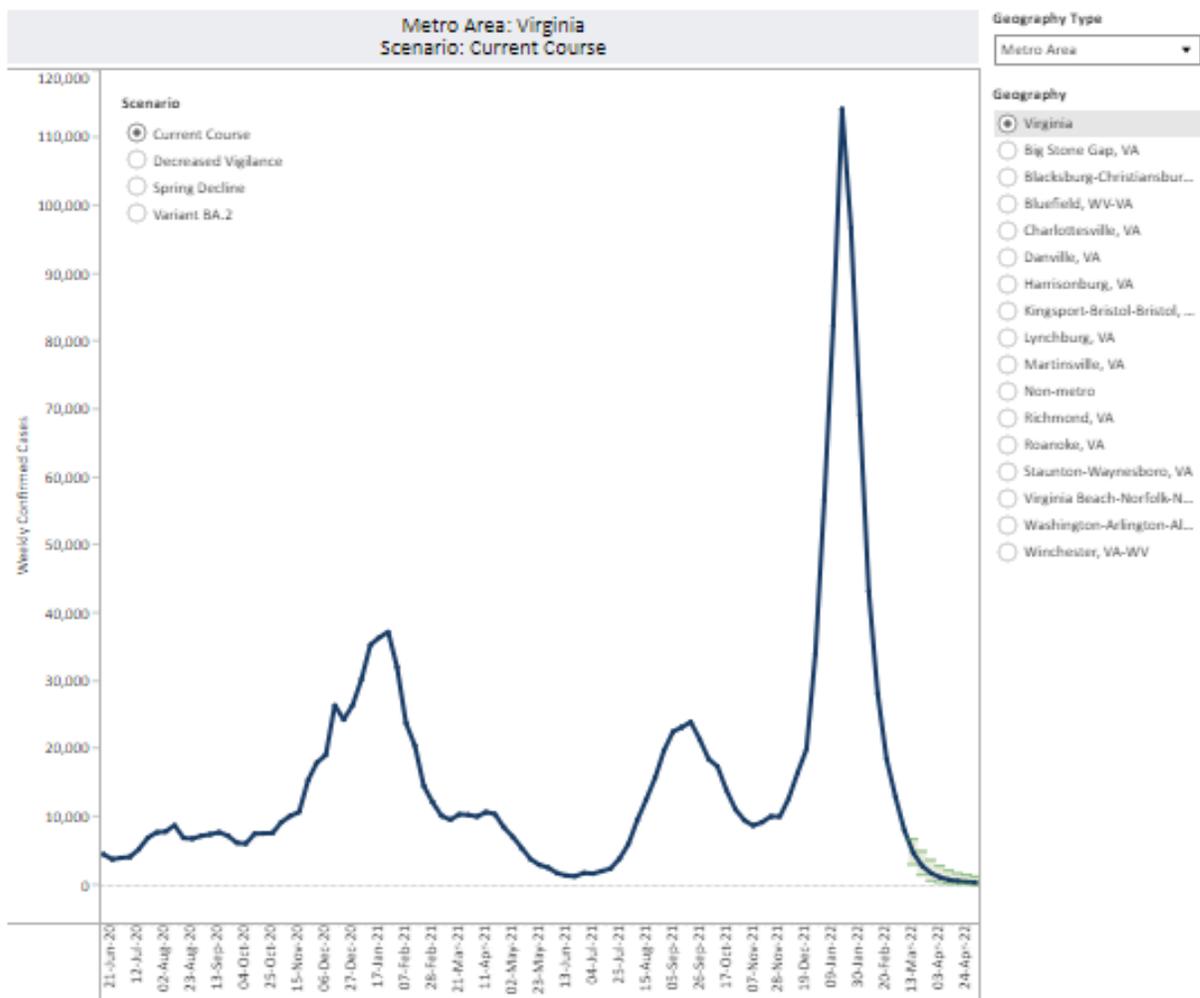
**Estimates are created for the Virginia portion of Metro areas only.

³⁰¹ <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/sec-the-numbers/covid-19-data-insights/uva-covid-19-model/>

Omicron Modeling in Virginia: UVA [University of Virginia] COVID-19 Model Projections, March 14, 2022.³⁰²

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a public health emergency. The future course of COVID-19 depends on all of us. In Virginia, case growth is surging as the Omicron variant moves into Virginia. Based on local conditions and trends, the model estimates new confirmed cases already peaked at 114,148 per week during the week ending January 16, 2022. However, viruses are difficult to forecast and this is just one potential path. One outbreak - or one outbreak avoided - can set us down very different paths. The 95% confidence intervals in the chart below shows the range of potential paths the model currently projects.

Models can help us understand the potential course of COVID-19, but they are not crystal balls. Most models struggle to project policy changes, changes in human behavior, or new or rare events. Seasons, vaccines, new variants or policies may affect COVID-19 spread in ways that are difficult to predict. To provide some insight, the UVA team includes several scenarios. The "Omicron" scenario shows how Omicron may influence cases. The "Surge Control" scenario shows what may occur if we reduce transmission rates by 25%. The "Holiday" scenarios add the potential impact of cooler weather and the holidays.



³⁰²Model estimates only, not actual cases. For actual case counts visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

*Cases are calculated by week, so "today," "so far," or any specific date refers to the week end date (Sunday) of the week in which the relevant date falls.

**Estimates are created for the Virginia portion of Metro areas only.

- Early scientific studies (some of which are peer reviewed and some that have not yet undergone peer review) and medical information suggests that the Omicron variant is likely less severe than infection with prior variants, particularly so for vaccinated and boosted individuals:
 - CDC.gov, December 20, 2021, "Potential Rapid Increase of Omicron Variant Infections in the United States." "At present, early data suggest Omicron infection might be less severe than infection with prior variants; however, reliable data on clinical severity remain limited."³⁰³
 - Imperial College London, December 22, 2021, " Report 50 - Hospitalisation risk for Omicron cases in England"³⁰⁴

Researchers in England, Scotland, and South Africa have found the risk of admission to hospital to be between 15% and 80% lower with omicron than the delta variant. The findings have not been peer reviewed, and all three studies accept limitations in the research, but the unanimity of the findings has been welcomed. "In my view, there is now solid reason to favour a more optimistic outcome of omicron in the UK than was feared," said James Naismith, director of the Rosalind Franklin Institute at the University of Oxford.³⁰⁵

- Medrxiv, January 1, 2022, "Epidemiological Characteristics and Severity of Omicron Variant Cases in the APHP Critical Care Units."³⁰⁶

Results. On January 18, 45% of patients in the ICU and 63.8% of patients in conventional hospital units were infected with the Omicron variant ($p < 0.001$). The risk of ICU admission with Omicron was reduced by 64% than with Delta (9.3% versus 25.8% of cases, respectively, $p < 0.001$). In critically ill patients, 400 had the Delta variant, 229 the Omicron variant, 98 had an uninformative variant screening test and 161 did not have information on variant screening test. 747 patients (84.1%) were admitted for pneumonia. Compared to patients infected with Delta, Omicron patients were more vaccinated ($p < 0.001$), even with 3 doses, more immunocompromised ($p < 0.001$), less admitted for pneumonia ($p < 0.001$), especially when vaccinated (62.1% in vaccinated versus 80.7% in unvaccinated, $p < 0.001$), and less invasively ventilated ($p = 0.02$). Similar results were found in the subgroup of pneumonia but Omicron cases were older. Unadjusted in-ICU mortality did not differ between Omicron and Delta cases, neither in the overall population (20.0% versus 27.9%, $p = 0.08$), nor in patients with pneumonia (31.6% versus 29.7%, respectively) where adjusted in-ICU mortality did not differ according to the variant (HR 1.43 95%CI [0.89;2.29], $p = 0.14$).

³⁰³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/forecasting/mathematical-modeling-outbreak.html>

³⁰⁴ <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/mrc-global-infectious-disease-analysis/covid-19/report-50-severity-omicron/>

³⁰⁵ <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n3144>

³⁰⁶ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.25.22269839v1>

Conclusion and relevance. Compared to the Delta variant, the Omicron variant is less likely to result in ICU admission and less likely to be associated with pneumonia. However, when patients with the Omicron variant are admitted for pneumonia, the severity seems similar to that of patients with the Delta variant, with more immunocompromised and vaccinated patients and no difference in adjusted in-ICU mortality. Further studies are needed to confirm our results.

- UPI.com, January 3, 2022, Omicron COVID-19 causes less lung damage in animal studies:"³⁰⁷

"The Omicron variant of COVID-19 may cause less severe illness than earlier strains of the virus because it attacks the lungs differently, a study³⁰⁸ posted online Monday found.

In research with mice and hamsters, animals infected with the Omicron variant of the virus had less damage in their upper and lower respiratory tracts, said researchers from the United States and Japan.

In addition, the strain that first emerged in South Africa in late November has a "lower viral burden" in the nose, throat and lungs, which essentially means there is less virus in these locations and less chance for spread to other parts of the body, they said.

The mice and hamsters in the study, which the researchers intentionally infected with the Omicron variant for the experiments, showed evidence of "weakened" infections in the lungs and lost less weight than rodents sickened with other strains, a sign of less severe illness, according to the researchers."

- Medrxiv.org, January 11, 2022, "Clinical outcomes among patients infected with Omicron (B.1.1.529) SARS-CoV-2 variant in southern California:"³⁰⁹

NOTE: This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed [what does this mean?]. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.

"The Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant of SARS-CoV-2 has rapidly achieved global dissemination, accounting for most infections in the United States by December 2021. Risk of severe outcomes associated with Omicron infections, as compared to earlier SARS-CoV-2 variants, remains unclear.

....

We analyzed clinical and epidemiologic data from cases testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection within the Kaiser Permanente Southern

³⁰⁷ https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2022/01/03/covid-19-omicron-lung-damage-animal-studies/6811641220695/

³⁰⁸ <https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-1211792/v1>; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-022-04441-6>

³⁰⁹ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.11.22269045v1>

California healthcare system from November 30, 2021 to January 1, 2022....

Results

Our analyses included 52,297 cases with SGTF (Omicron) and 16,982 cases with non-SGTF (Delta [B.1.617.2]) infections, respectively. Hospital admissions occurred among 235 (0.5%) and 222 (1.3%) of cases with Omicron and Delta variant infections, respectively. Among cases first tested in outpatient settings, the adjusted hazard ratios for any subsequent hospital admission and symptomatic hospital admission associated with Omicron variant infection were 0.48 (0.36-0.64) and 0.47 (0.35-0.62), respectively. Rates of ICU admission and mortality after an outpatient positive test were 0.26 (0.10-0.73) and 0.09 (0.01-0.75) fold as high among cases with Omicron variant infection as compared to cases with Delta variant infection. Zero cases with Omicron variant infection received mechanical ventilation, as compared to 11 cases with Delta variant infections throughout the period of follow-up (two-sided $p < 0.001$). Median duration of hospital stay was 3.4 (2.8-4.1) days shorter for hospitalized cases with Omicron variant infections as compared to hospitalized patients with Delta variant infections, reflecting a 69.6% (64.0-74.5%) reduction in hospital length of stay.

Conclusions During a period with mixed Delta and Omicron variant circulation, SARS-CoV-2 infections with presumed Omicron variant infection were associated with substantially reduced risk of severe clinical endpoints and shorter durations of hospital stay."

- ECDC.europa.eu, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, January 14, 2022, "Weekly epidemiological update: Omicron variant of concern (VOC) – week 2 (data as of 13 January 2022) EU/EEA."³¹⁰

Disease severity related to Omicron

Preliminary evidence suggests that infections with the Omicron VOC have a less severe clinical presentation than Delta. However, it is still too early to make a complete assessment of Omicron's severity.

Not peer-reviewed [data](#)³¹¹ from South Africa show that despite the higher number of SARS-CoV-2 cases during the Omicron wave, the hospital admission rates were lower (4.9%) than in the previous waves (Beta 18.9%, Delta 13.7%). Likewise, fewer patients had severe disease (28.8%) than the Beta (60.1%) and Delta (66.8%) waves. However, it is important to consider that 73% of the adult population in the area had

³¹⁰ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/weekly-epidemiological-update-omicron-variant-concern-voc-week-2-data-13-january-2022>

³¹¹ https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3996320

already been infected with SARS-CoV-2 before Omicron's dominance, and that incidental positive patients due to screening were also counted in the Omicron cases. Therefore, no conclusion on the inherent severity of Omicron can be made from these data.

The UKHSA shared a [report](#) estimating that Omicron-infected individuals have 50% lower risk to visit or to be admitted to the hospital than people with infection due to Delta (hazard ratio 0.53, 95% CI 0.50-0.57). They also found a 65% lower hospitalisation risk for Omicron cases who had received 2 doses of a vaccine and 81% reduction with 3 doses, compared to unvaccinated.

Another [study](#)³¹² from Scotland used the national data of individuals with symptomatic Omicron infection and identified a reduced hospitalisation risk compared to Delta cases, while the rate of possible reinfection for Omicron was 10 times that of Delta. Vaccinated individuals with the third vaccine dose had a 57% (95% CI 55-60) lower risk to experience symptoms following Omicron infection.

A recent Canadian [report](#)³¹³ confirmed low hospital admission rates (0.3%) and case fatality (<0.1%) for Omicron cases. Shorter median length of hospital stay and reduced need for respiratory support than the previous variants were also reported in another [publication](#)³¹⁴ (not peer-review) from Texas.

Similar findings were published in a [preprint](#)³¹⁵ from Southern California where they also report reduced risk of hospital/ICU admission and mortality for Omicron cases compared to Delta. The median hospital stay duration for symptomatic patients was approximately 70% (~3.4 days) shorter for Omicron infected cases. The added value of this study is the contemporaneous comparison of Omicron and Delta variants co-circulating among the same exposed population.

However, most of studies do not account for waning immunity, neither for the likely large amount of under-ascertained reinfections. This could lead to an overestimation of the decrease in severity.

- CDC.gov, January 25, 2022, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), "Trends in Disease Severity and Health Care Utilization During the Early Omicron Variant Period Compared with Previous SARS-CoV-2 High Transmission Periods — United States, December 2020–January 2022."

"Emergence of the Omicron variant in December 2021 led to a substantial increase in COVID-19 cases in the United States. Although the rapid rise in cases has resulted in the highest number of COVID-19-associated ED visits

³¹² <https://www.research.ed.ac.uk/en/publications/severity-of-omicron-variant-of-concern-and-vaccine-effectiveness->

³¹³ <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/epi/covid-19-weekly-epi-summary-report.pdf?la=en>

³¹⁴ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.12.30.21268560v2>

³¹⁵ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.01.11.22269045v1>

and hospital admissions since the beginning of the pandemic, straining the health care system, disease severity appears to be lower than compared with previous high disease-transmission periods. In addition to lower ratios of ED visits, hospitalizations, and deaths to cases observed during the Omicron period, disease severity indicators were also lower among hospitalized COVID-19 patients, including ICU admission, receipt of IMV, length of stay, and in-hospital death. This apparent decrease in disease severity is likely related to multiple factors, most notably increases in vaccination coverage among eligible persons, and the use of vaccine boosters among recommended subgroups."³¹⁶

- o Journal of the American Medical Association, Jamanetwork.com, February 17, 2022, Research Letter, "Estimates of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant Severity in Ontario, Canada."³¹⁷

"Results

We identified 37 296 Omicron cases that met eligibility criteria, of which 9087 (24.4%) were matched 1:1 with Delta cases (Table 1). The median follow-up time was 24 days (IQR, 21.0-28.0). There were 53 hospitalizations (0.6%) and 3 deaths (0.03%) among matched Omicron cases compared with 129 hospitalizations (1.4%) and 26 deaths (0.3%) among matched Delta cases. The HR for hospitalization or death among Omicron cases compared with Delta cases was 0.41 (95% CI, 0.30-0.55; 0.33 [95% CI, 0.19-0.56] in sensitivity analysis), while the HR for intensive care unit admission or death was 0.19 (95% CI, 0.09-0.39), and the HR for death was 0.12 (95% CI, 0.04-0.37). Stratified estimates of Omicron severity by age, sex, and vaccination status all indicated reduced Omicron severity (Table 2)."

- o Medrxiv.com, February 22, 2022, " COVID infection rates, clinical outcomes, and racial/ethnic and gender disparities before and after Omicron emerged in the US."³¹⁸

NOTE: This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed [what does this mean?]. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.

COVID infection rates, clinical outcomes, and racial/ethnic and gender disparities before and after Omicron emerged in the US

Method We performed a retrospective cohort study of a large, geographically diverse database of patient electronic health records (EHRs) in the US. The study population comprised 881,473 patients who

³¹⁶ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7104e4.htm?s_cid=mm7104e4_w

³¹⁷ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2789408>

³¹⁸ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.02.21.22271300v1>

contracted SARS-CoV-2 infection for the first time between 9/1/2021-1/16/2022, including 147,964 patients infected when Omicron predominated (Omicron cohort), 633,581 when Delta predominated (Delta cohort) and another 99,928 infected when the Delta predominated but just before the Omicron variant was detected in the US (Delta-2 cohort).

We examined monthly incidence rates of COVID-19 infections stratified by age groups, gender, race and ethnicity, compared severe clinical outcomes including emergency department (ED) visits, hospitalizations, intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, and mechanical ventilation use between propensity-score matched Omicron and Delta cohorts stratified by age groups (0-4, 5-17, 18-64 and ≥ 65 years), and examined racial/ethnic and gender differences in severe clinical outcomes.

....

After propensity-score matching for demographics, socio-economic determinants of health, comorbidities and medications, risks for severe clinical outcomes in the Omicron cohort were significantly lower than in the Delta cohort: ED visits: 10.2% vs. 14.6% (risk ratio or RR: 0.70 [0.68-0.71]); hospitalizations: 2.6% vs. 4.4% (RR: 0.58 [0.55-0.60]); ICU admissions: 0.47% vs. 1.00% (RR: 0.47 [0.43-0.51]); mechanical ventilation: 0.08% vs. 0.3% (RR: 0.25 [0.20-0.31]).

Similar reduction in disease severity was observed for all age groups. There were significant racial/ethnic and gender disparities in severe clinical outcomes in the Omicron cohort, with Black, Hispanic patients having more ED visits and ICU admissions than White and non-Hispanic patients, respectively and women had fewer hospitalization and ICU admission than men.

- o New England Journal of Medicine, February 23, 2022, "Population Immunity and Covid-19 Severity with Omicron Variant in South Africa."³¹⁹

RESULTS

Samples were obtained from 7010 participants, of whom 1319 (18.8%) had received a Covid-19 vaccine. The seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2 IgG ranged from 56.2% (95% confidence interval [CI], 52.6 to 59.7) among children younger than 12 years of age to 79.7% (95% CI, 77.6 to 81.5) among adults older than 50 years of age.

Vaccinated participants were more likely to be seropositive for SARS-CoV-2 than unvaccinated participants (93.1% vs. 68.4%). Epidemiologic data showed that the incidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection increased and subsequently declined more rapidly during the fourth wave than it had

³¹⁹ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2119658>

during the three previous waves. The incidence of infection was decoupled from the incidences of hospitalization, recorded death, and excess death during the fourth wave, as compared with the proportions seen during previous waves.

- British Medical Journal, March 9, 2022, "Clinical severity of, and effectiveness of mRNA vaccines against, covid-19 from omicron, delta, and alpha SARS-CoV-2 variants in the United States: prospective observational study."³²⁰

"Results

Effectiveness of the mRNA vaccines to prevent covid-19 associated hospital admissions was 85% (95% confidence interval 82% to 88%) for two vaccine doses against the alpha variant, 85% (83% to 87%) for two doses against the delta variant, 94% (92% to 95%) for three doses against the delta variant, 65% (51% to 75%) for two doses against the omicron variant; and 86% (77% to 91%) for three doses against the omicron variant. In-hospital mortality was 7.6% (81/1060) for alpha, 12.2% (461/3788) for delta, and 7.1% (40/565) for omicron.

Among unvaccinated patients with covid-19 admitted to hospital, severity on the WHO clinical progression scale was higher for the delta versus alpha variant (adjusted proportional odds ratio 1.28, 95% confidence interval 1.11 to 1.46), and lower for the omicron versus delta variant (0.61, 0.49 to 0.77). Compared with unvaccinated patients, severity was lower for vaccinated patients for each variant, including alpha (adjusted proportional odds ratio 0.33, 0.23 to 0.49), delta (0.44, 0.37 to 0.51), and omicron (0.61, 0.44 to 0.85)."

....

Among unvaccinated adults admitted to hospital with covid-19, the delta variant was associated with the most severe disease, followed by the alpha variant and then the omicron variant. Among unvaccinated patients admitted to hospital, covid-19 due to the omicron variant was about 79% and 61% as severe as covid-19 due to the alpha and delta variants, respectively.

The omicron variant was, however, associated with substantial critical illness and death, with 15% of patients admitted to hospital with the omicron variant (vaccinated and unvaccinated) progressing to invasive mechanical ventilation, and 7% dying in hospital."

³²⁰ <https://www.bmj.com/content/376/bmj-2021-069761>

G. Legal Protections for Employees Remaining if the Virginia Standard is Revoked.

1. The Department will issue a Guidance document entitled: "Protecting Workers, Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of Covid-19 in the Workplace," which will be based on a current OSHA guidance document³²¹ of the same name, with Virginia specific changes (See Attachment P).

2. All of VOSH's standards that apply to protecting workers from infection remain in place. These mandatory VOSH standards include: requirements for PPE (e.g., 1910.132³²² and 133³²³), respiratory protection (1910.134³²⁴), sanitation (1910.141³²⁵ and 16VAC25-160³²⁶), temporary labor camps (1910.142³²⁷), protection from bloodborne pathogens (1910.1030³²⁸), VOSH's requirements for employee access to medical and exposure records (1910.1020³²⁹), and requirements in the VOSH Administrative Regulations Manual (16VAC25-60-120,³³⁰ -130,³³¹ -140³³² and -150.³³³

3. When an employer or VOSH determines that PPE is necessary to protect unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers from exposure to COVID-19, the employer must provide PPE in accordance with relevant mandatory VOSH standards and should consider providing PPE in accordance with other industry-specific guidance.

Respirators, if necessary, must be provided and used in compliance with 1910.134 (e.g., medical determination, fit testing, training on its correct use), including certain provisions for voluntary use when workers supply their own respirators, and other PPE must be provided and used in accordance with the applicable standards in part 1910, Subpart I (e.g., 1910.132 and 133).

There are times when PPE is not called for by VOSH standards or other industry-specific guidance, but some workers may have a legal right to PPE as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA.

4. If someone who has been in the facility within 24 hours is suspected of having or confirmed to have COVID-19, follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations. Follow requirements in mandatory VOSH standards 1910.1200³³⁴

³²¹ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

³²² <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.132>

³²³ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.133>

³²⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.134>

³²⁵ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.141>

³²⁶ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter160/section10/>

³²⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.142>

³²⁸ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1030>

³²⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1020>

³³⁰ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter60/section120/>

³³¹ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter60/section130/>

³³² <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter60/section140/>

³³³ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/admincode/title16/agency25/chapter60/section150/>

³³⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1200>

and 1910.132, 133, and 138³³⁵ for hazard communication and PPE appropriate for exposure to cleaning chemicals.

5. Under Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A,³³⁶ the general duty clause, Virginia employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.³³⁷

6. Va. Code §40.1-51.2:1³³⁸ prohibits discharging or in any other way discriminating against an employee for engaging in various occupational safety and health activities. Examples of violations could include discriminating against employees for raising a reasonable concern about infection control related to COVID-19 to the employer, the employer's agent, other employees, a government agency, or to the public, such as through print, online, social, or any other media; or against an employee for voluntarily providing and safely wearing their own PPE, such as a respirator, face shield, gloves, or surgical mask.

7. Federal OSHA is in the final rule stage for a COVID-19 Healthcare Standard³³⁹ and has stated that "The agency is prioritizing its resources to focus on finalizing a permanent COVID-19 Healthcare Standard."³⁴⁰ As of February 9, 2022, OSHA's stated goal is to publish a final standard in six to nine months.

VOSH is required by the OSH Act of 1970³⁴¹ and OSHA regulations³⁴² to be "at least as effective as" federal OSHA, and state action on new OSHA standards and

³³⁵ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.138>

³³⁶ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-51.1/>

³³⁷ Federal OSHA Region III (federal region in which Virginia is located and monitored by) issued the following citation under §5(a)(1) of the OSH Act of 1970, the "general duty clause," to address a COVID-19 outbreak as a workplace:

"29 CFR OSH ACT of 1970 Section (5)(a)(1): The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees, in that employees were not protected from the hazard of contracting the virus, SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2), the cause of the COVID-19 disease....On or about April 19, 2021, and continuing thereafter, the employer did not develop and implement timely and effective measures to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Employees working in the Pouch Room and DE Line worked in close proximity to each other and were not required to wear face coverings. The employer did not use social distancing or physical barriers in the production areas or breakrooms. The employer did not screen employees before entering the facility and did not implement a procedure for disinfecting the production area. An outbreak occurred between April 19 and April 25, 2021 where 15 of the workers in these areas tested positive for the virus. Workers subsequently infected their families and friends, many of whom became seriously ill. After the outbreak, the employer still failed to implement any measures to protect workers from the virus. Abatement certification and documentation required within 10 days after abatement date. The certification shall include a statement that abatement is complete, the date and method of abatement, and state that employees and their representatives were informed of this abatement. Abatement documentation shall include documents demonstrating that abatement is complete, such as evidence of the purchase or repair of equipment, photograph or video evidence of abatement or other written records.

https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/establishment.violation_detail?id=1528699.015&citation_id=01001

³³⁸ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title40.1/chapter3/section40.1-51.2:1/>

³³⁹ <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaViewRule?pubId=202110&RIN=1218-AD36>

³⁴⁰ <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets2>

³⁴¹ https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section_18

³⁴² <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1902/1902.4>

regulations is required within six months of adoption.³⁴³ Should OSHA adopt a permanent COVID-19 Healthcare Standard, the Department would schedule a meeting of the Board to consider for adoption the OSHA standard.

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³⁴³ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1953/1953.5>

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Staff of the Department of Labor and Industry recommend that the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board make a final finding that there is no longer a continued need for the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, based on scientific and medical evidence that the current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a), and as discussed in the U. S. Supreme Court's decision in National Federation of Independent Businesses, et al., Applicants v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, et al.³⁴⁴

To be voted on if Recommended Action 1 is adopted:

2. If the Board finds that there is no longer a continued need for the standard, Staff of the Department of Labor and Industry recommend that the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board adopt a final revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, to become immediately effective upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation published in the city of Richmond, Virginia. The proposed effective date is March 23, 2022.

The Department also recommends that the Board state in any motion it may make to revoke this regulation that it will receive, consider and respond to petitions by any interested person at any time with respect to reconsideration or revision of this or any other regulation.

³⁴⁴ https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/21a244_hgci.pdf

ATTACHMENT A: CURRENT LAWS, STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Neither OSHA nor VOSH has a regulation specific to SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 or infectious diseases generally.³⁴⁵

Certain VOSH regulations (identical to OSHA counterparts unless otherwise noted) can be used to address some SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 hazards.

1. VOSH Regulations

a. General Industry.

General requirements to provide personal protective equipment to employees in General Industry are contained in:

1910.132 (Personal Protective Equipment)³⁴⁶,

1910.133 (Eye and Face Protection)³⁴⁷, however, the scope of the regulation is limited to exposure “to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.” It does not reference exposure to airborne biological hazards.

1910.134 (Respiratory Protection)³⁴⁸,

1910.138 (Hand Protection)³⁴⁹

1910.141 (Sanitation)³⁵⁰

1910.142 (Temporary Labor Camps)³⁵¹

1910.1200 (Hazard Communication)³⁵² (i.e., regulatory requirements for employee use of certain cleaning chemicals)

³⁴⁵ Following the H1N1 virus outbreak in 2009, the AFL-CIO petitioned OSHA on May 28, 2009 for an infectious disease standard to be promulgated. In 2010, OSHA published a Request for Information toward developing an infectious disease standard, held stakeholder meetings, and conducted site visits. A regulatory framework document was created. In Spring 2017, on OSHA’s Regulatory Agenda an infectious disease standard was placed under long term action. No subsequent actions have been taken by OSHA toward this standard during the current administration. <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/id/>. The AFL-CIO has again recently petitioned OSHA for a standard covering COVID-19 exposure risks, and on May 18, 2020 filed a petition in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia asking the court to order OSHA to promulgate such a rule. *In re: AFL-CIO*, dkt. no. 20-1158 (D.C. Cir. 2020).

³⁴⁶ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.132>

³⁴⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.133>

³⁴⁸ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.134>

³⁴⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.138>

³⁵⁰ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.141>

³⁵¹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.142>

³⁵² <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1200>

1910.1045 (Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories)³⁵³

b. Construction Industry.

1926.21(b)(2)³⁵⁴ (Safety Training and Education)

1926.59 (Hazard Communication)³⁵⁵ (i.e., regulatory requirements for employee use of certain cleaning chemicals)

1926.28³⁵⁶ and 1926.95³⁵⁷, (Personal Protective Equipment)

NOTE: The Construction Industry does not have a requirement comparable to 1910.132(d) which requires General Industry employers to conduct a written workplace assessment to “determine if hazards are present, or are likely to be present, which necessitate the use of” PPE.³⁵⁸

1926.102 (Eye and Face Protection)³⁵⁹; however, the scope of the regulation is limited to exposure “to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.” It does not reference exposure to airborne biological hazards.

1926.103 (Respiratory Protection)³⁶⁰

NOTE: The Construction Industry Standards do not have a “Hand Protection” regulation similar to 1910.138.

16VAC25-160³⁶¹ (Construction Industry Sanitation Standard – Virginia unique regulation that is the functional equivalent of 1926.51 for Construction), sanitation requirements are limited to “Toilet facilities shall be operational and maintained in a clean and sanitary

³⁵³ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.1450>

³⁵⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.21>

³⁵⁵ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.59>

³⁵⁶ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.28>

³⁵⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.95>

³⁵⁸ 1910.132(d), Hazard assessment and equipment selection.

1910.132(d)(1), The employer shall assess the workplace to determine if hazards are present, or are likely to be present, which necessitate the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). If such hazards are present, or likely to be present, the employer shall:

1910.132(d)(1)(i), Select, and have each affected employee use, the types of PPE that will protect the affected employee from the hazards identified in the hazard assessment;

1910.132(d)(1)(ii), Communicate selection decisions to each affected employee; and,

1910.132(d)(1)(iii), Select PPE that properly fits each affected employee.

Note: Non-mandatory appendix B contains an example of procedures that would comply with the requirement for a hazard assessment.

1910.132(d)(2)

The employer shall verify that the required workplace hazard assessment has been performed through a written certification that identifies the workplace evaluated; the person certifying that the evaluation has been performed; the date(s) of the hazard assessment; and, which identifies the document as a certification of hazard assessment.

³⁵⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.102>

³⁶⁰ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.103>

³⁶¹ <https://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+16VAC25-160-10>

condition.”

c. Agriculture Industry.

1928.21(a)(1)³⁶² (Temporary Labor Camps, 1910.142 applies to agricultural operations)

1928.21(a)(5)³⁶³ (Hazard Communication, 1910.1200 applies to agricultural operations) (i.e., regulatory requirements for employee use of certain cleaning chemicals)

1910.142 (Temporary Labor Camps)³⁶⁴ applies to the Agriculture Industry

16VAC25-180³⁶⁵ (Field Sanitation - Virginia unique regulation that is the functional equivalent of 1928.110 for Agriculture), sanitation requirements are limited to “(3) Maintenance. Potable drinking water and toilet and handwashing facilities shall be maintained in accordance with appropriate public health sanitation practices, including the following:

(i) Drinking water containers shall be constructed of materials that maintain water quality, shall be refilled daily or more often as necessary, shall be kept covered and shall be regularly cleaned.

(ii) Toilet facilities shall be operational and maintained in clean and sanitary condition.

(iii) Handwashing facilities shall be refilled with potable water as necessary to ensure an adequate supply and shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition; and

(iv) Disposal of wastes from facilities shall not cause unsanitary conditions.

NOTE: There are no regulatory requirements in the Agriculture Industry for PPE, including respiratory protection.

d. Maritime Industry.

NOTE: VOSH has jurisdiction of state and local government maritime related activities only. OSHA retains jurisdiction over private sector maritime activities in Virginia.

1915.88³⁶⁶, Shipyard Employment (Sanitation)

1915.152³⁶⁷, Shipyard Employment (Personal Protective Equipment)

³⁶² <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1928/1928.21>

³⁶³ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1928/1928.21>

³⁶⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.142>

³⁶⁵ <https://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+16VAC25-180-10>

³⁶⁶ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.88>

³⁶⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.152>

1915.153³⁶⁸, Shipyard Employment (Eye and Face Protection); however, the scope of the regulation is limited to exposure “to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation.” It does not reference exposure to airborne biological hazards.

1915.154³⁶⁹, Shipyard Employment (Respiratory Protection)

1915.157³⁷⁰, Shipyard Employment (Hand and Body Protection)

1917.127³⁷¹, Marine Terminal Operations (Sanitation)

1917.1(a)(2)(vi)³⁷², Marine Terminal Operations (Hazard Communication, 1910.1200)

1917.92 and 1917.1(a)(2)(x)³⁷³, Marine Terminal Operations (Respiratory Protection, 1910.134)

1917.91³⁷⁴, Marine Terminal Operations (Eye and Face Protection)

1917.95³⁷⁵, Marine Terminal Operations (PPE, Other Protective Measures)

1918.95³⁷⁶, Longshoring (Sanitation)

1918.90³⁷⁷, Longshoring (Hazard Communication)

1918.102³⁷⁸ Longshoring (Respiratory Protection)

1918.101³⁷⁹ Longshoring (Eye and Face Protection)

2. Va. Code §40.1-51(a), the “General Duty Clause”.

While neither OSHA nor VOSH has a regulation specific to SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19, Va. Code §40.1-51(a), otherwise known as the “general duty clause” (the Virginia equivalent to §5(a)(1)³⁸⁰ of the OSH Act of 1970), provides that:

“It shall be the duty of every employer to furnish to each of his employees safe employment and a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that

³⁶⁸ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.153>

³⁶⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.154>

³⁷⁰ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1915/1915.157>

³⁷¹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1917/1917.127>

³⁷² [https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1917/1917.1#1917.1\(a\)\(2\)\(ix\)](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1917/1917.1#1917.1(a)(2)(ix))

³⁷³ *Id.*

³⁷⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1917/1917.91>

³⁷⁵ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1917/1917.95>

³⁷⁶ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1918/1918.95>

³⁷⁷ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1918/1918.90>

³⁷⁸ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1918/1918.102>

³⁷⁹ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1918/1918.101>

³⁸⁰ https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section_5, 29 U.S.C. § 654(a)(1).

are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees....”

While Congress intended that the primary method of compliance and enforcement under the OSH Act of 1970 would be through the adoption of occupational safety and health standards³⁸¹, it also provided the general duty clause as an enforcement tool that could be used in the absence of an OSHA (or VOSH) regulation.

Federal case law has established that the general duty clause can be used to address “serious” recognized hazards to which employees of the cited employer are exposed through reference to such things as national consensus standards, manufacturer’s requirements, requirements of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or an employer’s safety and health rules.

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³⁸¹ *The Law of Occupational Safety and Health*, Nothstein, 1981, page 259.

ATTACHMENT B: VOSH INVESTIGATION AND INSPECTION PROCEDURES

1. VOSH Inspection Priority Categories.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Category</u>
First	Imminent Danger as defined in the VOSH <u>Administrative Regulation Manual</u> (ARM).
Second	Fatality Inspections (regardless of whether our inspection is in response to specific evidence of hazardous conditions or not).
Third	Accident / First Report of Accident Inspections.
Fourth	Complaints / Referrals.
Fifth	Follow-up / Monitoring.
Sixth	Programmed Inspections, i.e., General Schedule, Construction Schedule, National & Local Emphasis Programs AND unprogrammed inspections in response to alleged hazardous working conditions that would normally be classified as Other-Than-Serious.

2. VOSH Informal Investigation and Inspection Procedures.

COVID-19 “Investigations”

- Informal investigations (phone/fax/email/letter) are often conducted in response to employee complaints (with the permission of the employee); and referrals from the Virginia Department of Health
- The employer is provided the opportunity to provide a response to the complaint/referral items with a short turnaround time
- If no response or an unsatisfactory response is received, an inspection will be conducted
- If the response is considered satisfactory, it is provided to the Complainant for review and comment. If the Complainant provides reasonable information challenging the validity of the response provided, an inspection will be conducted.

Summary of How VOSH Initially Handled COVID-19 Related Complaints Early in the Pandemic:

COVID-19 related employee complaints received by the VOSH program that are within VOSH's jurisdiction are being addressed with employers. In an abundance of caution, at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in Virginia the Department decided to modify its normal complaint processing procedures for both the safety and health of the employees at the work sites and its VOSH compliance officers by trying to limit exposure to the virus as much as possible while carrying out statutory enforcement mandates.

Rather than conducting a combination of onsite inspections and informal investigations as is the case under normal situations, COVID-19 complaints were initially handled through the VOSH program's complaint investigation process, which involves contacting the employer by phone, fax, email, or letter.

VOSH informed the employer of the complaint allegation and required a written response concerning the validity of the complaint allegation, any safety and health measures taken to date to protect employees against potential COVID-19 related hazards, and any measures to be taken in response to valid complaint allegations.

Employers were required to post a copy of VOSH's correspondence where it would be readily accessible for review by employees; and provide a copy of the correspondence and the employer's response to a representative of any recognized union or safety committee at the facility. Complainants were provided a copy of the employer's response.

Depending on the specific facts of the employee's alleged complaint, an employer's failure to respond or inadequate response could result in additional contact by the VOSH program with the employer, a referral to local law enforcement officials, an onsite VOSH inspection, or other enforcement options available to the VOSH program.

COVID-19 "Inspections"

- Can result in violations and substantial penalties
- Inspections are opened for COVID-19 related employee deaths
- Inspections may be opened for COVID-19 related hospitalizations or handled through an investigation
- Inspection files with proposed violations will be reviewed by Headquarters and receive a legal review before a decision to issue or not issue is made

3. Violation and Penalty Structure.

The emergency temporary standard/emergency regulation would be enforced in the same manner as all other VOSH laws, standards, and regulations. The types of civil violations that VOSH can cite are "serious", "other than serious", "repeat", "willful," and "failure to abate. Maximum penalties for each type are:

Serious and Other-than-serious	\$13,277
Willful and Repeat	\$132,764
Failure-to-Abate	\$13,277 per day

In calculating penalties, Va. Code §40.1-49.4.A.4 .a provides:

In determining the amount of any proposed penalty [the Commissioner] shall give due consideration to the appropriateness of the penalty with respect to the size of the business of the employer being charged, the gravity of the violation, the good faith of the employer, and the history of previous violations. (Emphasis added).

Chapter 11 of the VOSH FOM explains how penalties are calculated:

https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=C:\TownHall\docroot\GuidanceDocs\181\GDoc_DOLI_5354_v6.pdf

Employers can receive penalty reductions for “size” based on the number of employees as follows:

1 - 25	70%
26-100	40%
101-250	20%
251 or more	zero

A penalty reduction of up to 25 percent is permitted in recognition of an employer’s “good faith” in increments of 0%, 5%, 10%, 15%, 20% and 25%.

History. A reduction of 10% shall be given to employers who have not been cited by VOSH for any serious, willful or repeated violations in the past three years.

The minimum penalty for a serious violation is \$600.00.

4. Employee Misconduct Defense.

The “Employee Misconduct” affirmative defense to VOSH citations and penalties is codified in VOSH regulation 16 VAC 25-60-260.B:

B. A citation issued under subsection A of this section to an employer who violates any VOSH law, standard, rule, or regulation shall be vacated if such employer demonstrates that:

1. Employees of such employer have been provided with the proper training and equipment to prevent such a violation;

2. Work rules designed to prevent such a violation have been established and adequately communicated to employees by such employer and have been **effectively enforced** when such a violation has been discovered;

3. The failure of employees to observe work rules led to the violation; and

4. Reasonable steps have been taken by such employer to discover any such violation. (Emphasis added)

5. De Minimis Violation Policy.

Va. Code §40.1-49.4.A.2³⁸² provides “The Commissioner may prescribe procedures for calling to the employer's attention *de minimis* violations which have no direct or immediate relationship to safety and health.” (Emphasis added).

The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Field Operations Manual (FOM)³⁸³ describes the Commissioner’s procedures for *de minimis* violations in Chapter 10, pp. 38-39:

De minimis violations are violations of standards which have no direct or immediate relationship to safety or health. Compliance Officers identifying *de minimis* violations of a VOSH standard shall not issue a citation for that violation, but should verbally notify the employer and make a note of the situation in the inspection case file. The criteria for classifying a violation as *de minimis* are as follows:

1. Employer Complies with Clear Intent of Standard.

An employer complies with the clear intent of the standard but deviates from its particular requirements in a manner that has no direct or immediate relationship to employee safety or health. These deviations may involve distance specifications, construction material requirements, use of incorrect color, minor variations from recordkeeping, testing, or inspection regulations, or the like.

....

2. Employer Complies with Proposed Standard.

An employer complies with a proposed standard or amendment or a consensus standard rather than with the standard in effect at the time of the inspection and the employer’s action clearly provides equal or greater employee protection or the employer complies with a written interpretation issued by OSHA or VOSH.

3. Employer Technically Exceeds Standard.

An employer’s workplace is at the “state of the art” which is technically beyond the requirements of the applicable standard and provides equivalent or more effective employee safety or health protection.

³⁸² <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-49.4/>

³⁸³

https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=C:\TownHall\docroot\GuidanceDocs\181\GDoc_DOLI_5354_v6.pdf

Note: Maximum professional discretion must be exercised in determining the point at which noncompliance with a standard constitutes a *de minimis* violation.

The FOM³⁸⁴ further provides:

The Compliance Officer shall discuss all conditions noted during the walkaround considered to be *de minimis*, indicating that such conditions are subject to review by the Regional Safety or Health Director in the same manner as apparent violations but, if finally classified as *de minimis*, will not be included on the citation. (Emphasis added).

6. Multi-employer Worksite Regulation and Defense.

Section 16VAC25-60-260.F contains requirements for employers:

“F. On multi-employer worksites for all covered industries, citations shall normally be issued to an employer whose employee is exposed to an occupational hazard (the exposing employer). Additionally, the following employers shall normally be cited, whether or not their own employees are exposed:

1. The employer who actually creates the hazard (the creating employer);
2. The employer who is either:
 - a. Responsible, by contract or through actual practice for safety and health conditions on the entire worksite, and has the authority for ensuring that the hazardous condition is corrected (the controlling employer); or
 - b. Responsible, by contract or through actual practice for safety and health conditions for a specific area of the worksite or specific work practice or specific phase of a construction project, and has the authority for ensuring that the hazardous condition is corrected (the controlling employer); or
3. The employer who has the responsibility for actually correcting the hazard (the correcting employer).

Section 16VAC25-60-260.G contains the multi-employer worksite defense:

“G. A citation issued under subsection F of this section to an exposing employer who violates any VOSH law, standard, rule, or regulation shall be vacated if such employer demonstrates that:

1. The employer did not create the hazard;

³⁸⁴ *Id.* at Chapter 5, p. 76.

2. The employer did not have the responsibility or the authority to have the hazard corrected;
3. The employer did not have the ability to correct or remove the hazard;
4. The employer can demonstrate that the creating, the controlling, or the correcting employers, as appropriate, have been specifically notified of the hazards to which the employer's employees were exposed;
5. The employer has instructed his employees to recognize the hazard and, where necessary, informed them how to avoid the dangers associated with it;
6. Where feasible, an exposing employer must have taken appropriate alternative means of protecting employees from the hazard; and
7. When extreme circumstances justify it, the exposing employer shall have removed the employer's employees from the job.

ATTACHMENT C: VOSH Violations Issued in COVID-19 Cases Opened From January 1, 2020 to January 21, 2022

Time run: 01/24/2022 8:51:03 AM			
Source: OSHA Information System (OIS), Violation Detail Data Report			
VOSH Violations Issued in COVID-19 Cases Opened From January 1, 2020 to January 21, 2022			
Standard	Violation Issued	Current Violation Type	Issuance Date
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Other-than-Serious	04/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	07/09/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.4	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.5	Serious	12/14/2020
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.5	Serious	03/18/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.a	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.a	Serious	06/30/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.b	Other-than-Serious	04/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	01/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	01/29/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	03/05/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Serious	03/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	04/22/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	05/18/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	05/18/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	06/09/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	06/30/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	07/09/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.B.8.e	Other-than-Serious	07/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.D.2	Other-than-Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.D.2	Willful - Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.E	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.E.1.b	Serious	04/08/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.E.1.b	Serious	06/30/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.F	Serious	01/29/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.F	Other-than-Serious	02/02/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.G	Serious	11/16/2020
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.K.5	Other-than-Serious	10/01/2020
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.K.5	Other-than-Serious	04/22/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-40.K.6	Other-than-Serious	04/19/2021

COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-50.D.2	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-50.D.5	Serious	03/18/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.a	Other-than-Serious	03/05/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.a	Serious	03/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.a	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.a	Serious	06/07/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.e	Serious	11/30/2020
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.g	Serious	01/05/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.g	Serious	02/11/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.g	Serious	03/24/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.g	Serious	05/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.g	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	11/30/2020
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	03/02/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Other-than-Serious	03/09/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	03/10/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	03/18/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	03/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	04/08/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	06/07/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.k	Serious	07/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Willful - Serious	01/05/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Willful - Serious	02/11/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Serious	02/17/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Willful - Serious	02/22/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Serious	05/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.C.1.l	Willful - Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Other-than-Serious	01/29/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Other-than-Serious	03/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	02/17/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	03/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	03/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	04/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	05/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	05/26/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	07/09/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	07/16/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.C.1	Other-than-Serious	01/29/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.C.3	Serious	03/19/2021

COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.C.3.b	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-70.C.3.c	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	04/21/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	04/23/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	05/14/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	06/04/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.A	Other-than-Serious	06/30/2021
COVID-10 Emergency Temporary Standard	16VAC25-220-80.B.8	Serious	03/19/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.1	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.a	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.a	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.a	Serious	09/23/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.b	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.d	Other-than-Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	03/10/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	08/12/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Serious	09/23/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.B.7.e	Other-than-Serious	10/19/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.C	Other-than-Serious	08/12/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D.1	Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D.1	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D.1	Other-than-Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D.1	Other-than-Serious	09/09/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.D.1	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.E	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.E.1	Serious	06/24/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.E.1	Serious	09/23/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.E.1	Other-than-Serious	10/19/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.E.2	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.F.5	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.I	Serious	06/24/2021

COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.I	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.I	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.J.1	Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.J.1	Other-than-Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.J.1	Other-than-Serious	09/09/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.L.4	Serious	09/23/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.L.5	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-40.L.7	Serious	09/23/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-50.D.4	Serious	11/05/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.B.2	Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.B.2	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.B.2	Other-than-Serious	09/09/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.1	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.1	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.1	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.1	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Willful - Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Serious	07/30/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Serious	08/02/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.10	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.11	Willful - Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.11	Other-than-Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.11	Other-than-Serious	09/09/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.11	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.11	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.C.5	Serious	07/29/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.D.1	Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-60.D.2	Other-than-Serious	10/28/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-70.A.2	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.A	Other-than-Serious	07/06/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	09/27/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	10/04/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.A	Serious	10/08/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.C.1	Other-than-Serious	10/28/2021
COVID-19 Final Permanent Standard	FPS 16VAC25-220-80.C.1	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2021
Posting	16VAC25-60-40	Other-than-Serious	06/04/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.29(a)	Other-than-Serious	11/09/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.29(a)	Other-than-Serious	03/19/2021

Recordkeeping	1904.29(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.29(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	05/27/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.29(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	08/23/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.30(a)	Other-than-Serious	09/28/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.33(a)	Other-than-Serious	10/27/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.4(a)	Other-than-Serious	06/30/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.40(a)	Other-than-Serious	12/15/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.5(a)	Other-than-Serious	11/09/2020
Recordkeeping	1904.5(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	03/05/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.5(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	03/11/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.5(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	03/19/2021
Recordkeeping	1904.5(b)(3)	Other-than-Serious	09/23/2021
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(c)(1)(i)	Serious	09/30/2021
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(c)(1)(ii)	Serious	11/06/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(c)(1)(ii)	Serious	11/09/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(c)(2)(i)	Serious	11/04/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(c)(2)(i)	Serious	09/30/2021
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(f)(1)(i)	Other-than-Serious	11/13/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(f)(1)(i)	Serious	09/30/2021
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(g)(2)(ii)(B)	Other-than-Serious	11/06/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(g)(2)(ii)(B)	Other-than-Serious	11/13/2020
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(g)(2)(ii)(B)	Serious	09/30/2021
Bloodborne Pathogens	1910.1030(h)(3)(ii)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	09/08/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	11/09/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	11/16/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	12/18/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	12/22/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	01/05/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	01/29/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	03/10/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	06/07/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	06/15/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	07/29/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Serious	09/30/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/04/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(e)(1)(i)	Serious	06/15/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(f)(6)	Serious	09/23/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(f)(6)	Serious	07/29/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(f)(6)	Serious	09/30/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(f)(6)(ii)	Serious	11/16/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(f)(6)(ii)	Other-than-Serious	01/12/2022

Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(11)	Other-than-Serious	09/23/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Other-than-Serious	09/02/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Serious	09/23/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Serious	11/16/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Other-than-Serious	12/14/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Other-than-Serious	12/22/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Serious	06/15/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Serious	07/29/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(g)(8)	Other-than-Serious	10/04/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	09/08/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Serious	09/23/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Serious	11/09/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	12/22/2020
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	03/30/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Serious	06/15/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Serious	07/29/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Serious	09/30/2021
Hazard Communication	1910.1200(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/04/2021
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(1)	Serious	09/28/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(1)	Serious	11/09/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(1)	Other-than-Serious	09/30/2021
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(1)(i)	Other-than-Serious	08/13/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(1)(i)	Serious	09/30/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Serious	08/13/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	10/26/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	10/27/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	10/29/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	10/29/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Serious	11/09/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	12/18/2020
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(d)(2)	Other-than-Serious	03/02/2021
Personal Protective Equipment	1910.132(f)(1)	Serious	09/28/2020
Eye and Face Protection	1910.133(a)(1)	Other-than-Serious	09/23/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/26/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	10/27/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	11/06/2020

Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	11/06/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	11/09/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	03/10/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Serious	03/19/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(1)	Other-than-Serious	05/18/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(2)(i)	Other-than-Serious	09/30/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(c)(2)(ii)	Serious	09/30/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(d)(1)(i)	Serious	09/28/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(d)(1)(ii)	Serious	06/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	10/27/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	11/06/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	11/09/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	12/18/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	03/10/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	03/19/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1)	Serious	06/09/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(6)(i)	Other-than-Serious	08/13/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(6)(i)	Other-than-Serious	09/03/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(6)(i)	Other-than-Serious	05/18/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(7)(iv)	Serious	03/19/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(1)	Serious	10/27/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(1)	Serious	11/06/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(1)	Other-than-Serious	08/12/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Other-than-Serious	07/21/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Other-than-Serious	11/04/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	11/09/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	12/18/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	03/10/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	03/19/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(f)(2)	Serious	06/04/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(h)(1)	Other-than-Serious	09/03/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(1)	Other-than-Serious	10/26/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(1)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)	Other-than-Serious	10/26/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)	Serious	10/29/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)	Other-than-Serious	11/06/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)	Other-than-Serious	05/18/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(B)	Other-than-Serious	08/13/2020

Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(B)	Other-than-Serious	09/03/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(B)	Serious	06/09/2021
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(C)	Other-than-Serious	09/03/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(E)	Other-than-Serious	08/13/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(2)(i)(E)	Other-than-Serious	09/03/2020
Respiratory Protection	1910.134(m)(4)	Serious	10/26/2020
Sanitation	1910.141(a)(3)(i)	Other-than-Serious	09/23/2020
Sanitation	1910.141(d)(2)(ii)	Serious	03/02/2021
Temporary Labor Camps	1910.142(l)(1)	Other-than-Serious	01/29/2021
First Aid	1910.151(b)	Other-than-Serious	11/16/2020
First Aid	1910.151(c)	Serious	04/02/2021
First Aid	1910.151(c)	Other-than-Serious	09/30/2021
Ventilation	1910.94(a)(3)(i)(a)	Serious	01/12/2022
General Duty Clause Violation	40.1-51.1.A	Serious	10/29/2020
General Duty Clause Violation	40.1-51.1.A	Serious	10/29/2020
General Duty Clause Violation	40.1-51.1.A	Serious	11/05/2020
General Duty Clause Violation	40.1-51.1.A	Serious	04/22/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2020
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	03/02/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	05/27/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	07/08/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	08/25/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	09/30/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2021
Failure to Notify (Fatality, Hospitalization)	40.1-51.1.D	Other-than-Serious	11/05/2021

ATTACHMENT D: Executive Order 6 (EO 6), Reinvigorating Job Growth by Removing Burdensome Regulations From Virginia’s Business Community

DRAFT



*Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of the Governor*

Executive Order

NUMBER SIX (2022)

REINVIGORATING JOB GROWTH BY REMOVING BURDENSOME REGULATIONS FROM VIRGINIA'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, I hereby issue this Executive Order to ensure Virginia is open for business.

Importance of the Initiative

Businesses across the Commonwealth of Virginia faced unprecedented challenges throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. From government mandated closures, lockdowns, and restrictions to supply chain disruptions to staffing shortages, the effects of the pandemic undoubtedly made running a business in Virginia more difficult. Unfortunately, our government contributed to these difficulties.

The "Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19," as implemented by the Safety and Health Codes Board, is not having a measurable impact on preventing the spread of COVID-19 while presenting a significant burden on businesses. Overly burdensome and time-consuming training requirements for employees inhibit the hiring of new workers. Conflicting state and federal regulations cause confusion. Unnecessary restrictions impede daily activities.

Further, it appears the "Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19" was not enacted consistent with the Administrative Process Act as required by law and, in any event, was adopted in a rushed process that provided limited opportunity for the public to review and comment on the proposed

permanent regulations. It is critical that a standard such as this, which substantially impacts the lives and legal rights of our businesses and our citizens, be enacted through a process consistent with the law and the democratic principles fundamental to our Commonwealth.

The Department of Labor and Industry has many important responsibilities in protecting the interests of Virginia's workers, and our government and our businesses must work together to combat COVID-19.

However, regulations that do little to protect our citizens while imposing heavy burdens on our businesses are not in the best interest of our Commonwealth. This is particularly true when a regulation substantially impacts the legal rights our business and our citizens and is of questionable legality. Under these circumstances, to protect the rights of the citizens of our Commonwealth, our government should focus its limited resources on enforcement activities that further the interests of our citizens.

Directive

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, by Article V, Sections 1 and 7 of the Constitution of Virginia, and by § 2.2-103 of the Code of Virginia, I direct the following:

1. The Safety and Health Codes Board is to convene an emergency meeting of their membership to discuss whether there is a continued need for the "Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19." The board is directed to consider federal action in regard to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Emergency Temporary Standard. The Board should report its findings to the Governor within 30 days.
2. The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.
3. As a matter of enforcement discretion, all Virginia Agencies of the Commonwealth under my authority are directed to focus their limited resources on enforcement activities that have the most impact with the least burden on our business and citizens.

Effective Date

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by future executive order or directive.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 15th day of January, 2022.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kelly Thomasson".

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth

DISCLAIMER:

THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT WILL NOT TAKE EFFECT UNTIL THE VIRGINIA STANDARD FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION OF THE SARS-COV-2 VIRUS THAT CAUSES COVID19, 16VAC25-220, (VIRGINIA STANDARD) IS NO LONGER IN EFFECT.

NOTHING IN THIS DOCUMENT SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO IN ANY WAY LIMIT VOSH'S ABILITY TO ENFORCE ITS LAWS, STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO THIS LINK TO VOSH WORKPLACE SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE VIRGINIA STANDARD, SEE:
<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/virginia-standard-for-infectiousdisease-prevention-of-covid-19/>

REGARDLESS OF ANY INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT, EMPLOYERS HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO ADOPT SAFETY AND HEALTH WORKPLACE RULES FOR EMPLOYEES THAT ARE MORE STRINGENT THAN THIS GUIDANCE. § 40.1-51.1. Duties of Employers
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/40.1-51.1/>

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Programs

Guidance for Employers to Mitigate the Risk of COVID-19 to Workers

Purpose

As current COVID-19 infections decline and vaccinations and natural immunity increase within the general population, Virginia is on a path toward normalcy. This guidance is designed to help employers provide appropriate information for workers to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace and to help establish a workplace framework for future organizational and individual expectations and responsibilities.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and the Department of Labor and Industry believe that fully approved COVID-19 vaccines and boosters mitigate the individual health risk from contracting the COVID-

19 virus, and we encourage all people to consider the benefits of vaccines and boosters in reducing the impact of COVID-19.

Immunity is conferred either after contracting an infection from the COVID-19 virus or from a COVID-19 vaccine. The Commonwealth of Virginia and the Department of Labor and Industry recognize that natural immunity, after recovery from COVID-19 infection, likely provides significant protection against COVID-19 for some time. COVID-19 “immunity” does not mean that a person will not contract the COVID-19 virus in the future – rather, a person with “immunity” may not get seriously symptomatic or hospitalized with COVID-19.

As the population of vaccinated and natural immunity increase, the level of transmission and health risks in our community is reduced. This increased level of community immunity is an important step on Virginia’s path to normalcy.

During this transition period of near normalcy, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Department of Labor and Industry support and respect the rights of individuals to choose whether to wear masks or to not wear masks in non-federally mandated environments, unless required by law or as medically appropriate in cases of acute illness or in certain healthcare environments.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and the Department of Labor and Industry will not allow or condone illegal discrimination based on wearing or not wearing masks, and people should not be fired or terminated for not wearing a mask, except as noted above, or unless required by federal law.

Because the COVID-19 vaccine and booster reduces the risk of hospitalization and death from the COVID-19 virus, this guidance specifically recommends, but does not mandate, COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters for workers and encourages employers to permit workers and customers the choice of whether to wear a mask, except as otherwise required by their employer or VOSH pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A.

The Department of Labor and Industry relies on the current data and guidance received from the Virginia Department of Health and the expertise of the Governor’s Medical Advisory Committee regarding the COVID-19 Omicron variant and the disease in general. Employers and workers may also find information on the revised CDC guidelines as listed below.

This guidance provides general COVID-19 recommendations that may be implemented in the workplace. Nevertheless, employers should adhere to the VOSH mandatory safety and health standards that may apply to their specific industries or workplaces.

All recommendations are intended to assist employers in providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

General Guidance for Employers

Under the OSH Act and Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

Employers should engage with workers to mitigate COVID-19 transmission and the impact of contracting the virus, including:

- Facilitate employees getting vaccinated and boosted;
- Encourage any workers with COVID-19 symptoms to stay home from work and seek advice on testing and treatment from their physician;
- Require all workers infected with COVID-19 virus to stay home;
- Provide workers with face coverings or surgical masks, as appropriate;
- Encourage good sanitary work habits such as frequent hand washing;
- Educate workers on your COVID-19 policies and procedures using accessible formats and in languages they understand;
- Operate and maintain ventilation systems in accordance to manufacturers specifications to achieve optimal performance;
- Record and report COVID-19 infections and deaths which are mandatory under VOSH regulations part 1904; and,
- Follow other applicable mandatory VOSH standards.

All of VOSH's standards that apply to protecting workers from infection remain in place.

These **mandatory VOSH standards** include: requirements for PPE (part 1910, Subpart I (e.g., [1910.132](#) and [133](#))), respiratory protection ([1910.134](#)), sanitation ([1910.141](#)), protection from blood borne pathogens ([1910.1030](#)), VOSH's requirements for employee access to medical and exposure records ([1910.1020](#)), and requirements in the VOSH Administrative Regulations Manual.

Employers are also required by the General Duty Clause, [Va. Code 40.1-51.1.A](#), to provide a safe and healthful workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

See the OSHA COVID-19 guidance for more information on how to protect workers from potential exposures, according to their exposure risk.

Additional Resources

For more information to mitigate COVID-19 transmission among employees, reduce the impact of contracting the disease, maintain healthy business operations, and maintain a healthy work environment, please see the informational resources. They are provided as educational information regarding additional practices that businesses and individuals may choose to implement to plan, prepare, prevent and respond.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

COVID-19 in Virginia

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

COVID-19 Data in Virginia

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-in-virginia/>

Latest Guidance for Health Professionals

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/get-the-latest-guidance/health-professionals/>

Schools, Workplaces & Community Locations

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/schools-workplaces-community-locations/>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus>

Guidance by Industry

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/guidance/industry>

Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace

<https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Guidance by Audience (e.g., Employers, Business Owners and Community Leaders; Health Care Professionals; State and Local Government; etc.)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance.html>

How to Protect Yourself & Others

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Activities and Gatherings

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/index.html>

Science Brief: COVID-19 Vaccines and Vaccination

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/>

Vaccines for People with Underlying Medical Conditions

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

People with Certain Medical Conditions

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

COVID-19 Workplace Prevention Strategies

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/workplaces-businesses/index.html>

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Exercise Starter Kit for Workshop on Reconstituting Operations

<https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/best-practices/exercise-starter-kit-workshop-reconstituting-operations>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

What You Should Know About COVID-19, the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, & Other EEO Laws

<https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws>

MARCH 20, 2022

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
VIRGINIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (VOSH) PROGRAM

16 VAC 25-220, Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-COV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19

Combined Townhall, Public Hearing, Direct to DOLI Public Comments 2.17.22 to 3.3.2022 (the first 15 days of the 30 day comment period from 2.17.2022 to 3.19.2022), With Department Response

LINK TO TOWN HALL PUBLIC COMMENT FORUM:

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/Comments.cfm?generalnoticeid=2373>

The Department developed the following standard responses to issues raised multiple times by Commenters (highlighted in yellow):

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356	[REVOCATION]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357	[REVOCATION AND CDC UPDATE]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359	[REVOCATION AND MASK EFFECTIVENESS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366	[REVOCATION AND EMPLOYER RIGHT TO REQUIRE MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370	[PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371	[VIRGINIA STANDARD LEGALLY ADOPTED]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374	[LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382	[FDA APPROVED CLEAR MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519	[30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537	[VIRGINIA RANKINGS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541	[GRAVE DANGER]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550	[ABILITY TO STAY CURRENT WITH CDC CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557	[EFFECTIVENESS OF VACCINES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573	[VIRGINIA STANDARD DOES NOT MANDATE VACCINES/SHUTDOWNS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119575	[EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO FILE COMPLAINT]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119703	[VACCINES ARE NOT DANGEROUS]

Virginia Regulatory Townhall Comments

119356 2022/02/17 12:34:42 Ashley S. Remove Masks Please remove masks for teachers and other workers in VA.

Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board proposed revocation of Virginia Standard. The Board met on February 16, 2022 to consider the Department of Labor and Industry's (DOLI) proposal to revoke the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (Virginia Standard) with the following results: The Board adopted DOLI's proposed finding that the SARS-Cov-2 virus no longer poses a grave danger to employees under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a).

The Board adopted DOLI's proposed recommendation that the Virginia Standard be revoked, and that the such proposed revocation will be the subject of a 30-day written comment period, a public hearing (during the 30-day period), and a second Board meeting to vote on final revocation of the Virginia Standard.

https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\34796\Agenda_DOLI_34796_v9.pdf

NOTE: If the Virginia Standard is revoked, the Department will issue a guidance document entitled: Guidance for Employers to Mitigate the Risk of COVID-19 to Workers. The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) program will post the Guidance document on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall for public comments between March 28, 2022 and April 27, 2022. https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DOLI-Guidance-for-Employers-to-Mitigate-the-Risk-of-COVID-19-to-Workers-03.01.2022_FINAL.pdf

119357 2022/02/17 12:51:27 Hairstylist and teachers wife! Please remove masks The data is clear! THE CDC is dragging their feet but mask mandates should be dropped for ALL workers in Virginia.
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

CDC updated guidance of February 25, 2022.

The Department has issued an FAQ on CDC's February 25, 2022 guidance:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/final-covid-19-standard-frequently-asked-questions/#Employer%20Compliance%2050>

NEW! added of 03-02-22

THE CDC RECENTLY UPDATED ITS GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 FOR MASK WEARING. IF I AM AN EMPLOYEE WHOSE JOB DUTIES DO NOT INCLUDE PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE/NON-MEDICAL CARE TO KNOWN OR SUSPECTED COVID-19 PERSONS CAN I FOLLOW THE UPDATED CDC GUIDANCE REGARDING MASKS?

Yes, except as otherwise noted in these FAQs, and only in areas of medium and low COVID-19 community levels as defined by the CDC.

16VAC25-220-40.G, Mandatory requirements for all employers, contains a mask requirement for employees that are not fully vaccinated, fully vaccinated employees in areas of substantial or high community transmission, and otherwise at-risk employees (because of a prior transplant or other medical condition).[1]

16VAC25-220-40.G further provides a list of exceptions to the masking requirement, including when an employee is alone in a room, etc.

CDC Guidance Update

On February 25, 2022, the CDC updated its mask wearing guidance based on community level metrics. CDC looks at the combination of three metrics — new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days — to determine the COVID-19 community level.[2]

In areas of low COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance does not include mask wearing. In areas of medium COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance provides:

- If you are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing).

In areas of high COVID-19 community level, the CDC updated guidance provides:

- Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status.

- If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection.
- If you are immunocompromised or high risk for severe disease, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing).

You can determine your place of employment's COVID-19 community level at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

16VAC25-220-10.E Analysis

The Virginia Standard provides flexibility for the Department and employers as CDC workplace guidance changes. Section 16VAC25-220-10.E provides that:

To the extent that an employer actually complies with a recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or non-mandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease related hazards or job tasks addressed by this chapter, the employer's actions shall be considered in compliance with this standard. An employer's actual compliance with a recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or non-mandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 related hazards or job tasks addressed by a provision of this chapter shall be considered evidence of good faith in any enforcement proceeding related to this chapter. The Commissioner of Labor and Industry shall consult with the State Health Commissioner for advice and technical aid before making a determination related to compliance with current CDC guidelines.

The intent of 16VAC25-220-10.E is to give employers the option to either comply with the requirements of a provision of the Virginia Standard or demonstrate as an alternative that they have actually complied with the mandatory and non-mandatory recommendations and considerations in a CDC publication addressing the same hazards, issues, requirements, etc., that are also addressed in a specific provision of the VOSH Standard.

As provided in 10.E, the Commissioner of Labor and Industry will consult with the State Health Commissioner for advice and technical aid before making a determination related to compliance with current CDC guidelines.

The Department and VDH agree that, with the exceptions noted for employers and employees whose job duties include providing medical care/non-medical care to known or suspected COVID-19 persons, an employer's compliance with the mandatory and non-mandatory updated CDC guidance on mask wearing issued on February 25, 2022, would be in compliance with 16VAC25-220-40.G.

NOTE: CDC's new COVID-19 Community Levels recommendations do not apply in healthcare settings, such as hospitals and nursing homes. Instead, healthcare settings should continue to use community transmission rates and continue to follow CDC's infection prevention and control recommendations for healthcare settings. Employers and employees whose job tasks include providing medical assistance/non-medical care to known or suspected COVID-19 persons (e.g., hospitals, urgent care facilities, doctor's offices, medical clinics, first aid providers, emergency response personnel, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.) must continue to comply with 16VAC25-220.40.G and other applicable VOSH standards (e.g., Respiratory Protection Standard, 1910.134; Personal Protective Equipment Standard, 1910.132, etc.).

[1] <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/VAC-16VAC25-220-Virginia-Standard-10.6.21-Current.pdf>

[2] https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_2145-DM76655&ACSTrackingLabel=02.25.2022%20-%20COVID-19%20Data%20Tracker%20Weekly%20Review&deliveryName=USCDC_2145-DM76655

119358 2022/02/17 12:56:00 Jay D. Remove All COVID Requirements, Restrictions and Recommendation Its obvious that bureaucrats politicized this virus from the start, and now the

narrative is completely falling apart. Based on the polling data, the current elite bureaucrats and politicians have decided that they can't win the next election by continuing to push these restrictive policies. Remove these ineffective COVID requirements, restrictions, and recommendations for all employers and employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119359 2022/02/17 13:02:36 Megan REMOVE MASK The mask mandate is ineffective! Please remove all mask mandates for VA workers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

Effectiveness of wearing masks to mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

With regard to the efficacy of face masks/face coverings, the CDC states (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>): SARS-CoV-2 infection is transmitted predominately by inhalation of respiratory droplets generated when people cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe. CDC recommends community use of masks, specifically non-valved multi-layer cloth masks, to prevent transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Masks are primarily intended to reduce the emission of virus-laden droplets (source control), which is especially relevant for asymptomatic or presymptomatic infected wearers who feel well and may be unaware of their infectiousness to others, and who are estimated to account for more than 50% of transmissions.^{1,2} Masks also help reduce inhalation of these droplets by the wearer (filtration for wearer protection). The community benefit of masking for SARS-CoV-2 control is due to the combination of these effects; individual prevention benefit increases with increasing numbers of people using masks consistently and correctly.

Source Control to Block Exhaled Virus

Multi-layer cloth masks block release of exhaled respiratory particles into the environment,³⁻⁶ along with the microorganisms these particles carry.^{7,8} Cloth masks not only effectively block most large droplets (i.e., 20-30 microns and larger)⁹ but they can also block the exhalation of fine droplets and particles (also often referred to as aerosols) smaller than 10 microns;^{3,5} which increase in number with the volume of speech¹⁰⁻¹² and specific types of phonation.¹³ Multi-layer cloth masks can both block up to 50-70% of these fine droplets and particles^{3,14} and limit the forward spread of those that are not captured.^{5,6,15,16} Upwards of 80% blockage has been achieved in human experiments that have measured blocking of all respiratory droplets,⁴ with cloth masks in some studies performing on par with surgical masks as barriers for source control.

Filtration for Wearer Protection

Studies demonstrate that cloth mask materials can also reduce wearers' exposure to infectious droplets through filtration, including filtration of fine droplets and particles less than 10 microns. The relative filtration effectiveness of various masks has varied widely across studies, in large part due to variation in experimental design and particle sizes analyzed. Multiple layers of cloth with higher thread counts have demonstrated superior performance compared to single layers of cloth with lower thread counts, in some cases filtering nearly 50% of fine particles less than 1 micron.^{14,17-29} Some materials (e.g., polypropylene) may enhance filtering effectiveness by generating triboelectric charge (a form of static electricity) that enhances capture of charged particles^{18,30} while others (e.g., silk) may help repel moist droplets³¹ and reduce fabric wetting and thus maintain breathability and comfort. In addition to the number of layers and choice of materials, other techniques can improve wearer protection by improving

fit and thereby filtration capacity. Examples include but are not limited to mask fitters, knotting-and-tucking the ear loops of medical procedure masks, using a cloth mask placed over a medical procedure mask, and nylon hosiery sleeves.

Human Studies of Masking and SARS-CoV-2 Transmission

A study of an outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt, an environment notable for congregate living quarters and close working environments, found that use of face coverings on-board was associated with a 70% reduced risk of infection.

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6923e4.htm>

From: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>:

At least ten studies have confirmed the benefit of universal masking in community level analyses: in a unified hospital system,⁴⁷ a German city,⁴⁸ two U.S. states,^{49, 50} a panel of 15 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.,^{51, 52} as well as both Canada⁵³ and the U.S.⁵⁴⁻⁵⁶ nationally. Each analysis demonstrated that, following directives from organizational and political leadership for universal masking, new infections fell significantly. Two of these studies^{51, 52} and an additional analysis of data from 200 countries that included the U.S.⁵⁶ also demonstrated reductions in mortality. Another 10-site study showed reductions in hospitalization growth rates following mask mandate implementation.⁵⁴ A separate series of cross-sectional surveys in the U.S. suggested that a 10% increase in self-reported mask wearing tripled the likelihood of stopping community transmission.⁵⁷ An economic analysis using U.S. data found that, given these effects, increasing universal masking by 15% could prevent the need for lockdowns and reduce associated losses of up to \$1 trillion or about 5% of gross domestic product.⁵² Two studies have been improperly characterized by some sources as showing that surgical or cloth masks offer no benefit.^{58,59} A community-based randomized control trial in Denmark during 2020 assessed whether the use of surgical masks reduced the SARS-CoV-2 infection rate among wearers (personal protection) by more than 50%.⁵⁸ Findings were inconclusive,⁵⁸ most likely because the actual reduction in infections was lower. The study was too small (i.e., enrolled about 0.1% of the population) to assess whether masks could decrease transmission from wearers to others (source control). A second study of 14 hospitals in Vietnam during 2015 found that cloth masks were inferior to surgical masks for protection against clinical upper respiratory illness or laboratory-confirmed viral infection.⁵⁹ The study had a number of limitations including the lack of a true control (no mask) group for comparison, limited source control as hospitalized patients and staff were not masked, unblinded study arm assignments potentially biasing self-reporting of illness, and the washing and re-use of cloth masks by users introducing the risk of infection from self-washing. A follow up study in 2020 found that healthcare workers whose cloth masks were laundered by the hospital were protected equally as well as those that wore medical masks.⁶⁰

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

Effectiveness of governmentally imposed mask mandates.

Healthaffairs.org, February 16, 2022. The Effectiveness Of Government Masking Mandates On COVID-19 County-Level Case Incidence Across The United States, 2020.

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2021.01072>

Abstract

Evidence for the effectiveness of masking on SARS-CoV-2 transmission at the individual level has accumulated, but the additional benefit of community-level mandates is less certain. In this observational study of matched cohorts from 394 US counties between March 21 and October 20, 2020,

we estimated the association between county-level public masking mandates and daily COVID-19 case incidence. On average, the daily case incidence per 100,000 people in masked counties compared with unmasked counties declined by 23 percent at four weeks, 33 percent at six weeks, and 16 percent across six weeks postintervention.

Journals.plos.org, June 23, 2021. Association between COVID-19 outcomes and mask mandates, adherence, and attitudes.
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0252315>

Abstract

We extend previous studies on the impact of masks on COVID-19 outcomes by investigating an unprecedented breadth and depth of health outcomes, geographical resolutions, types of mask mandates, early versus later waves and controlling for other government interventions, mobility testing rate and weather. We show that mask mandates are associated with a statistically significant decrease in new cases (-3.55 per 100K), deaths (-0.13 per 100K), and the proportion of hospital admissions (-2.38 percentage points) up to 40 days after the introduction of mask mandates both at the state and county level. These effects are large, corresponding to 14% of the highest recorded number of cases, 13% of deaths, and 7% of admission proportion.

119360 2022/02/17 13:04:59 Audrey Walters COVID RESTRICTIONS Remove all COVID restrictions, requirements and recommendations.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119361 2022/02/17 13:06:01 Sean Foster Remove masking in all workplaces Remove masking in all workplaces

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119362 2022/02/17 13:13:42 MB Please remove Covid requirements for Workers Please remove the burdensome Covid requirements for Virginia workers as they are no longer reasonable now that we are in the endemic stage of this virus. School children no longer need to wear masks and it makes sense that school teachers and other workers in VA should now be free from masks, testing and vaccine requirements. We need to take steps to ensure that our schools and other businesses can retain their employees, and move forward in rebounding from the past two and a half years of onerous government restrictions and mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

119363 2022/02/17 13:19:14 Mark C Remove Masks for ALL! Time for normalization!!
Remove Masks for ALL! Time for normalization!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119366 2022/02/17 13:48:09 Jess B Remove mask mandate All workers in the public and private sector should have the choice to wear or NOT wear a mask in their workplace. Individuals make the best medical decisions for themselves, not political entities!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

Employers can implement workplace safety and health rules for employees that are more stringent than VOSH laws, standards, and regulations.

Employers have the legal right to adopt safety and health workplace rules for employees that are more stringent than VOSH laws, standards, and regulations. See Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A. It shall be the duty of every employer to furnish to each of his employees safe employment and a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees and to comply with all applicable occupational safety and health rules and regulations promulgated under this title.

Employees that fail to comply with an employer's workplace safety and health rules, or with VOSH laws, standards and regulations are subject disciplinary action up to and including job termination. 16VAC25-60-260.B recognizes the right of employers to set workplace safety and health rules and to enforce such rules:

B. A citation issued under subsection A of this section to an employer who violates any VOSH law, standard, rule, or regulation shall be vacated if such employer demonstrates that:

1. Employees of such employer have been provided with the proper training and equipment to prevent such a violation;
2. Work rules designed to prevent such a violation have been established and adequately communicated to employees by such employer and have been effectively enforced when such a violation has been discovered;
3. The failure of employees to observe work rules led to the violation; and
4. Reasonable steps have been taken by such employer to discover any such violation.

There are a number of different reasons an employer may opt to require stricter COVID-19 mitigation strategies for employees than.

First, the OSH Act of 1970 and Virginia laws, standards and regulations require employers to provide a safe and health workplace to employees. While providing for and enforcing workplace safety and health requirements indirectly benefits members of the general public, the primary focus of those laws is employee safety and health.

Second, customers or patrons are at a business voluntarily while employees are required to be there in order to keep their jobs. Customers can assume the risk of being potentially exposed to the virus, while no employee should be required or permitted to do so.

Third, customers can limit the length of their exposure at a particular business and can limit the number of businesses they visit on a daily basis to reduce the risk of exposure, while employees are required to be present for the full period of their work shift.

Slowing or preventing the spread of the virus is all about mitigating the risk of exposure by limiting or eliminating possible sources of the virus (both in length of exposure to a particular patron/customer as well as the sheer number of patrons/customers that an employee is exposed to during an entire shift).

119367 2022/02/17 13:52:38 Jacqueline D. remove ALL Covid restrictions! Covid has become endemic. It's time to move forward. It is time to remove ALL restrictions and mandates immediately (remove vaccine, testing, and mask requirements) for ALL VA employees, teachers, school staff, hospital workers, civil servants, etc.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119368 2022/02/17 13:54:14 Dianna B. Stop the insanity! Unmask Virginia! Please remove all mandates related to COVID. Vaccines are widely available and those who want them have received them. Let people choose for themselves if they want to mask or not. This is an infringement on personal liberty. I do not ask my neighbors to wear a coat to keep me warm. It is insidious that I have the right to choose if my child wears a mask, but I do not have that right to make that choice for my own body. Virginia has spoken in the elections and the fact that there is even a comment period for this is an insult to every voting Virginian. Remove the masks now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119369 2022/02/17 13:56:03 Dbotelho Remove all COVID prevention mandates All COVID mandates (masking, distancing and vaccination) need to be removed immediately. People deserve a choice and can protect themselves if they feel the need.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119370 2022/02/17 13:59:35 Mark Leone Rmove the Mask Mandate Scientific evidence in support of mask mandates is abundantly clear. They do not work against the spread of an aerosolized virus, and they have many deleterious effects. They are dehumanizing, harmful to individual mental health, poisonous to civic society, divisive, and can promote physical harm. Furthermore, COVID-19 is not even close to a public emergency that justifies coercive regulations affecting peoples bodily freedom and integrity. Do the right thing, and remove this unnecessary, harmful, and worse than useless mandate.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

The SARS-Cov-2 virus that causes COVID-19 constituted a public health emergency in the United States and Virginia.
Situation Summary.

On February 7, 2020, the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) issued a Declaration of Public Emergency.

On March 7, 2020 the first case of COVID-19 in Virginia was confirmed.

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.

On March 12, 2020 Governor Ralph Northam issued Executive Order 51, Declaration of a State of Emergency Due To Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

On March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 17, 2020 Governor Northam and State Health Commissioner M. Norman Oliver, MD, MA issued a Declaration of Public Health Emergency.

As of February 2, 2022, in the U. S. there were 75,605,991 total cases reported (current 7-day average of 378,015 cases), 4,317,927 hospitalizations (current 7-day average of 16,068), and 892,442 total deaths (current 7-day moving average of 2,404 deaths).

As of February 5, 2022, cases in Virginia totaled 1,598,416 (7-day average 4,468 cases), 47,208 hospitalizations (7-day average of 28 hospitalizations), with 17,393 deaths (7-day average of 8 deaths).

119371 2022/02/17 14:03:57 Kelly Newcome No More Masks! EVER! It has become apparent that these mandates were done unlawfully and go against our Constitutional rights. In addition, it is well known that masks do nothing to prevent transmission of viral agents. There are at least 12 peer reviewed studies showing this. These mandates must be removed and never implemented again!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

The Virginia Standard was legally adopted.

Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 6 provides in part:

The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.

After reviewing DOLI's request for legal advice, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) can report, EO6 orders the Board and DOLI to seek guidance from the OAG regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard. The answer is yes: the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard, as affirmed by the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals.

Multiple legal challenges to COVID-19 related Governor's Executive Orders and the VOSH Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220, were filed in the Circuit Court for the City of Richmond and consolidated. On March 4, 2021, the Court granted the Commonwealth's motion to dismiss. On March 31, 2021, the plaintiffs appealed the dismissal to the Virginia Court of Appeals (case number 0316-21-2).

The Court of Appeals issued its ruling in the case on December 7, 2021.

The Court found that Governor's Executive Orders (EO) are not subject to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), and that the challenges to the Department's Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS)

are moot because it has expired. The Court also found that the Department's Final Permanent Standard, which replaced the ETS, went through a distinct and separate rulemaking process and must be challenged separately, if at all.

The Court further found that the Plaintiff's claims under the Virginia Religious Freedom Act are moot because the Executive Orders expired and were replaced. Finally, the Court found that with regard to Count IV in the case (that EO restrictions violated the separation of powers provisions of the Virginia Constitution and impermissibly infringed on rights of assembly and association and the free exercise of religion), broader constitutional claims were raised which are not within the appellate jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals, and transferred those assignments to the Supreme Court of Va.

119372 2022/02/17 14:13:54 Anonymous Please remove masks! Please remove masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119373 2022/02/17 14:14:32 Anonymous Remove masking in all workplaces Remove masking in all workplaces

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

[119374](#) 2022/02/17 14:18:13 Anonymous science over politics We decided two days ago to end required masking in our small office. The relief and return of uninhibited concentration is palpable. However, it concerns me that VA seems to have no concurrent plan in place to protect vulnerable populations like daycare facilities, schools, nursing homes. Shouldn't we at least provide these groups with testing supplies and protocols to avoid more infections, and disruptive shutdowns, isolations, and quarantines? The littlest kids can't get vaccines yet, but they don't live alone!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

All other VOSH laws, standards and regulations that apply to protecting workers from infection will remain in place if the Virginia Standard is revoked.

Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A, also known as the general duty clause, requires employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace to employees:

§ 40.1-51.1. Duties of employers.

A. It shall be the duty of every employer to furnish to each of his employees safe employment and a place of employment that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees and to comply with all applicable occupational safety and health rules and regulations promulgated under this title.

As an example, federal OSHA Region III (federal region in which Virginia is located and monitored by) issued the following citation under §5(a)(1) of the OSH Act of 1970, the general duty clause, to address a COVID-19 outbreak as a workplace:

29 CFR OSH ACT of 1970 Section (5)(a)(1): The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or

serious physical harm to employees, in that employees were not protected from the hazard of contracting the virus, SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2), the cause of the COVID-19 disease....On or about April 19, 2021, and continuing thereafter, the employer did not develop and implement timely and effective measures to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Employees working in the Pouch Room and DE Line worked in close proximity to each other and were not required to wear face coverings. The employer did not use social distancing or physical barriers in the production areas or breakrooms. The employer did not screen employees before entering the facility and did not implement a procedure for disinfecting the production area. An outbreak occurred between April 19 and April 25, 2021 where 15 of the workers in these areas tested positive for the virus. Workers subsequently infected their families and friends, many of whom became seriously ill. After the outbreak, the employer still failed to implement any measures to protect workers from the virus. Abatement certification and documentation required within 10 days after abatement date. The certification shall include a statement that abatement is complete, the date and method of abatement, and state that employees and their representatives were informed of this abatement. Abatement documentation shall include documents demonstrating that abatement is complete, such as evidence of the purchase or repair of equipment, photograph or video evidence of abatement or other written records.

https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/establishment.violation_detail?id=1528699.015&citation_id=01001

Mandatory VOSH standards include: requirements for PPE (e.g., 1910.132 and 133), respiratory protection (1910.134), sanitation (1910.141 and 16VAC25-160), temporary labor camps (1910.142), protection from bloodborne pathogens (1910.1030), VOSH's requirements for employee access to medical and exposure records (1910.1020), and requirements in the VOSH Administrative Regulations Manual (16VAC25-60-120, -130, -140 and -150).

When an employer or VOSH determines that PPE is necessary to protect unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers from exposure to COVID-19, the employer must provide PPE in accordance with relevant mandatory VOSH standards and should consider providing PPE in accordance with other industry-specific guidance. Respirators, if necessary, must be provided and used in compliance with 1910.134 (e.g., medical determination, fit testing, training on its correct use), including certain provisions for voluntary use when workers supply their own respirators, and other PPE must be provided and used in accordance with the applicable standards in part 1910, Subpart I (e.g., 1910.132 and 133). There are times when PPE is not called for by VOSH standards or other industry-specific guidance, but some workers may have a legal right to PPE as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA.

If someone who has been in the facility within 24 hours is suspected of having or confirmed to have COVID-19, follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations. Follow requirements in mandatory VOSH standards 1910.1200 and 1910.132, 133, and 138 for hazard communication and PPE appropriate for exposure to cleaning chemicals.

Employers have the legal right to adopt safety and health workplace rules for employees that are more stringent than VOSH laws, standards, and regulations. See Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A.

Va. Code §40.1-51.2:1 prohibits discharging or in any other way discriminating against an employee for engaging in various occupational safety and health activities. Examples of violations could include

discriminating against employees for raising a reasonable concern about infection control related to COVID-19 to the employer, the employer's agent, other employees, a government agency, or to the public, such as through print, online, social, or any other media; or against an employee for voluntarily providing and safely wearing their own PPE, such as a respirator, face shield, gloves, or surgical masks.

119375 2022/02/17 14:20:08 Michelle Fraser Mask and Covid vaccine mandates Covid is no longer a pandemic. The Omicron variant essentially made Covid endemic. Most people have gotten 1,2 or 3 shots or have natural immunity. It's over! Enough damage has been done. Nobody should be forced to wear masks or take shots or accept any medical treatment as a condition of employment. This is still America for God's sake! We have rights!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119376 2022/02/17 14:22:39 Anonymous Let businesses choose. The Permanent standards had a place and time. We are very thankful for how they guided us through some very trying times. We have now come to another crossroad - as the state, country and world has started to open up - the standard is now obsolete. This revocation will allow businesses to decide which parts to keep, which parts to amend and which part to eliminate. If parents can choose for their kids - businesses and adults can choose for themselves. Keeping a strict policy for 8 hours a day is asinine when employees go home and into the community for the other 16 hours and do not (and should not) keep the stringent adherence as they are required to do at work.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119377 2022/02/17 14:22:59 Anonymous No more mask We need to end this craziness. If our God or whatever higher power you believe in saw fit to block our noses and mouths I think He or nature would have designed us and all living creatures that way. Again, it should be about CHOICE. If you feel safe with one or two, please by all means do. But don't expect others to sit eight hours a day with their mouths and noses covered worsening their anxiety levels.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119378 2022/02/17 14:25:09 Henry Bass, Automation Creations, Inc. We value DOL, Virginia Health and local public health department expertise! While many commenters have strong opinions regarding mask mandates, I wanted to take a moment to say thank-you to the many experts and officials who carefully consider infectious diseases, worker safety, and minimizing risk. I believe the Virginia regulations and recommendations are based on scientific evidence, proven epidemiology and public health concerns. As a small business owner, I appreciate, follow and adhere to the local, state and Federal recommendations. It makes sense.

The only possible quibble we have seen in the pandemic is the tremendous difference in population density between the Golden Crescent area of the Commonwealth versus the rural Appalachian area where my business of 24 employees is located. Rules that are passed to minimize public transportation congestion or crowded workplaces make sense in high-density areas, but not when there are a total of 10 people in a 50,000 square foot office, or when a typical workday involves no less than 50 feet of space between me and the small handful of people I might see in a typical work day. The solution is local authority to adjust mandates based on known conditions, current risks and predictive trends. In Montgomery County, Virginia, we have been blessed with an outstanding public health department that tirelessly worked nights and weekends to keep our community safe and well-informed. Please continue to empower localities to do what makes sense for our Commonwealth. Thank you! Henry Bass, owner, Automation Creations, Inc.

2020 Kraft Drive, Suite 3000

Blacksburg, VA 24060

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119380 2022/02/17 14:33:09 Monica de la Rosa No more masks The virus is endemic. E29 Allow us to breathe fresh air.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119381 2022/02/17 14:36:08 Alice olson Masks should be optional for EVERYONE There is a vaccine, N95 masks and a milder variant. Masks should no longer be mandated !

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119382 2022/02/17 14:42:16 Anonymous Teach without a Mask, PLEASE I teach Kindergarten. I have for 32 years. Children need to see my face and expressions during reading. They need to see my mouth for phonics and decoding. Please allow teachers the choice to not wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

FDA approved clear face masks.

Some commenters expressed concern about the inability of others to understand words or see facial expressions during the wearing of masks.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved face masks on the market that are clear and that enable others to see a wearer's face. While the Department does not endorse commercial products, here is a link to a news story about one such product:

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/clearmask-introduces-worlds-first-ce-marked-fully-transparent-surgical-mask-301387067.html>

FDA approved face masks are considered personal protective equipment covered by the Personal Protective Equipment Standard, 1910.132.

119383 2022/02/17 14:43:28 Ashley Fritzman George Stop Discrimination and stop masking in the workplace Please stop discriminating between the vaccinated and the unvaccinated when deciding who can wear a mask in the work place. It has been proven that both individuals are the same when it comes to spreading the COVID virus so why does one get to choose and the other does not? This is a form of segregation that I thought we the people were trying to get away from? I want my legal right back to choose what to do with my body which includes how I choose to protect myself from COVID. Two years is long enough..

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119384 2022/02/17 15:00:14 Mary Mack No evidence for masks End mandatory masks. There is no evidence that they stop any disease. In fact, they are germ magnets and spread disease, especially to the wearer. They make people sick. They are medieval, not science.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119385 2022/02/17 15:01:34 Teacher Please stop the mask mandates. Please stop the mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119386 2022/02/17 15:06:30 Jennifer Goyet Please rescind ALL mandates I am asking the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry to fully and completely rescind their employee mask mandates in conjunction with EO2 and EO6. If we as parents are able to make the personal and private decision for and with our school-aged children, we as Virginia employees should be awarded the same freedom of choice. Students need to see their teachers faces for proper instruction. This does not stop a teacher from wearing a mask if they so choose but that is what it should be - their

<div dir=ltr>- All across our great country, everyone is quickly realizing masks do not equal the science everyone has been following.

All across our great country, people are no longer wanting or believing in any sort of mandate.

All across our great country, governors and mayors are lifting their mask mandates for all settings effective immediately. The governors and mayors are not saying "possibly one day in the future" nor are they saying "some random date span in three weeks. This week during the sporting events on Virginia college campuses and across the country at even like the Super Bowl, only

the smallest of minorities was wearing a mask.No one was drinking or eating 100% of the game but they were definitely going maskless 100% of the game. The photos are proving this. What they are doing in those games carries over - they are not wearing mask any other time. And finally, all across our state, K12 students have been going to school without their masks and the data demonstrates the cases are all but disappearing. The numbers are dropping drastically. Cases, severity level, hospitalizations, deaths - all going down. The mask wearing did not contribute to this fact since we all wore masks for two years and they did not stop the numbers from skyrocketing. Natural immunity has started to reach a peak, contributing to mild cases or no cases at all.

Please rescind the mask mandate for all employees in Virginia.
Jennifer Goyet
Virginia Beach resident
Virginia employee

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119387 2022/02/17 15:17:40 Anonymous No more masked teachers and therapists in special education It is long overdue for all teachers, staff, and therapy providers (think speech therapy in a mask, what a joke) to be able to un-mask at school so that students, but especially those with special needs, can read non-verbal communication cues, clearly hear the messages being said to them in order to correctly process the message, and for those who benefit from visual cues to be able to read lips and see how sounds are formed in the mouth. Our students have been impacted by this for far too long.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119388 2022/02/17 15:19:31 Anonymous End mask mandates please! Please end the mask mandate and all other mandates ASAP. When Virginia Tech has sold out Basketball games with very few fans wearing masks, it is time to end it! Not to mention the Super Bowl with very few seen wearing a mask!! Almost everyone has been vaccinated and/or has had COVID. Seems there should be high immunity at this point.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119389 2022/02/17 15:24:30 Anonymous Please end masking Please end the masking in schools for the students as well as the teachers. It should be a personal choice by ALL. Individuals may choose to further protect themselves by masking if the so CHOOSE to. The science has proven that masked and unmasked school divisions have had similar COVID cases. Thank you for FINALLY helping the commonwealth get back to some normalization

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119390 2022/02/17 15:28:05 Anonymous End Mask for all Employees The mask mandate needs to go away for everyone. Teachers, grocery/shopping, other businesses. If we can as parents .are decisions for our kids it should be up to us if we want to wear one to work.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119391 2022/02/17 16:09:35 Nancy Torrisi NO MORE MASKS No more masks at work please! As a teacher it's difficult to talk and teach daily wearing a mask for 8 hours. COVID has not been spreading at the elementary level since children have been given the option to wear a mask or not. Please consider giving teachers the same option.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119392 2022/02/17 16:38:37 David B. Johnson, CSP Chesterfield County Government Comments on the Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of t Honorable Members of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry Safety and Health Codes Board: On behalf of Chesterfield County, Virginia we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of Labor and Industry Safety and Health Codes Board's proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. Chesterfield County is one of the larger counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia encompassing over 460 square miles while providing critical infrastructure and essential services to over 365,000 citizens. The county government and public school district employs over 12,000 employees and we are committed to protecting the health and safety of our employees, students, citizens, contractors, and suppliers. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us all in many ways over the past two years, both on a personal basis and as an employer. Chesterfield County has earnestly attempted to implement mitigation protocols within our workplaces that were risk-based, appropriate, effective, and protective of our employees and others who may utilize our services and facilities. At times we have found the guidance coming from the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry, the Virginia Department of Health, and the federal CDC to be confusing, not always grounded on a solid scientific basis, shrouded in uncertainty, everchanging, and onerous to implement. It is now evident that the pandemic has taken a significant turn for the better across the Commonwealth and in Chesterfield County, as is evidenced by the rapidly declining number of new COVID-19 cases, significant reduction in case positivity rates, and decline in hospitalizations attributable to the predominant Omicron variant. Chesterfield County agrees with and supports the DOLI Health and Safety Codes Board's acknowledgement that COVID-19 no longer presents a unique grave danger to employees in the workplace. Current thought is that the pandemic has entered an endemic phase and as such will become a ubiquitous community-based illness that has occasional flareups and hotspots. There is no longer a continued need for the existing workplace standard. We support and recommend that the Board vote to revoke the existing workplace standard at

the end of the 30-day comment period. Thank you for your effort to keep Virginia's workers safe and for your kind consideration. Respectfully, David B. Johnson, CSP Director, Department of Risk Management and Chief Risk Officer

Chesterfield County, Virginia

cc. Hon Christopher Winslow, Esq. - Chairperson Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Hon. Leslie Haley, Esq. Vice Chairperson - Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Hon. Kevin Carroll - Member Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Hon. James Ingle - Member Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Hon. James Holland - Member Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Dr. Joseph Casey - County Administrator

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119393 2022/02/17 16:44:28 Anonymous Please remove the mask Please remove the mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356

119394 2022/02/17 16:49:00 Ann Parker REVOKE the VA Std for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Caused Covid 19 Vote to REVOKE the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that caused COVID-19, as per the Committee Decision yesterday, February 16, 2022. Employers and Employees have been negatively effected by this over reaction, and need the opportunity to start recovering lost wages, their jobs, businesses and overall health and well being. This needs to be Effective as swiftly as possible. Thank You, Ann Parker

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119395 2022/02/17 16:49:20 Anonymous Continue with sound scientific action We all know that the COVID debate has gotten to politicized. Looking through the first comments regarding mask requirements, it is clear that people are passionate about this issue. But we are in the midst of another surge. How does it makes sense to relax safety protocol in the middle of a surge? That feels like political posturing, and that is bad for Virginia. Apparently the Department of Labor voted to remove a permanent COVID Standard, which absolutely makes sense. We are going to be stuck with this virus for the foreseeable future, and we can't continue to isolate forever. But please don't remove all safety protocols simply because it is politically expedient. We must carefully plan for how to learn to live with this virus, it does not make sense to immediately undo all of the safety protocols at once to satisfy a few outspoken constituents.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119396 2022/02/17 16:50:18 Sara 3rd Grade Teacher Give teachers a choice As a teacher (and, you know, an adult) I would like the option to make health choices for myself and take off my mask. Quite frankly, I don't know how anyone expects us to be heard by our students or teach PHONICS to these children with a piece of cloth strapped over our faces. I have literally had to use a microphone so my kids can hear me. I have no issue with anyone who wants to keep wearing a mask but I would like the choice to NOT wear my mask. Drop this whole standard please.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119397 2022/02/17 16:52:01 Kim End all covid regulations including mask/vaccine mandates for ALL Regulations requiring masks and vaccinations in all workplaces should be rescinded. It has been widely proven through data that masks and mandatory vaccinations offer little protection over unmasked and natural immunity. People should be able to choose if they want to wear a mask and want to get a vaccine for their own protection. End all regulations immediately for vaccinated and unvaccinated employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119398 2022/02/17 16:56:42 Anonymous Remove the mask mandate! Everyone should be able to choose! Student at should see teachers' faces. Everyone should have a choice. Remove mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119399 2022/02/17 17:00:02 Kelly Jones Remove the mask mandates. Remove the mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

119400 2022/02/17 17:13:26 Courtney Remove the mask mandates! Remove the mask mandates! Our children need to see their teachers' faces!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119401 2022/02/17 17:31:30 Anonymous Make masks optional for teachers. Let teachers teach without masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119402 2022/02/17 17:33:35 Anonymous Remove the mask mandate Every American should have the right to be masked or unmasked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119403 2022/02/17 17:39:17 A teacher in pwcs Remove the teacher mask mandate asap
I have unvaxxed kids allowed to come in unmasked, but a triple vax Ed teacher who has already had covid(me) will still have to wear a mask. There's no science to this. Get rid of it now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119404 2022/02/17 17:39:47 Anonymous REMOVE ALL COVID MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS
It is time to allow adults to take ownership for their own health and safety. If you want to mask, etc. you can do so. If you don't, you should not be forced to. That is a constitutional right that has been taken away. Bring it back!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119405 2022/02/17 17:48:53 David Campbell Remove all COVID mandates please Please remove all mask and COVID testing mandates for all levels of education (including colleges and universities) in VA. WE ARE OVER IT!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119406 2022/02/17 17:54:26 Anonymous The pandemic is OVER! Way past time to return to normal.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119407 2022/02/17 18:15:57 Kevin W. Holt Mask Mandate Please vote to remove the workplace mask mandate and other COVID requirements. COVID is not a unique workplace risk to begin with and, in any event, the disease is no longer a pandemic, but endemic. We need to live with it. People can choose to mask or not based on their personal situations. And the burden of your COVID rule on business has been significant.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119408 2022/02/17 18:22:41 Dennis Hannick Remove Covid 19 Restrictions It's time to end the state mandated COVID 19 restrictions. ALL OF THEM!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119409 2022/02/17 18:24:13 Karen Scalf Mask mandate should be gone My husband and I are teachers and believe the mask mandate should be gone. The risk of severe illness due to Covid 19 is no longer a threat. Vaccines are readily available. The current masks most people wear are not even effective against Omicron.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119410 2022/02/17 18:27:48 Jessica Remove Masks in the Workplace As the co-admin of a group that worked tirelessly to get rid of mask mandates for our children, we have been contacted by so many teachers asking for our help so that they can have a choice too. The main job of an educator is to convey information to a student in a format they can understand. How can we possibly think that masking teachers was ever a good idea? Our smallest students need to see the way words are formed. They need to know where to place their tongue and how to purse their lips to pronounce certain letters, words and sounds correctly. Our older students continue to navigate a confusing world where much of their lives, at least for the last two years, have been online. Our adolescents need to see facial

expressions and feel meaningful connections with their peers, and their teachers. Masking is serving no public health purpose anymore. It has been a hinderance to learning and has put up additional barriers to understanding for students who need less barriers more than ever. As a former public school teacher, I can't imagine having to teach from behind a mask all day long. Please give Virginians choice in the workplace, the same way parents and their children now have choices.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119411 2022/02/17 18:30:01 Anonymous Remove teacher mask mandate There is absolutely no reason for teachers to remain masked. This needs to stop now.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119412 2022/02/17 18:30:50 Dedi rapp Masks It's time to end this idiocy. Get rid of the masks for our employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119413 2022/02/17 18:33:30 Anonymous Remove the masks. Enough is enough romove the masks. 2 weeks to curve the spread has turned in to 2 years. If not now then when? Quit kicking the can down the road and remove masks now.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119415 2022/02/17 18:52:13 Nicole Cook Time to remove mandates It is time to remove ALL covid mandates. Its been two years and we are still acting like we don't know anything about Covid then we did in 2020. Its time to life employee mask mandates, public transportation, etc. People complied long enough and people want their freedom back. Our children have suffered enough.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119416 2022/02/17 18:59:06 Stacy Riddle Time to end the standard The permanent COVID standard enacted by VDOLI has placed undue hardship on small businesses and their employees. As a business owner I am asking you to repeal the standard as soon as possible.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119417 2022/02/17 19:15:06 SPED Teacher No more mandates It is time for personal choice and medical freedom. No more mandates. Please rescind all mandates and standards you have set forth for employees in Virginia.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119418 2022/02/17 19:15:25 Tom Waters Remove all mandates! The mandates have been of doubtful use since their inception. The overreach by those in power is more blatantly clear now than ever before.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119419 2022/02/17 19:25:44 Susan No more masks! End mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119420 2022/02/17 19:34:12 Holly R. Make masks OPTIONAL for teachers and staff I have been a teacher for nearly 20 years, and over a decade of that has been in kindergarten. Children need to see our faces for phonics instruction, learning to read meaning by our facial expressions, and to bond with us as we need to connect before we can correct. Our ability to interact with our students is greatly hampered by masks and I have had to rely on videos I make to show to students so they can see how I form sounds and words! We already have a very heavy load. Remove the mask mandate for educators.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119421 2022/02/17 19:47:17 Frank M. No More Effing Masks! It is about time to delete these mandates. Not sure the government had authority to require their use in the first place.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119422 2022/02/17 19:49:11 Madison No more restrictions!! It's time to remove all restrictions and mandates. It's time to turn our economy around.It's time our rights are restored.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119423 2022/02/17 19:51:16 Anonymous Time to fully open Virginia no mandates It is time to fully open Virginia no mandates for workers, health care professionals, schools etc.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119424 2022/02/17 19:55:47 Brett A. Please return our Right to choose. Please return our right to choose what we do for our health and well being. We. Look to the government to guarantee our rights not rule over them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119425 2022/02/17 20:10:50 Anonymous NO MORE MASK MANDATES!!! People should be making their own decisions for themselves and their children. It is NOT the role of the government to decide what is BEST for me and my family.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain any mandates for non-employee children.

119426 2022/02/17 20:14:07 Steve L Enough Already! Time to end the mandates…Vaccines, masks, testing. No more JAB for JOB!

It's time for the government and the news media to report the truth and stop scaring the crap out of people!! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119427 2022/02/17 20:17:10 Sarah E Remove all mandates At this stage, there is no reason to continue mandating masking or any other health related decision. The virus has weakened, many people have acquired natural immunity, and the vaccine is widely available. Please remove any and all mandates for workers and teachers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119428 2022/02/17 20:19:52 Anonymous Rescind Mask Mandates As a special education teacher with elementary students it's is ridiculous that I am trying to teach reading without children being able to see my mouth. I don't where a mask anywhere besides school and the doctor. It is time for this to end. The kids no longer have to wear them so it is time to free the teachers and staff.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119429 2022/02/17 20:25:20 Anonymous remove all masks REMOVE ALL MASKS!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119430 2022/02/17 20:41:48 M S Remove all Covid restrictions, mandates, discrimination and manipulation. Let people make their own choices on their own health and wellness. Stop with propaganda and lies.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119431 2022/02/17 20:48:43 Patricia M Tryal Remove all mandates We the people need to return to as normal a life as possible! It is high time to end all mask mandates, for the masks have only made things more complicated, as if things were not already complicated enough! A return to freedom of breathing freely is way overdue. Thank God for our new Governor and his rational thinking. Please use rational thinking in this decision, and stop all mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119432 2022/02/17 20:58:48 Burkett Reed Carver please remove mandates in all forms Please remove all mandates related to covid-19; masks, vaccines, etc. Govt response over the past 2 years has been an extreme over-reach - the Govt works for the people.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119433 2022/02/17 21:00:39 Anonymous Allow Teachers to Remove Masks Allow teachers to remove masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119434 2022/02/17 21:04:57 Todd PorthouseIt's About Time!! We've been under tyrannical mask mandates for far too long. They were a mistake back in 2020 and they are still a mistake. Let's bring back some sanity to the Commonwealth and get rid of the mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119435 2022/02/17 21:08:23 MichaelMask mAndates. End all mask dates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119436 2022/02/17 21:14:25 John G End all covid restrictions End all covid restrictions and open a special counsel to look into how many people really died from covid, Full adverse effects and deaths due to vaccines and begin to look at adverse health effects do to mask-wearing and hand sanitizer multi-year period.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

119437 2022/02/17 21:17:48 Erin Grzeda Allow teachers to make the choice on whether to wear masks. Allow teachers to make the decision for themselves on whether or not to wear a mask. They are adults and can make the risk/benefit calculation for themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119438 2022/02/17 21:23:30 Carrie Give Teachers a CHOICE Why are we forcing these public servants to continue wearing these face diapers? If they want to wear it, go for it. If they don't want to, they should be allowed to show their class their face! CHOICE!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119439 2022/02/17 21:25:28 Renee Shannon Please get rid of the mask mandates for teachers. Schools should not fall into the same categories of factories. If students have the option to remove masks then so should teachers. Let's get back to normal.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119440 2022/02/17 21:26:40 Elizabeth, parent Give teachers a choice! Let our children see their teachers faces! Give teacher's a choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119441 2022/02/17 21:40:51 Anonymous Please immediately end mask mandates for all employees I wholeheartedly agree with the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board's proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19. Please immediately give employees (including all staff in schools) their freedoms back and stop all mask mandates, vaccine requirements, and the resulting discrimination, harassment, and segregation that has occurred as a result of the former policy. Masks are not necessary and are not effective, only harboring more germs. They restrict one's ability to interact effectively and clearly communicate, as well as inhibiting students social-emotional development. They are also uncomfortable, hard to breathe in, and cause dizziness. It is time for common sense to prevail. Deaths and cases are way down, with an approximate 99.7% survival rate. We need to stop creating panic and spreading irrational fear. I'm concerned about the effect that these mask mandates and the constant media reports of doom are having on peoples emotional health and well-being. People need to have hope and a sense of normalcy, and the revocation of masks will be an important first step in improving mental health.

Thank you for proposing the revocation, and I sincerely hope that the board will fully approve the removal of masks and other mandates as soon as possible.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119442 2022/02/17 21:48:32 A. Dryden Freedom for all! Please allow ALL citizens to decide what's best for their health!!! Remove the mandate 2 years has been long enough of over reach from our government!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119443 2022/02/17 21:54:30 Anonymous End all mask mandates! Please end all mandates and give Americans a choice. ;Especially the teachers. ;The kids need to see their teachers' faces. How to you expect a child to learn from a faceless adult when their own brain is not fully developed?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119444 2022/02/17 21:59:05 Lynne Peace Choice- Mask and Vaccine Please allow us the freedom to make the best choice. Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119445 2022/02/17 22:01:05 HEM Please end mandates for masks! Please end mandates for masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119446 2022/02/17 22:01:22 Anonymous Mask removal for teachers My school has now adopted the Governors order to allow parent choice for student mask wearing. However, myself and other adults in the same building, WHO ARE FULLY VACCINATED, must continue to wear ours. How does this make sense? Please remove the mask order and also allow the adults working in the school the same choice parents have been given. SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119448 2022/02/17 22:17:24 Elisabeth Leacock Remove all mandates for non vaccinated
Please allow us the choice to wear masks or not. Be vaccinated or not. By allowing only vaccinated people to take off masks, reveals the rest of us who have medical and religious beliefs vulnerable to harrassment, etc.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119449 2022/02/17 22:38:35 Laurie L. Remove the mandates! Remove the mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119450 2022/02/17 22:58:44 Man Jorgan I'm not the best teacher I can be with a mask on One of my students wears two cochlear implants. She never sees my lips to read them. Why can I eat and drink without a mask, but I must teach in one? The cafeteria is more swamped with students than my classroom. The mask doesn't save me or help me, nor does it help my students. I know this because I got Covid with a vaccine in my body, so did my students. In a mask, we are only virtue signaling and creating a generation of scared, woke ignoramuses who would rather be good little soldiers, rather than think for themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119451 2022/02/17 23:59:58 George Clotfelter Remove all China Virus mandates Virginia should remove all mandates related to the China virus/Covid 19.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119452 2022/02/18 0:13:34 M Pratt End this madness! Let teachers and all employees CHOOSE! Let all employees choose if they want to wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119453 2022/02/18 5:30:31 Aimee M. greene county va No more mandates. Freedom of choice All virginians have a right to make their own medical choices including whether to wear a mask. No more unconstitutional mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119454 2022/02/18 6:37:01 D. Rowe Covid mandatesPlease end all Covid restrictions for all workers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119455 2022/02/18 6:45:29 Anonymous Optional Making masks optional is the best way to allow people to follow their conscience. If people choose to continue wearing a mask they can wear an KN95 for their peace of mind.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119456 2022/02/18 6:45:54 Anonymous Mask choice for the adults in the classroom Now that the students don't have to wear masks, it is time to allow the adults in the schools to have the same choice. It is insane that I teach in a room full of kids that have a choice and I do not have the same liberties. Please allow the adults to have the same freedom of choice. Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119457 2022/02/18 7:03:08 Shannon Teacher choice!! Teachers are sick of teaching all day in a mask! Daily headaches, shortness of breath, dental issues are just a few problems daily masking for 8+ hours have caused me. You think there's a teacher shortage now, wait til next year if masks are still a thing! Those of us that have hung in there, did so thinking this was temporary. Many of us already have a plan B in our back pocket, if this continues!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119458 2022/02/18 7:05:06 Anonymous Remove the mask Teachers should not be forced to wear masks. All adults should be able to choose whether or not they want to wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119459 2022/02/18 7:21:16 M. Jamieson Please make masks optional for everyone...teachers, staff, bus drivers. No more mandates. Please make masks optional for everyone. Students need to see their teachers faces and hear their voices. No more mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119460 2022/02/18 7:21:59 Wanda J McLennan End mask mandates for medical personnel and doctors I believe that it is time that the state if Virginia gets back to a regular life. End all mandates for the mask, that includes doctors, employees if medical facilities, hospitals, and clinics. But I also remember we are a free country and if a person wants to wear a mask so be it, it is their choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119461 2022/02/18 7:26:22 Terry Pruitt Gaston Brothers Utilities, LLC Rescind COVID-19 Employer Mandates As a Virtual attendee at Wednesday's HSCB meeting regarding the Permanent Standard for COVID-19 in the workplace, I listened intently to the commentors representing most if not all industries in the Commonwealth. It was abundantly clear employers do not support mandates or government intervention. The COVID-19 and it's variants have significantly impacted our lives and ruined many businesses, continuing regulatory burdens on employers will not serve to improve workplace conditions, but rather will create nearly impossible compliance problems for employers. In my opinion, there is no need for a Construction Industry Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119462 2022/02/18 7:32:26 Peggy Mandated No more mask mandates. Freedom for all

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119463 2022/02/18 7:46:28 Elizabeth D No masks for teachers! My son is afraid to stop wearing his mask even though I told him he doesn't need to wear it anymore. I think it would help tremendously if the teachers stopped wearing them. Additionally, it would help the children learn better if they could see the teachers faces. Let the children see the teachers faces!! Laugh, smile, expressions!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119464 2022/02/18 8:00:56 Jonathan End mask mandates for all Virginia employees Writing in support of rescinding all mask mandates for Virginia employees, especially our teachers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119465 2022/02/18 8:17:15 Anonymous NO MORE MASKS! We have certainly killed our immune systems with these masks. The cells responsible for immunity depend on oxygen to be produced. With these masks on we are not getting the oxygen our bodies need. As a person with

asthma, this has been a hard thing to do. I have had to use my inhaler more than normal. So I feel it should be optional for teachers, just like its the parents choice for the students.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The commenter provides no scientific or medical research to support their immune system comment. The Department is aware no such legitimate research.

No scientific evidence supports the claim that wearing face masks or gloves, or handwashing weakens the immune system. Instead, such measures effectively reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

<https://healthfeedback.org/claimreview/face-masks-handwashing-and-vaccination-do-not-weaken-the-immune-system-and-are-effective-measures-to-reduce-the-spread-of-infectious-diseases/>

119466 2022/02/18 8:20:26 Anonymous Mask choice for all This is a personal choice and should no longer be mandate, the benefits are minimal from cloth and N95 need to be fit tested to be effective…vulnerable are protected by their mask if worn correctly

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119467 2022/02/18 8:25:36 Michelle Austin Bank of Botetourt Supports proposed revocation
Before the DOLI and OSHA standards were issued, Bank of Botetourt had already enacted our own mitigation strategies to maintain a safe workplace. Encouraging vaccinations was our top mitigation strategy and we currently have an 82% vaccination rate bank-wide. We feel we are at an appropriate place to assess what is needed for our individual workplace circumstances. We would like the flexibility to create mitigation plans that are reasonable for our specific workplace. We support your board's proposed revocation.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119468 2022/02/18 8:27:09 FLG Permanently Revoke the Permanent Standard As an employee of one of Virginia's largest manufacturing companies, the practices and protocols dictated in the standard neither lessened or increased the number of COVID cases. It was a failure as far as protection goes and was never based upon science but upon political knee jerk reactions. As a member of the COVID committee and tracking team, over 97% of the infections originated from outside the facility

within family circles and other sources. Instead of seeing a decrease or flattening of the curve, we saw increases in health issues associated with wearing a mask for hours on end, as well as increases in anxiety and stress associated with angst created by the needless regulations. Where OSHA has been a great help in reducing job related risks in most areas, this one was a dictatorial decree over an issue that was not intended to be governed by nor considered a true function of OSHA.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119469 2022/02/18 8:27:28 Karen Brad Let's be normal again- no more mask! It's time to be NORMAL again! Let's students see their teachers faces! Let teachers actually see students faces! End this mask mandate. The major threat is over so let this be over too!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119470 2022/02/18 8:28:42 Anonymous Mask Mandate Please end mask mandate for all employees immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119471 2022/02/18 8:30:15 Stephanie Give teachers CHOICE Let teachers and school staff have the same choice on masks that parents now have.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119472 2022/02/18 8:32:09 Vicki Hurt Return everyone to normal. No mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119473 2022/02/18 8:32:55 Anonymous Masks optional! EVERY person deserves the right to decide for themselves whether to wear a mask or not. Give teachers and all employees personal freedom!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119474 2022/02/18 8:38:01 John Wagstaff Remove all Mask Mandates! It is time to remove all mandates related to Covid. It has been over 700 days, if you are going to be exposed, you have been. Masks have not been proven to stop the spread. REMOVE ALL MASK AND ANY OTHER EMERGENCY RESTRICTIONS NOW!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119475 2022/02/18 8:43:16 Dana Mask choice!! Stop forcing people to cover their airways. This should be a choice! It is cruel to do this when masks don't even work. Those who want can still mask and vax. Teachers deserve choice just like everyone else! Trust people to make the best decisions for themselves. Masks can even cause other illness and we have seen mask boxes even have cancer warnings!! This is ridiculous at this point.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119476 2022/02/18 8:43:28 Anonymous Remove all mask Please remove all masks whether vaccinated or not! Vaccinated people can still spread it and catch it. There is not difference between the two.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119477 2022/02/18 8:45:42 Jacqueline Anderson Support this change The mask and other policies were an overreach of government and were unnecessary and ineffective. I support the Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119479 2022/02/18 8:46:04 Angie Muncy Remove mask mandates! Remove all COVID related mandates! All mandates should be removed! Time to get back to normal life, and freedom of choice for that life!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119480 2022/02/18 8:49:46 Stephen Roszel Get rid of the masks Please end this farce that masks have any mitigation effects. Get on the right side of history already and end this immoral form of petty tyranny please.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119481 2022/02/18 8:54:00 Shelley Buckles No mask or vaccine mandates! End all mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119482 2022/02/18 9:02:18 Anonymous End mandates It has been 2 years. Time to let our teachers teach and get back to living

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119483 2022/02/18 9:02:57 Adrienne Mask mandate No mask mandates. Constitutional freedom of choice for all.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119484 2022/02/18 9:08:31 Kimberly Thurston Make Masks OPTIONAL FOR ALL Giving citizens the choice on how they will protect themselves from COVID is imperative in a free society. We voted against COVID mandates in the last state-wide election, so giving the citizens the choice is the right and ethical thing to do. Make masks optional for all, and do not implement vaccine mandates in the future.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119485 2022/02/18 9:18:57 Anthony No More Masks It is time to end the mask mandate in Virginia.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119486 2022/02/18 9:23:15 Anonymous NO MORE MASK MANDATES The science shows a negligible effect with mask wearing on the spread of COVID. It is LONG past time to get rid of the mandates. Every American deserves CHOICE! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119487 2022/02/18 9:24:08 Chapin George No more masks There is absolutely zero scientific logic behind removing masks from students but mandating teachers still wear them. Mask wearing should be optional for all! It's simple logic at this point. SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119488 2022/02/18 9:24:42 Kim Holmes Remove masks for teachers! If I, as a parent, can make decisions about my child's health, I should be allowed to make decisions about my own health. Every individual has the right to assess the inherent risk of any given situation and make their own decisions. Allow adults to make their own decisions about whether to wear a mask. It makes no sense that my students can be unmasked at school and I cannot.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119489 2022/02/18 9:25:20 Karen No mask No more masks!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119490 2022/02/18 9:26:57 Anonymous NO MASKS FOR ANYONE especially from SCHOOL SYSTEMS Many Virginians have been silent because they have been shamed at work for making their own decisions and following the science. The school system didn't help me with my health issues after I went to the principals, HR, and school board. I have lost trust in the public schools and many government officials. I have left the profession. Thank you Lord for giving us the freedom to choose! God bless Governor Youngkin and his administration! God bless Governor DeSantis in Florida!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

As of March 8, 2022:

Florida has experienced 331 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 17th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 222 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 37th highest in the country.

Virginia's COVID-19 related death rate is 32.9% lower than Florida.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109011/coronavirus-covid19-death-rates-us-by-state/>

As of March 7, 2022:

Florida has experienced 27,225 COVID-19 related cases per 100,000, 10th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 19,282 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 44th highest in the country. Virginia's COVID-19 related case rate is 29.2% lower than Florida.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

119491 2022/02/18 9:28:14 John Ray End all Covid Mandates Period! Thank you for allowing me to comment. I will keep this short. This is about day 700 of 14 days to slow the spread. The results are in. What the politicians and Fauci did was only to damage the economy and our children. This all must end now. one of the most fascinating facets to me was that Fauci was our only doctor. I ask everyone if they were diagnosed with something severe what would they do? They all said get a serving opinion. We did not do that. Makes no sense. Only political sense. It needs to all be investigate. Never let a Democrat to get into office again. I blame them.

John Ray

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119492 2022/02/18 9:29:41 Anonymous No Mandates Rescind the mask mandate now! The CDC admits they do not work and have not worked for two years. Rescind the mandates and give people a choice! No need to wait!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119493 2022/02/18 9:31:13 Tina Dunn No mask mandate Please end the mask mandate for all people. Everyone should have a choice to wear a mask or not. Its amazing to me in this Country that we even have to have this conversation. It should have always been a choice. Parents and adults should be able to make choices regarding their health.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119494 2022/02/18 9:39:15 A Free American The Constitution trumps all political tyranny
It has been forgotten that the Constitution and Bill of Rights trumps all, regardless of how many

revisions lawmakers, politicians, etc. want to try and impose. The individual had the right to make medical decisions for their own person.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119495 2022/02/18 9:42:08 Anonymous Teachers/Staff masks optional Teacher/Staff choice to wear or not wear a mask!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119496 2022/02/18 9:43:30 Emily Council Let Adults Choose! We have spent the last 8+ months watching people pack into stadiums, concerts, and other large-scale events across the country and adults have repeatedly chosen to go without masks. We know that mask mandates have had little to no effect on reducing the spread of this virus and therefore should no longer be allowed to be forced upon ANYONE - adults or children. Let adults make their own personal decisions regarding their health and well-being. Remove any mandate and allow people the freedom to choose what is best for them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119498 2022/02/18 9:54:45 Kim Luckabaugh Emergency is over The dropping rates of the disease (all metrics measured) shows that the emergency related to COVID is over. It is important to remove all extra measures from the workplace to allow for necessary mental health improvement. Serious mental health impact are limiting Virginians every day. Many of these are due to fears caused by management of the pandemic. Children and others are suffering irreparable harm.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119499 2022/02/18 9:56:39 Krystal Johnston It's time for the masks to go! It is time to make Virginia safe to work in again. For the past two years Virginian's have been mandated to wear mask while at work. The masks have one, been proven not to work and two, in some cases been

harmful. We shouldn't just do things to do things, there got to be common sense behind them. I for one have had to wear masks at work and have been recently diagnosed with asthma. I have never had breathing troubles, not even allergies and now I have asthma, the ONLY thing that has changed is that I've had to work under ridiculous mandates wearing harmful masks. Who's going to be responsible for the damages that are happening? Make it a choice for people to care for their own bodies the way they see fit.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119500 2022/02/18 9:57:41 Kerri End the Mandate I'm in favor of ending the mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119501 2022/02/18 10:05:44 Teacher CCPS Give me choice! Teaching phonics in a mask is so counterproductive. These children are suffering academically and will continue to fall behind because of things like this mask. They can't hear me, unless I use the MICROPHONE I purchased with my own money. To fully grasp phonetic principles, they need to be able to see my mouth for lip and tongue placement in order to correctly form and make letter sounds. I am unable to breathe. I have had a daily headache for over a year now. I never had migraines or headaches until I had to wear a mask. If my students can have a choice, I should be able to have one too!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119502 2022/02/18 10:07:36 Kelly Williams End all mandates Please end all mandates. Let adults make the decisions for their own well-being.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119503 2022/02/18 10:08:57 Kevin Lugo No more mandate Time to return the power of decision back to the people.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119504 2022/02/18 10:10:30 Anonymous Remove ALL Mandates ALL fake mandates need to be end/removed and everything open so we the people can live our lives like we should be. Then you all need to come out with a letter or something stating you all were wrong about the fake plandemic and be punished for all the lies and making people sick.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119505 2022/02/18 10:11:36 Renae Jones Remove all Vaccine and Mask Mandates Give people back the rights to their personal freedoms. The Government has no right to tell us what to do with our body.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119506 2022/02/18 10:14:31 Alberto Calimano Remove Mandates Now Remove mandates now. Let Virginians live free and make their own decisions for their kids and their health.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119507 2022/02/18 10:15:52 Jenn Dunning Teacher Choice Teachers have been masked for 2 years and it's time we give them the choice to remove it. The mandate should end for all schools, including daycares, as it has been proven to hinder social development in our students when they are unable to see facial expressions from adults around them. Do the right thing and give teachers and staff the right to choose!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119508 2022/02/18 10:20:20 JK End all restrictions Where as the typical cloth mask has been found practically useless and where as the Covid shot has been found to not prevent the spread if is well past time to remove all unnecessary restrictions on all persons in Virginia. Covid is endemic and new therapeutics are available to the public so the early restrictions should all be dropped. Individuals may choose a mitigation strategy that fits their lifestyle. Choice not force is way forward. A return to normal is called for! Thank you for your consideration and attention to this critical matter

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119509 2022/02/18 10:20:29 Caitlin Remove all mandates! Remove ALL mandates. Make it all optional.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119511 2022/02/18 10:23:14 Anonymous End all mandates Thank you for choosing to remove the standard by which businesses and employers are forcing employees/patrons to either vaccinate or test and wear masks. If parents can choose for their kids, adults should also be able to choose for themselves. End this so we can get on with LIVING!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119512 2022/02/18 10:25:35 KL NO MASK MANDATES We now know that masks are ineffective. No mask mandates inVirginia Period!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119513 2022/02/18 10:27:14 Anonymous Make masks optional for everyone Please consider making masks optional for everyone-contractors, teachers, school personnel.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119514 2022/02/18 10:29:59 Tricia Neill All mask and vaccine mandates should be removed
Mask and vaccine mandates should be removed immediately. And I will go so far as to say that they should NEVER have been implemented in the first place. There have been hundreds of studies concerning the effectiveness of masks and the SCIENCE shows they are ineffective. Please do the research. The vaccines have health risks and with risk there MUST BE CHOICE. The science community doesn't even know the long term effects of this experimental injection. We do, however, know that there have been many serious side effects as well as deaths after taking the doses. I personally know of a 3 vaxxed gentleman who was golfing the day before he showed symptoms who has now passed due to covid. The injections don't even WORK. Politics can NEVER be played out in the medical world. No more mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119515 2022/02/18 10:32:39 Sam Janney UNMASK THE ALL EMPLOYEES (TEACHERS TOO!)
What a sad world we live in when we have to pass rules and laws to ALLOW people to make choices about what they will and will not put on their faces. Shame on Northam and VDOLI for sneaking these rules into place last August that not only masked our teachers, but employees all across the Commonwealth. Undo the damage the authoritarians did to protect us and allow ALL employees to choose whether or not they will cover their faces. Can't believe this is something we even have to fight for. Common sense tells us we should make these sorts of decisions for ourselves, and our families. Fix this.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of numerous comment periods at various times during initial adoption and amendment phases (one 60 day comment period, three 30 day comment periods and and three public hearings).

119516 2022/02/18 10:41:07 Anonymous Burdensome Reporting The requirement for businesses to report 2 or more cases in a 14 day period is overly burdensome. At a large facility or worksite, 2 employees may have zero contact but are still considered an outbreak if they test positive in a 14 day period. During the Omicron peak, reporting these cases to DOLI and VDH became a full time job since the form required so much information and it had to be re-entered for each site over and over again. There was no indication of what happened with this information. I believe the rule should be revoked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) used the case reporting to contact employers and to determine whether contact tracing was needed to slow the spread of the virus. The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry used the case reporting to contact employers to confirm that the Virginia Standard was being complied with to slow the spread of the virus.

119517 2022/02/18 10:44:49 Anonymous Remove Mask Requirements Please remove all masks mandates and allow the freedom of choice for everyone. Those who support masks will still have the right to wear them but stop forcing those of us who see no benefit from them to continue wearing them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119518 2022/02/18 10:48:59 Kara Webb Requesting immediate allowance of choice When this standard went into place there was not a 30 day public comment period, please consider the immediate allowance of choice to those who are still mandated to wear masks.

Where there is risk there must be choice and there are plenty of known risks to wearing masks. We have teachers and staff who are dealing with anxiety, breathing issues and continued illnesses from wearing masks. We have students - suffering development and social issues as they attempt to learn from a masked and muffled teacher. I completely support your revocation of this standard and request that an emergency order be put in place to allow optional wearing, without repercussions to the person, during this 30 day commenting period.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

When the current Virginia Standard went into effect in 2021, there was a 60 day comment period and a 30 day comment period.

119519 2022/02/18 11:01:47 Anonymous Remove masks from all children, including daycare and college Why must our children wait another 30 days? Remove masks from our youngest and our college-age students. While you're at it, make it optional for daycare providers, preschool staff, K-12 teachers and staff, professors, and college staff. Those who wish to mask can still do so. Non-employee children are not covered by the Virginia Standard.

Guidance from the Office of the Attorney General in Accordance With Executive Order 6.

Executive Order 6 provides in part:

The Board and the Department of Labor of Industry is directed to seek guidance from the Office of the Attorney General regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standards.

After reviewing DOLI's request for legal advice, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) can report, EO6 orders the Board and DOLI to seek guidance from the OAG regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard. The answer is yes: the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard, as affirmed by the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals.

The OAG also confirmed that:

Any proposed changes to or proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard will go through a similar notice and comment process to that used for adoption of the current standard. This includes a written comment period for the public and stakeholders to provide written feedback to the Board about the proposed changes or proposed revocation, at least one public hearing, and the development of an Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) as necessary (an EIA would not be necessary in the event of proposed revocation). The Board will then hold a second meeting and vote to accept or reject the proposed changes or proposed revocation as final, which would become effective upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation published in the City of Richmond, Virginia.

119520 2022/02/18 11:02:13 M Mills End all Mandates Thank you for allowing me to comment. It's been nearly 2 years into 14 days to slow the spread. What the politicians and Fauci did was only to damage the economy and our children. We are tired of the fear porn and of our kids being used as political. It needs to all be investigated.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119521 2022/02/18 11:03:26 Anonymous END ALL MANDATES All mask, testing and vaccine mandates should be removed. Also remove contact tracing We the people of Virginia demand it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119522 2022/02/18 11:09:32 D Lyons It is BEYOND time to end all mandates Masks don't work. Anyone in the military who has been in a CBR (chemical, biological, or radiological hazard) exercise can tell you that a cloth mask is useless against biological (or other) agents. And now the vaunted follow the science has demonstrated what people with common sense have known for 2 years: masks don't work. Mandates are not about health or safety, but control. It is time to end them all. NOW

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119523 2022/02/18 11:13:42 S.D. No Mask Mandate Please remove all mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119524 2022/02/18 11:15:07 Fed Up Educator No More masks for staff. There should not be any more masks required for teachers or staff members in public school buildings. This is beyond ridiculous, and we have the worst of it with the Prince William health department. Their tyrannical behavior in the last two years has caused irreparable damage to students, especially to those in younger grades. Seeing another's face, facial expressions, smiling, and enunciation of words is extremely important in the development of the whole child. This ridiculous mandate, which has been proven to not stop the virus spread, should have been done away with a long long long time ago. You guys under the direction of Wreck-It Ralph have irreparably harmed and damaged millions of Virginia school children. And that's on you. So when graduation rates are down, literacy rates are down, and inappropriate behaviors are up, are you going to step in and try to solve it? No. You won't. Teachers will have to do that. Principals will have to do that. Bus drivers will have to do that. And support staff will have to do that. Just like always. They always rise to the occasion. It's time for this ridiculous mask mandate to go. And you need to do it sooner rather than later

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119525 2022/02/18 11:15:52 Mike Nichols ETS as a whole should be revoked. Communication to large groups has been difficult with the required social distancing and reduced capacity limits in conference rooms. Removing this requirement will improve communication. Also, having to manage masking in the workplace is burdensome. The cost of providing surgical masks is expensive and is proven to be ineffective with the Omicron variant. Providing N95 masks exacerbates these costs. In addition, forcing teachers to wear masks while students have the option is counterproductive and therefore should be the employee's choice. Everyone has been given ample opportunity to receive the vaccine and booster. Those who have chosen to not take the vaccine have also chosen to assume the risks with COVID-19.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119526 2022/02/18 11:16:15 Anonymous Freedom of choice Teachers/Staff masks optional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119527 2022/02/18 11:17:55 Anonymous Teachers/staff masks optional Masks optional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119528 2022/02/18 11:18:38 Coleman Bunn Terminate all the indoor masking requirements. Date: February 18th, 2022 To Whom It May Concern: I am sending you this message related to the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. My findings raise significant concerns for the current mask policies in place. Masks are ineffective for the purpose claimed by the mandate, potentially harmful, and only authorized for use by a EUA. Masks are ineffective and in many ways, they are harmful. It is a myth that masks prevent viruses from spreading. The overall evidence is clear: Standard cloth and surgical masks offer next to no protection against virus-sized particles or small aerosols.¹ The size of a virus particle is much too small to be stopped by a surgical mask, cloth, or bandana. A single virion of SARS-CoV-2 is about 60-140 nanometers or 0.1 microns.² The pore size in a surgical mask is 200-1000x that size. Consider that the CDC website states, surgical masks do not catch all harmful particles in smoke. Consider also that the size of smoke particles in a wildfire is ~0.5 microns, which is 5x the size of the SARS-CoV-2 virus! Wearing a mask to prevent catching SARS-CoV-2, or similarly sized influenza, is like throwing sand at a chain-link fence: it does not work. There has been one large randomized controlled trial that specifically examined whether masks protect their wearers from the coronavirus. This study found mask-wearing “did not

reduce, at conventional levels of statistical significance, the incidence of Sars-Cov-2-infection. Consider also, that the existence of more particles does not mean a higher concentration of the virus. Research shows less virus does not mean less illness. Dr. Kevin Fennelly, a pulmonologist at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood institute debunked the view that larger droplets are responsible for viral transmission. Fennelly wrote: current infection control policies are based on the premise that most respiratory infections are transmitted by large respiratory droplets- i.e., larger than 5 [microns] – produced by coughing and sneezing, …Unfortunately, that premise is wrong. Fennelly referenced a 1953 paper on anthrax that showed a single bacterial spore of about one micron was significantly more lethal than larger clumps of spores.⁵ Exposure to one virus particle is theoretically enough to cause infection and subsequent disease. This is not an alarming thought - it simply means what it has always meant, that our immune system protects us continually all our life. There have been hundreds of mask studies related to influenza transmission done over several decades. It is a well-established fact that masks do not stop viruses. Part of that evidence shows that cloth facemasks actually increase influenza-linked illness. ⁷ Bacteria are 50x larger than virus particles.⁸ As such, virus particles can enter through the mask pores, yet bacteria remain trapped inside of the mask, resulting in the mask-wearer continually being exposed to the bacteria. Related to the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic, there was almost universal agreement among experts, that deaths were virtually never caused by the influenza virus itself but resulted directly from severe secondary pneumonia caused by well-known bacterial eumopathogens” that colonized the upper respiratory tract.⁹ Dr. Fauci and his National Institute of Health studied pandemics and epidemics and concluded, “the vast majority of influenza deaths resulted from secondary bacterial pneumonia. All parties mandating the use of facemasks are not only willfully ignoring established science but are engaging in what amounts to a clinical experimental trial. This conclusion is reached by the fact that facemask use and Covid-19 incidence are being reported in scientific opinion pieces promoted by the CDC and others.¹¹ The fact is after reviewing ALL of the studies worldwide, the CDC found no reduction in viral transmission with the use of face masks. Any intervention, especially a prophylactic one, must cause fewer harms to the recipient than the infection. The cost-benefit of mandating an investigational face-covering with emerging safety issues is especially difficult to justify. Anthony Fauci was very clear that asymptomatic transmission was not a threat. He stated, “in all the history of respiratory-borne viruses of any type, asymptomatic transmission has never been the driver of outbreaks. The driver of outbreaks is always a symptomatic person. Wearing respirators come(s) with a host of physiological and psychological burdens. These can interfere with task performances and reduce work efficiency. These burdens can even be severe enough to cause life-threatening conditions if not ameliorated.¹⁴ Fifteen years ago, National Taiwan University Hospital concluded that the use of N-95 masks in healthcare workers caused them to experience hypoxemia, a low level of oxygen in the blood, and hypercapnia, an elevation in the blood's carbon dioxide levels.¹⁵ Studies of simple surgical masks found significant reductions in blood oxygen as well. In one particular study, researchers measured blood oxygenation before and after surgeries in 53 surgeons. Researchers found the mask reduced the blood oxygen levels significantly, and the longer the duration of wearing the mask, the greater the drop in blood oxygen levels.¹⁶ Moreover, people with cancer will be at further risk from hypoxia, as cancer cells grow best in a bodily environment that is low in oxygen. Low oxygen also promotes systemic inflammation which, in turn, promotes “the growth, invasion and spread of cancers. ¹⁷ Repeated episodes of low oxygen, known as intermittent hypoxia, also “causes atherosclerosis” and hence increases all cardiovascular events” such as heart attacks, as well as adverse cerebral events like stroke.¹⁸

<p dir=ltr>Informed consent is required for investigational medical therapies

Regardless of the lack of safety and efficacy behind the decision to require employees to wear a mask, it is illegal to mandate EUA-approved investigational medical therapies without informed consent. Mask use for viral transmission prevention is authorized for Emergency Use only.¹⁹ Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA, means “the products are investigational and experimental”; only.²⁰ The statute granting the FDA the power to authorize a medical product of emergency use requires that the person being administered the unapproved product be advised of his or her right to refuse administration of the product.²¹ This statute further recognizes the well-settled doctrine that medical experiments, or “clinical research,” may not be performed on human subjects without the express, informed consent of the individual receiving treatment.²²

The right to avoid the imposition of human experimentation is fundamental, rooted in the Nuremberg Code of 1947, has been ratified by the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki, and further codified in the United States Code of Federal Regulations. In addition to the United States regarding itself as bound by these provisions, these principles were adopted by the FDA in its regulations requiring the informed consent of human subjects for medical research.²³ The law is very clear; It is unlawful to conduct medical research (even in the case of emergency) unless steps are taken to “secure the informed consent of all participants.”²⁴

Furthermore, by requiring employees to wear a mask, you are promoting the idea that the mask can prevent or treat a disease, which is an illegal deceptive practice. It is unlawful to advertise that a product or service can prevent “disease unless you possess competent and reliable scientific evidence”; substantiating that the claims are true.²⁵

The FDA EUA for surgical and/or cloth masks explicitly states, “the labeling must not state or imply “that the [mask] is intended for antimicrobial or antiviral protection or related, or for use such as infection prevention or reduction.”²⁶ As you can see from the image below, masks do not claim to keep out viruses

Illegally mandating an investigational medical therapy generates liability

There are proven microbial challenges as well as breathing difficulties that are created and exacerbated by extended mask-wearing

Requiring employees to wear a mask sets the stage for contracting any infection, including COVID-19, and makes the consequences of that infection much graver. In essence, a mask may very well put us at an increased risk of infection, and if so, have a far worse outcome.²⁷

The fact that mask-wearing presents a severe risk of harm to the wearer should – standing alone – not be required for employees, particularly given that we are not ill and have done nothing wrong that would warrant an infringement of our constitutional rights and bodily autonomy. Promoting the use of a non-FDA-approved, Emergency Use Authorized mask, is unwarranted and illegal. This mandate is in direct conflict with Section 360bbb-3€(1)(A)(ii)(I-III), which requires the wearer to be informed of the option to refuse the wearing of such “device.” Misrepresenting the use of a mask as being intended for antimicrobial or antiviral protection, and/or misrepresenting masks for use as infection prevention or reduction is a deceptive practice under the FTC. It is clear, there is no waiver of liability under deceptive practices, even under a state of emergency. As such, forcing employees to wear masks, or similarly forcing use any other non-FDA approved medical product without the wearer’s consent, is illegal and immoral

Accordingly, I urge you to comply with Federal law and advise employees they have a right to refuse or wear a mask as a measure to prevent or reduce infection from Covid-19. Any other course of action is contrary to the law

<p dir=ltr>_____

1 https://www.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?doi=10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.4221

2 Berenson, A (November 24, 2020). Unreported Truths about Covid-19 and Lockdowns: Part 3: Masks

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<p dir=ltr>10 https://academic.oup.com/jid/article/198/7/962/2192118

<p dir=ltr>11 https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html

<p dir=ltr>12 Nonpharmaceutical Measures for Pandemic Influenza in Nonhealthcare Settings—Personal Protective and Environmental Measures, Jingyi Xiao¹, Eunice Y. C. Shiu¹, Huizhi Gao, Jessica Y. Wong, Min W. Fong, Sukhyun Ryu, and Benjamin J. Cowling (Volume 26, Number 5, May of 2020)

<p dir=ltr>13 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1orSO094uY

<p dir=ltr>14 Arthur Johnson, Journal of Biological Engineering (2016)

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<p dir=ltr>16 Bader A et al. Preliminary report on surgical mask induced deoxygenation during major surgery. Neurocirugia 2008;19:12-126.

<p dir=ltr>17 Aggarwal BB. Nucler factor-kappaB: The enemy within. Cancer Cell 2004;6:203-208, and Blaylock RL. Immunoexcitatory mechanisms in glioma proliferation, invasion and occasional metastasis. Surg Neurol Inter 2013;4:15

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<p dir=ltr>19 https://www.fda.gov/media/137121/download

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<p dir=ltr>21 21 U.S.C.§ S360bbb-3 (The FD&C Act)

<p dir=ltr>22 21 U.S.C. § 360bbb-3(e)(1)(A) (“Section 360bbb-3”)

<p dir=ltr>23 C.F.R. § 50.20

<p dir=ltr>24 http://www.invertedalchemy.com/2020/12/belief-is-not-medical-counter-measure.html, 21 C.F.R. § 50.23, 21 C.F.R. §50.20 21 C.F.R. § 50.24

<p dir=ltr>25 FTC Act, 15 U.S. Code § 41

<p dir=ltr>26 <a rel=nofollow

x=https://www.fda.gov/media/137121/download>https://www.fda.gov/media/137121/download

<p dir=ltr>27 Russell Blaylock, Id. (quoting Shehade H et al. Cutting edge: Hypoxia-Inducible Factor-1 negatively regulates Th1 function. J Immunol 2015;195:1372-1376. See also: Westendorf AM et al. Hypoxia enhances immunosuppression by inhibiting CD4+ effector T cell function and promoting Treg activity. Cell Physiol Biochem 2017;41:1271-84. See further: Sceneay J et al. Hypoxia-driven immunosuppression contributes to the premetastatic niche. Oncoimmunology 2013;2:1 e22355

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SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119530 2022/02/18 11:24:42 Les Williams End ALL mask mandates. Time to return to the norm. No more mask mandates. CDC post the cloth/paper mask never were effective! Before this we still had contagious viruses: strep throat, flu, weak immune systems, etc etc. TIME TO LET THESE KIDS AND TEACHERS GET BACK TO THE NORM AND ALL AMERICA FOR THAT MATTER

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119531 2022/02/18 11:35:07 Anonymous No More Masks in favor of repealing the mask mandate for all state workers, but especially for teachers. As a Phonics teacher, it is so difficult to teach kids how to form sounds correctly with the mask on. Thank you!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119532 2022/02/18 11:40:22 Michele mcmullen End all mandates End mask mandates for ALL and don't make us wait! I want it off NOW! There is no reason for us to even be discussing this. It's a choice. Stop forcing us to follow something that people may or may not agree on. We live in a free country - or used to at least. Let's bring back our freedoms in this case it's just CHOICE!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119533 2022/02/18 11:43:31 Cathy End the mandates It is past time to end the mandates for mask, shots, and test (especially only the unvaccinated group). Following the science has been an excuse. I'm all for science and freedom. The science has been a hypothesis. Testing should have been done on the entire general population to get proper data but that would be an invasion as well. Change the current situation to a choice on masking. shots, and test for ALL age groups. Preschool, k-12, college, state/federal employees, and all other citizens need to make their own choices.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119534 2022/02/18 11:45:42 Anonymous Personal preference but no requirement If people want to wear a mask, fine, but it should not be required.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119535 2022/02/18 11:47:00 J Jeffries END ALL MANDATES NO MORE MASKING OR MANDATES, PERIOD.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119536 2022/02/18 11:54:12 Jonathan End all mask mandates for State/Public employees
Please end all mask mandates for state/public employees. Freedom of choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119537 2022/02/18 11:54:17 Kelly Hickey REVOCATION OF THE VOSH STANDARD MASK MANDATE I feel that this mask mandate was never effective in the first place. Therefore, I believe that this Permanent Standard should be withdrawn because COVID-19 no longer poses a grave danger to Virginia workers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Virginia ranking in key COVID-19 metrics.

Total Covid-19 Cases per 100,000 – Virginia has consistently ranked better than more than 40 other states, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Cases per 100K as of February 10, 2022

4	-	Tennessee
7	-	Kentucky
14	-	West Virginia
25	-	North Carolina
45	-	Virginia
49	-	Maryland

Rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in the United States as of February 10, 2022, by state
(per 100,000 people)



COVID-19 State Rankings: Total Covid-19 Death per 100,000 – Virginia ranks better than 36 other states throughout the pandemic. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109011/coronavirus-covid19-death-rates-us-by-state/>



Virginia Ranks 7th Among States for the Lowest Estimated COVID-19 Infection Rate

1 - Vermont

2. - Hawaii

3 - Maine

4 - Oregon

5 - Washington

6 - New Hampshire

7 - Virginia

Becker's Hospital Review, March 1, 2022, 43% of Americans have had COVID-19, CDC estimates. (<https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/public-health/43-of-americans-have-had-covid-19-cdc-estimates.html#national-lab>)

More than 140 million Americans — about 43 percent of the nation's population — have had COVID-19, according to CDC estimates cited by The Washington Post.

Every two weeks, the CDC collects thousands of blood tests analyzed by commercial labs for reasons unrelated to COVID-19. Those samples are also tested for coronavirus antibodies. The data is from 72,000 blood samples gathered through Jan. 29, which means the number of Americans infected is likely much higher now. The study counts each person only once and includes only antibodies from natural infection, not from vaccination.

Nevada wasn't included in the estimates, and there was insufficient data for North Dakota, Arizona and Utah.

Five things to know, per the study:

1. Infection rate estimates are much higher for children and younger adults. The study found 58 percent of children age 11 or younger have antibodies from natural infection, along with the same share among ages 12-17.
 2. Just under half of adults 49 and younger have been infected. The rate decreases to 37 percent for people 50-64 years and 23 percent among Americans 65 or older.
 3. At the end of November — just before omicron began spreading in the U.S. — the study estimated 103 million Americans had been infected. According to that measure, 37 million new people got COVID-19 in the two months ending late January.
 4. At least half of the population in 14 states have had COVID-19, with Wisconsin reporting 56 percent of its population at one point infected. The other states with a majority infection rate, in descending order, are Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, Wyoming, Texas, Indiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Michigan, New Jersey, Tennessee and Louisiana.
 5. Vermont has the lowest estimated infection rate with 18 percent. The next-lowest states in ascending order are Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Washington, New Hampshire, Virginia and Massachusetts.
-

119538 2022/02/18 11:56:42 Venecia Hunter To each his own Safety is important for ourselves as well as others around us. However I feel that those who choose not to wear a mask should not be forced to do so. We have obligations as being humans and just doing the right thing but it is not cause to take away what makes us American that is the right to choose. Mask should not be mandated but an option. In the same token keep vaccinations on the forefront so we can move on.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119539 2022/02/18 11:59:05 Anonymous Thank you for increasing your risk As you expose yourself to COVID-19, the greater the balance of voters shifts toward the Democrats.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119540 2022/02/18 12:09:20 Billy D End mask mandate End the mandate it's not a law and this tyrannical govt needs to be stopped especially infringing upon our rights as American Citizens. Our body our choice right!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119541 2022/02/18 12:16:09 Anonymous People are confused This forum is about the revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, but the only comments I see are about mask mandates which are not solely what this is about. There are also posts of misinformation that are also concerning. I would suggest you at least come up with metrics as to why this should be removed before saying it's no longer needed. Covid is not gone despite people who pretended it was never here.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Adoption of the current Virginia Standard was based on a finding by the Board that the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 constituted a grave danger to employees in Virginia that necessitated the adoption of a standard to mitigate the spread of the virus in the workplace.

The term grave danger is not defined in the statute, but has been addressed in federal court cases surrounding federal OSHA's similar statutory requirement in the OSH Act, §6(c), 29 U.S.C. § 655(c).

From International Union, United Auto., Aerospace, and Agr. Implement Workers of America, UAW v. Donovan, 590 F. Supp. 747 (D.D.C. 1984), where OSHA declined to promulgate an ETS on formaldehyde in the workplace. The court action was brought in district court challenging decision under the federal APA:

The 'grave danger' and 'necessity' findings must be based on evidence of actual, prevailing industrial conditions, i.e., current levels of employee exposure to the substance in question. Id. at 751.

The Court also agreed with the defendant's position that A danger rises to the level of 'grave' when, based on actual workplace conditions, employees are faced with a risk of contracting serious disease which is substantially greater than a 'significant risk [a finding by OSHA of significant risk of material health impairment to employees from an occupational health hazard is necessary to support the adoption of a health standard]. Id. at 755.

Please note that by recommending the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board make a finding that SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 work-related hazards no longer constitute a grave danger to employees, the Department is not saying that the virus does not constitute a significant risk to employees, which would be the basis for adopting an OSHA standard. However, if the Board wished to undertake such a rulemaking, it would have to proceed under the requirements of Va. Code §40.1-22(5) and -22(6) and the notice and comment procedures of the Virginia Administrative Process Act.

119542 2022/02/18 12:19:57 Speech Therapist End Mandates Please end the mandates requiring masks, particularly for educators. I am a school-based speech language pathologist and my students need to see my face to learn how to correctly produce speech sounds, to learn how to read facial expressions, and to be able to read my lips if they are hearing impaired, among other things. The current requirement for me to wear a mask during therapy sessions is impeding their progress in therapy.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119543 2022/02/18 12:20:02 Anonymous Unmask our kiddos & STAFF Teachers should also be given the right to choose to mask or not. We are moving in the right direction for our children but part of them living this nightmare is seeing the smiling faces of their caregivers as well! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119544 2022/02/18 12:21:40 Anonymous Remove the Mandates It is well overdue for the mandates to be lifted. Give us our freedom back!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119545 2022/02/18 12:22:10 Becky GLeberman End all mandates Let teachers and other employees faces be seen and voices be heard. Americans with disabilities act should be ending these mandates. As a hearing impaired individual we need facial ques and lips to read. End all of this!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119546 2022/02/18 12:35:35 JAK End All Mandates Please end ALL mandates; the madness that gives a false sense of security.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119547 2022/02/18 12:36:33 Zachy Remove All Mandates - The Data Says Its Time With politics and personal opinion aside. Data is showing that natural immunity is as effective and works better than vaccines, but both provide some level of protection from the vaccine. Mask have a very poor track record for success of the course of this pandemic as well. Those that want the vaccine have had the time to get it. Those that want to continue to mask up and get boosters can do so. Stay at home and isolate if that is your choice. The choice should be up each person, as all aspects of personal life and health choices are.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119548 2022/02/18 12:43:45 DJ Enforce Masks The pandemic is still very much alive. Every time restrictions are lifted we see a surge in the spread of the virus, bringing more deaths and illnesses, especially to those who cannot protect themselves, such as elderly in nursing homes. We have a responsibility to protect all citizens including those that cannot protect themselves. Not wearing a mask is does not just affect that individual, but every other person they come into contact with, which could be caregivers for those at extreme risk for this virus. The inconvenience of a mask for you could save the life of someone else - is there really a question here for the right thing to do? Did we learn nothing from our repeated mistakes of lifting restrictions for the first several strains of the virus? If we saved just one person's life, is wearing a mask too much burden? What if that one person is you?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

119549 2022/02/18 12:53:58 Anonymous REMOVE ALL MANDATES Please follow the science and allow Virginias to get on with life. Remove all mandates immediately.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119550 2022/02/18 12:58:36 Scott Shufflebarger, Hertless Brothers Roofing, Inc. REVOKE Virginia Standard 16VAC25-220 To Whom it May Concern:On behalf of myself and the employees of Hertless Brothers Roofing, Inc. we ask the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 be REVOKED. We found the compliance to the standard was unduly expensive to our small business at a time when we were already suffering with economic uncertainty. Additionally, we found the standard difficult to interpret, especially when certain controls were benchmarked on a moving target (CDC Guidance). Again, we request that the VA Safety and Health Boards proceed with the REVOCATION of this standard. Thank you for your time and attention in this most important matter.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Ability of VOSH Standard to stay current with CDC guidance.

Some comments appear to be under a misunderstanding about the ability of the Virginia Standard to respond to changes in CDC guidance. 16VAC25-220-10.E provides:

E. To the extent that an employer actually complies with a recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or non-mandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID19 disease related hazards or job tasks addressed by this standard, the employer's actions shall be considered in compliance with this standard. An employer's actual compliance with a recommendation contained in current CDC guidelines, whether mandatory or non-mandatory, to mitigate SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 related hazards or job tasks addressed by a provision of this standard shall be considered evidence of good faith in any enforcement proceeding related to this standard. The Commissioner of Labor and Industry shall consult with the State Health Commissioner for advice and technical aid before making a determination related to compliance with current CDC guidelines.

Contrary to some commenters stating that the Virginia Standard was inflexible and unable to account for the changing dynamic of the virus and the revised CDC recommendations that have issued, 16VAC25-220-10.E specifically does allow the Department's Virginia Standard to account for revised CDC recommendations which are issued in response to the changing dynamic of the virus.

Unlike the states of California and Oregon, for instance, who issued Emergency Temporary Standards (that did not contain language similar to 16VAC25-220-10.E) and later had to convene their regulatory rulemakers to reissue updated regulatory text to reflect CDC changes, Virginia did not have to do so because it could address them within days of CDC changes through interpretative FAQ responses to questions asked by the regulated community and employee representatives.

In closing, 16VAC25-220-10.E, has turned out to be a very effective method for the Virginia to deal with the changing dynamic of the virus and the revised CDC recommendations that have issued

The FAQs can be found at: <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/final-covid-19-standard-frequently-asked-questions/>

119551 2022/02/18 13:05:15 Anonymous Masks need to be optional It is time for masks to become optional for all school employees!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119552 2022/02/18 13:09:57 Anonymous End ALL mask mandatesEnd All Mask Mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119553 2022/02/18 13:10:14 Mark Bryant Revoke the Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention, 16 VAC25-220 I support the full revocation of the Standard as soon as possible. These restrictions are not necessary for the general public and are a pointless and expensive burden for Virginia's small businesses.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119554 2022/02/18 13:13:10 Kathleen Schmidt Mask choice Please allow for mask choice for teachers and school visitors.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119555 2022/02/18 13:13:32 Walkabout Outfitter Please remove burdensome Covid regulations on businesses To whom it may concern, I own a small business, Walkabout Outfitter that has six locations in Virginia. It is a retail business and it has been awful trying to keep our business afloat, and continuing employing people, these last 2 years. Science shows that current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace. It is time to remove the cumbersome and burdensome Covid regulations on businesses. It's been an awful time for businesses and 25% of all small businesses in Virginia CLOSED their doors permanently. It's time to help them by removing regulations that are just difficult, costly, and take time. Let us work on serving customers instead of taking time trying to keep up with regulations. It's bad enough for those of us in retail, that the last two years have trained people to just shop on Amazon!! Let us get back to creating a positive experience in our stores. Please remove the Covid regulations Tina MillerOwner, Walkabout Outfitter

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119556 2022/02/18 13:13:45 Anonymous Freedom of choice Masks should be a choice! If someone wants to wear one, fine; let them decide for themselves. But don't punish the rest of us because a germ-o-phobe wants to breathe their own dirty air. This is no different than the flu vaccine or abortion rights. Tell me again about that double standard we have as a free country.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119557 2022/02/18 13:15:04 Educated on the science and lover of freedom of my own body/choices
Science shows MORE harm from vaccination and masks. Mass Psychosis for those still brainwashed be on the right side of history, because the lions have been awakened. Everyone deserves a choice and the science shows masks do more harm than good! And the vaccine doesn't even stop it and is causing greater harm. so if these all work, why doesn't it?? Why? Because it is mass psychosis and control. The majority knows

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

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Although no vaccine is 100% effective, the various iterations of the COVID-19 vaccine have proven to be tremendously successful at mitigating the spread of the virus and dramatically decreasing the number of emergency room visits, hospitalizations, use of mechanical ventilation and deaths. The success of the vaccines is one of the primary reasons that the Department recommended and the Safety and Health Codes Board adopted the proposed revocation of 16VAC25-220.

In January 2022, compared to fully vaccinated persons in each group shown below, the monthly rates of COVID-19-associated hospitalizations were: 3X higher in unvaccinated children ages 12-17; 5X higher in unvaccinated adults ages 18-49; 7X higher in unvaccinated adults ages 50-64; and 8X higher in unvaccinated adults 65 years and older. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#covidnet-hospitalizations-vaccination>

Also see scientific and medical studies on the positive effect of vaccines cited in the February 16, 2022 Briefing Package to the Board at pages 21-21, 31-36, 79-80, 87-88, 92, and 105-111; https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\34796\Agenda_DOLI_34796_v9.pdf.

Also see: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2119658>; <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccine-effectiveness>; <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#rates-by-vaccine-status>; <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#covidnet-hospitalizations-vaccination>

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119558 2022/02/18 13:16:17 Anonymous Mask optional Everyone has the option of deciding for themselves and their family what works best for them. Many people have suggested mask mandates during flu season. We need to get back to some normalcy and trust our neighbors and fellow Americans to make good decisions by not going to Hospitals, Nursing Homes or medical facilities while sick. This is far more important than forcing people to wear useless masks on their faces when they are perfectly healthy.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119559 2022/02/18 13:17:35 Duckworth End all COVID mandates I personally had to direct 250 employees through the debacle of the all COVID ETS mandates. The last 3 years have been a complete utter mess trying to navigate through all it. Confusion, misinformation, stressed burnt out employees, and requirements that were months behind the latest greatest science. The mandates have created more anxiety for employees than the pandemic ever did, and in case you're unaware, anxiety is not compensable under Virginia's Worker's Compensation laws. If you continue with the COVID Standard, you may as well change the W/C laws to cover anxiety. After 3 years of this, everyone knows about COVID now. We get it. We do not need government intervention to require folks to do what they are capable of doing on their own, which is making their own decisions for themselves, their employees, and their businesses. We do not need the government to continue the wrath of creating undue pressure through the fear of citations and enforceable fines. Forced persuasion is bad for Virginia business. 'm done, I'm cooked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Virginia Workers' Compensation laws are not within the purview of the Department.

119560 2022/02/18 13:18:56 virginia Kares Home Care Services, LLC Covid Regulations We think that if it is JUST for the covid regulations, it would be good to remove the standard for Infections Disease

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119562 2022/02/18 13:27:04 robin removing masks from the teachers I believe that the masks need to be removed from the teachers. The students need to make that connection with their teacher to where they can have that bond. It is hard for the students to under their teacher's instructions while they are wearing these masks. The students that have problems with pronunciations and such, really need the teachers to be maskless. Also students who are mentally challenged, also need their teacher to be maskless. They really need to connect to their teachers. This whole covid thing has been overplayed. The PCR tests are a fraud. I feel that everything that has been done to these children and teachers have been nothing more than child abuse and have caused undue stress on their teachers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119564 2022/02/18 13:32:18 Bobby E. For Choice Masks Do Not Work Anyhow - NIH 2015 - Remove them From Teachers! It is time for this mask charade to end and stop using these issues as some kind of political divide not to mention, the social divide and the injuries this has caused This is The United States of America, The Land of the Free (Choice) and Home of the Brave! I have never witnessed so many citizens fight so hard over giving up their freedoms of the right to choose, it is complete and utter insanity. If you wanna wear a mask by all means do, but do not infringe upon my freedom of choice or others. Furthermore, my health is my own business and my doctor business and none of the governments and privatized businesses business at all! I would hate to be on the other end of these lawsuits of injuries that may be coming to the way of the government and privatized businesses. It is time to demask everyone and move on the masks do not work anyhow according to an NIH study alone. No Mask. REMOVE them From our Teachers !!

The rates of all infection outcomes were highest in the cloth mask arm, with the rate of ILI statistically significantly higher in the cloth mask arm (relative risk (RR)=13.00, 95% CI 1.69 to 100.07) compared with the medical mask arm. Cloth masks also had significantly higher rates of ILI compared with the control arm. An analysis by mask use showed ILI (RR=6.64, 95% CI 1.45 to 28.65) and laboratory-confirmed virus (RR=1.72, 95% CI 1.01 to 2.94) were significantly higher in the cloth masks group compared with the medical masks group. Penetration of cloth masks by particles was almost 97% and medical masks 44%

Conclusions:his study is the first RCT of cloth masks, and the results caution against the use of cloth masks. This is an important finding to inform occupational health and safety. Moisture retention, reuse of cloth masks and poor filtration may result in increased risk of infection. Further research is needed to inform the widespread use of cloth masks globally. However, as a precautionary measure, cloth masks should not be recommended for HCWs, particularly in high-risk situations, and guidelines need to be updated.<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25903751/>><https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25903751/>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119565 2022/02/18 13:38:30 Betty Eggers End all mandates! End all mandates enough is a enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119566 2022/02/18 13:47:17 Tracey Brizendine Let it go and go forward. If you want to wear a mask then do so,; if not then don; Let the people make this call not the Government. Thank you Gov. Youngkin for working with the people of Virginia and giving us this choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119567 2022/02/18 13:48:38 Anonymous Freedom of Choice! Please return to us our freedom of choice!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119568 2022/02/18 13:49:30 Erin Mask optional Please allow teachers, bus drivers and staff to have the option to remove masks. Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119569 2022/02/18 13:49:34 Gibson Freedom of choice People should be able to do what they feel they need to nothing should be forced.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119570 2022/02/18 13:51:48 Michael Martin, The Martin Co CDC restrictionsI would like to see all of the Covid mandates lifted as they are a hindrance to the operation of my business as well as the companies that I deal with. Any lifting of these mandates will have a favorable effect on the business and the employees moral.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119571 2022/02/18 13:54:53 Anonymous Allow choice Thank you for voting to reverse the DOLI Standards. I ask that you follow through with this vote and reaffirm it to remove these burdensome regulations. Businesses and school divisions need these removed. We have got to move

past the constant fear. Customers and school students want to see who they are working with and get back to life.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119572 2022/02/18 14:02:15 Rich Jenkins Infectious Disease Response Plan Requirements Please eliminate the requirement for this burdensome response plan. Since our plan was issued (based on the VOSH and other guidelines) the recommendations for COVID have changed a number of times. Trying to maintain the document current is a time-consuming hassle and frankly, businesses have a lot of other problems to deal with such as labor shortages, rising costs, shortages, etc. With respect to COVID, most of my employees and customers are vaccinated and/or have natural immunity.Thanks,Rich Jenkins

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119573 2022/02/18 14:02:38 Patriot Lady END ALL MANDATES AND NO LOCKDOWNS! No masks, no forced vaccines/boosters and no more lockdowns!!! FREEDOM FOR ALL!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not mandate vaccines or business shutdowns.

119574 2022/02/18 14:08:34 2A Jim STOP THE PROPAGANDA!!! No more masks!!! Stop pushing vaccines!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

119575 2022/02/18 14:09:16 John Walker Please repeal the the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention Dear Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board,As a small business owner with over 200 employees, I ask you to consider repealing the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. As you know, most all businesses have suffered debilitating interruption from the

Covid 19 virus. We have tried to protect our employees by following the CDC and OSHA guidelines. We have also tried to survive the closing of our stores and the loss of income. When the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention was enacted, it created a very burdensome amount of paperwork and opened up liability for our small company. At the time of the passage of the Standard, we were financially crippled, had a skeleton crew, employee morale was at its lowest, and then had to navigate and write manuals mandated by this Standard. Worst yet, this Standard passed a mechanism for our employees to become government agents and report back when rules were not followed. It has added more confusion to the already very confusing guidance from our government officials on navigating this virus. I believe that Virginia's business and employees have endured enough. With the Virus numbers falling quickly along with hospitalizations and deaths, we must start to move toward a more normal way of life and learn to live with this virus. We will continue to follow the guidelines of OSHA and the CDC, but the Virginia Permanent Standard needs to be repealed and retired. I appreciate your consideration of this request, John S. Walker

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

With regard to the Commenter's statement that Worst yet, this Standard passed a mechanism for our employees to become government agents and report back when rules were not followed, employees have had the right to file occupationally related complaints with the Department of Labor and Industry. Va. Code § 40.1-51.2.(b), Rights and duties of employees, provides:

(b) Employees or their representatives may bring to the attention of their employer any hazardous conditions that exist or bring the matter to the attention of the Commissioner or his authorized representative, without first bringing the matter to the attention of their employer. Upon receipt of any complaint of hazardous conditions, the Commissioner or his authorized representative shall cause an inspection to be made as soon as practicable. Within two working days after making the oral complaint the employee or the employee representative shall file a written complaint with the Commissioner on a form prescribed by the Commissioner, if at that time, the Commissioner or his authorized representative has not caused the hazardous condition to be corrected. A copy of such written complaint shall be made available to the employer by the Commissioner at the time of such inspection. The name or names of individuals bringing such matters to the attention of the Commissioner shall be held in confidence upon request of such individuals.

119576 2022/02/18 14:10:58 Steve Powell End all restriction related to Covid 19 Please end all mask mandates and vaccine mandates related to Covid 19. People should have free choice related to this subject. Virginia overstepped their authority to require masks and especially to mandate how many days an employee had to stay out of work after getting sick.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119577 2022/02/18 14:12:09 H Flowers Personal Choice Teachers should have the same privilege as the community and choosing whether they wear a mask at school and/or in the workplace. The employer should not be able to inhibit an employee's abilities by enforcing them to where a mask that might possibly limit their teaching! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119578 2022/02/18 14:14:09 Anonymous End all mandates, restore freedom of choice Please end the mandates for students, teachers and staff

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119579 2022/02/18 14:21:16 DFS employee Mask Continuation in State Workplaces and Courthouses Throughout the pandemic, many state employees, including myself, have been at work, in-person, handling biological materials from COVID and non-COVID-infected persons, and have been traveling to other sites for work. In my case, I have been required to be at work where distancing is not always possible and have to travel amongst 12 different jurisdictions, all of which have had varying degrees of adherence to vaccine and mask rules. Part of my job requires going to courthouses and interacting with the public, law enforcement, attorneys, and other court officials, all of which I have continued to do since courts reopened in July 2020. I strongly believe that court business has been able to continue with minimal disruptions due to the requirements of masks, particularly in some of the older, less spacious facilities. Masks are a precaution, meaning they are designed to minimize and mitigate spread. Since COVID-19 is caused by virus particles spread through the air (talking, coughing, sneezing, etc.) as well as through some surface transmission, the use of masks stops salivary particles from spreading from an infected person, as well as from touching their mouths (which people do a lot more than they realize) then touching other people or objects. Masks are not 100% effective, as nothing ever is, but they have proven to be a strong tool in minimizing the spread of COVID in public places when used correctly. While I am not against the eventual lifting of mask requirements, I believe they should be in place for at least a few more months until the the data conclusively show that extremely dangerous variants are nearly gone and that hospitalizations are well below a manageable level. And even then, counties should retain the power to reinstitute masks when the data show increases in COVID-related hospitalizations. Additionally, worker protections should be in place so that those who do become ill are not forced to choose between going to work and infecting others, or staying home and protecting their coworkers and the public at large. Sure, masks are not the most comfortable, but utilizing masks has helped me and countless others continue to do our jobs and serve the citizens of the Commonwealth while also keeping ourselves and our families safe. This shouldn't be a political issue or one of lets get things back to normal (whatever you believe normal to be). This is about caring for our

communities and following the consensus of unbiased scientific data to make sound decisions for the benefit of the public.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119580 2022/02/18 14:21:32 Jamie Thornton Mandates End ALL mandates! We have more data on vaccines and mask ineffectiveness the mandates are unconstitutional. ;Masks and Vaccines should be a choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119581 2022/02/18 14:22:26 Tonia Free Teachers & Staff! Teachers & staff are due their God given freedoms. Make masks optional!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119583 2022/02/18 14:30:04 Anne P Freedom of Choice-Stop Mandates End all mandates. No one should be forced to....or prevented from masking if it makes them feel better. Teachers need their students to see and hear them clearly. We are a free nation, this nonsense has to end. The science has not changed, masks have done almost nothing to prevent viral spread. States that never had mandates did as well as (and often BETTER than) masked ones. The kids have suffered enough; everyone has. FYI the common cold (pre-covid19) is also a coronavirus. SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

Both COVID-19 and the common cold are caused by viruses. COVID-19 is caused by SARS-CoV-2, while the common cold is most often caused by rhinoviruses. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/covid-19-cold-flu-and-allergies-differences/art-20503981#:~:text=What's%20the%20difference%20between%20COVID,the%20same%20signs%20and%20symptoms.>

119584 2022/02/18 14:31:08 Anonymous End the mask mandate! End the mask mandate, including physician offices. Please allow this option. It is time.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119585 2022/02/18 14:31:14 Andrew Lang Get mask optional for teachers We know masks do nothing to stop the spread of covid, but at best we can call them a personal protection choice. One should be able to choose to wear it not wear. Virginia should fix this immediately before more children are negatively harmed. I believe most teachers would unmask if they had the choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119586 2022/02/18 14:31:43 Anonymous End mandates now! Individual liberties can no longer be trampled as the data is clear that mandates do nothing to protect anyone. Individuals and families must be given the freedom to choose!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119587 2022/02/18 14:34:00 Anonymous End masks for physicians offices. End the mask mandate for medical offices. They are not the same as hospitals and should not be held to the same standards.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119588 2022/02/18 14:34:16 Sherry Strauss Eliminate the face diaper! Eliminate the face diaper!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119589 2022/02/18 14:34:21 Anonymous It's Time The time has come to end the overly burdensome Permanent Standard. We have entered a period of the pandemic where it is clear this is an endemic virus that will need to be managed like other endemic viruses. Revoking this standard will not stop any individual from continuing with whatever mitigation measures they determine from their own personal risk assessment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119590 2022/02/18 14:35:08 Kim END MAS MANDATES NOW End mask mandates for teachers and staff.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119591 2022/02/18 14:36:21 Emily Turner Phonics Instruction and Masking I am in favor of repealing regulations requiring teachers to mask. How are young children and English language learners supposed to gain an understanding of phonics without seeing their teachers' lips makes the words? How are students of foreign languages supposed to learn proper pronunciation? Teachers have had access to safe and effective vaccines for over a year. Mandatory masking of teachers carries significant downsides, which outweigh the benefits purportedly provided by universal teacher masking.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119592 2022/02/18 14:41:46 Brett Corle VOSH Standard It is time to revoke the VOSH Standard. It has become a tedious burden that has no current value.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119593 2022/02/18 14:41:54 Anonymous Stop mask mandate for students and teachers FCPS needs to update its procedures based on the new data and science. Stop making everything political. Follow the science and stop the mask mandate!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119594 2022/02/18 14:43:32 Anonymous End the mask mandate, the medical science doesn't support it. End the mask mandate, the medical science doesn't support it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119595 2022/02/18 14:44:29 Lynn R. Please make masks optional for teachers and staff I am in a classroom situation. Since we have returned to the classroom we have not had a Covid case transmitted from child to child, teacher to teacher or child to teacher. We need for children to be able to see our faces while learning specific information.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119596 2022/02/18 14:50:08 L. Marsh Unmask our teachers! This is beyond ridiculous. Stop the overreach. Let Teachers choose what's best for them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119597 2022/02/18 14:52:03 Macon Powers, President of Atlantic Fence Supply Elimination of the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease, CDL Testing, Driving w/ Phone I have at least two employees who are at very high risk for severe disease or death from Covid. As long as they are part

of our team, we will continue to go above and beyond OSHA rules to protect them. I would like to see the standard go away at some point, especially the liability on employers. I believe it would be fairly difficult to be 100% sure of when and where an infection occurs. While it may seem to have spread in the work place and had been preventable, it is nearly impossible to know for sure and therefore I find it difficult to hold employers responsible. Employers cannot control people's behaviors outside of the workplace and it is reasonable to assume that no employer can fully control employees within the workplace, no matter the amount and frequency of training nor through the threat of disciplinary measures. Some employees will cut corners sometimes. While I would like to see the standard removed eventually, I believe it was very beneficial to the safety of employees, employers and communities in Virginia. In my opinion, the standard should remain in place until early spring of 2023 to make sure we do not make safety changes too hastily. We could have another bad winter and with these safety measures in place, hardly anyone catches the common cold anymore. That being said, I will move my business out of Virginia if this Standard is not removed within 18 months. If the Commonwealth is actually concerned for the safety from infectious disease, it should be doing everything within its power to limit population density. It is with increased population density that these infectious diseases present themselves. I prefer to live in a place with less people, free space to roam and a higher quality of life. I realize our economic models rely upon continuous and uninterrupted growth until the system implodes upon itself from a lack of space and resources. Virginia could hold off and not overpopulate with its neighbors and create a very desirable way of life, which would be quite valuable. Off this subject, but the federal government's idea to allow third party FOR PROFIT testing for the knowledge portion of the CDL test is probably THE WORST IDEA I HAVE HEARD IN MY LIFE. Running a fleet of trucks myself and having taken online classes/test, I understand first hand how private companies operating testing for profit will not produce the results we need and our roads will become very unsafe. How many will have someone complete this for them? Stop third party CDL knowledge testing at all costs What we need more than anything at the moment, is for our representatives to force mobile phone carriers to quickly develop ways to block phones from being used while driving. Give them a deadline that if they do not reach will result in any and all phones travelling over 10mph(?) from being functional. They can come up with a way to triangulate the driver's phone within a vehicle and blocking it alone or they can come up with a way to block them all, by your deadline. I cannot believe this is not already happening. It is absolutely insane that people cannot put their phones away long enough to drive and the problem is still getting worse. Over time, as younger generations replace older ones on the roads, it will be far worse. Stop the political divisions and do your jobs before it is too late.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119598 2022/02/18 14:56:17 Anonymous It's Time! The time has come to live with and deal with COVID as we do other viruses. In FULL support of lifting ALL requirements immediately!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119599 2022/02/18 14:57:29 Carly Clark (FCPS Parent) Allow Teachers the Choice to Mask or Unmask! Give teachers the choice to mask or unmask -- same treatment as our kids (finally)!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119600 2022/02/18 14:58:35 Mary Unmask teachers The masking is detrimental to our students' learning. The loss of learning through masking our faces is going to show in the coming years of it continues.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119601 2022/02/18 14:59:56 Michael Smith End Mask Mandates and Forbid Any Future Mask Mandates Please end all mask mandates throughout Virginia. Science does not support the wearing of masks to prevent the spread of viruses. The previous governor and VDH know that this is a fact that cannot be disputed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119602 2022/02/18 15:03:52 Anonymous End all mask mandates. End mask mandates. Masks should be optional, but no employer, including a stand alone medical office, should be able to make them mandatory

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119603 2022/02/18 15:05:26 Anonymous Remove masks in medical offices. Masks should be optional everywhere, including the doctor's office.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119604 2022/02/18 15:07:26 Anonymous Teachers Should Be Given Mask Choice Parents have the option to decide for their child. Teachers are adults and should be given the choice as well.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119605 2022/02/18 15:08:27 Anonymous Masks are inhibiting patient care. Remove mask mandates everywhere, including my doctor's office. Why should I have to wear one there if I can see the same people in the grocery store without a mask? Remove mask mandate for medical office personnel and prohibit individual employers from requiring it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119606 2022/02/18 15:11:08 Anonymous Physicians offices shouldn't be the enforcers. Medical offices are being put in a position of being the enforcers. Masks are not required elsewhere, and it is causing anger and hostility when patients have to wear one in Medical offices. Employees of these offices should also be exempt.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119607 2022/02/18 15:12:16 FCPS teacher End mask mandate for teachers Teaching in a mask is terrible and scientifically not only useless, but detrimental to our health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119608 2022/02/18 15:24:04 Traci Unmask our educators NOW Please give our educators the right to breathe fresh air, smile at our children and teach more effectively by letting the children see their face!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119609 2022/02/18 15:25:55 Julie Bingham Unmask option now Our highly educate and dedicated teaching professionals are more than capable of making a choice for themselves!! Let them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119610 2022/02/18 15:27:49 Rcps End teacher mask mandate Let teachers CHOOSE whether to wear a mask or not!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119611 2022/02/18 15:31:38 Andy Anderson Agreed! Time to end the restrictions Yes, and in the future, please listen to other voices than the federal government. We have plenty of good doctors who treat patients in VA who could advise. Public health officials do not treat patients and are heavily influenced by big pharma. Read https://childrenshealthdefense.org/fauci_info/ https://childrenshealthdefense.org/fauci_info/ if you'd like more information on that assertion.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was not based on any requirement by the federal government.

119612 2022/02/18 15:35:04 Anonymous NO MORE FACE DIAPERS! 2 years is long enough. Please end all of the mandates. Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119613 2022/02/18 15:36:42 Anonymous End Masks for all Please end mask mandates for teachers and school staff as well as anyone entering a school building. While I am thankful that my kids will soon be able to go to school and show their faces, I want the same for the teachers who they see! End masks for everyone!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119614 2022/02/18 15:39:56 Anonymous End Mask and Vaccine Mandate Please let us end the mask and vaccine mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119615 2022/02/18 15:46:19 Brian Freeman Personal choice I support the revocation of the Covid-19 regulations known as the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. Virginia is one of only two states that instituted such a restrictive and burdensome Standard on its businesses and other organizations. It has negatively impacted my business and my childrens quality of education.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Virginia was one of five states that adopted COVID-19 related regulations or standards and numerous other states used the mechanism of Governor's Executive Orders to address COVID-19 in the workplace.

119616 2022/02/18 15:47:40 Ronalie Giere Mask choice for EVERYONE Scientific studies are proving that masks do more harm physically and emotionally than preventing the spread of COVID. It is time to give EVERYONE mask choice!! Vaccinated, unvaccinated, young, old, teachers, admin, doctors offices, daycares, salons. whatever type establishment, everyone should have the choice to wear a mask at this point. There will be people that will simply feel more comfortable and believe wearing a mask is the safest option, and they have that right. However, those that do not share the same views or beliefs about masks should also have the right to NOT wear one. We are now 2+ years into COVID-19, though the coronavirus has been around since 1964 and we've lived with it all these years with no politics. There will always be viruses and illnesses that we will have to face and live with. Its time to let people decide for themselves how they wish to handle their own self care. Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119617 2022/02/18 15:50:09 Anonymous Revoke in its entirety These types of mandates have become useless and at best provided minimal protections. Remove all restrictions for all business sectors.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

119618 2022/02/18 15:55:08 Anonymous End masks for medical offices. We were forced to be vaccinated. time for reparations. End mask requirements for medical office employees. We did our part. Do not allow us to be forced to continue wearing masks when no one else is.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

119619 2022/02/18 15:58:38 Anonymous Doctors office staff should not be forced to wear masks
Medical offices are not front line. Most dont test, treat or vaccinate for covid and should not be covered by any mandatory mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119620 2022/02/18 16:02:25 Anonymous Medical front office staff should not be mandated to wear masks
Medical office staff in front office, business office, check in etc are not patient care or front line and should not be forced to be masked. We were forced to be vaccinated to keep our jobs. Weve sacrificed enough. Let us remove these masks. It;s been all day, every day for two years. Enough.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119621 2022/02/18 16:04:19 Carrie L. No more mask mandates It started with the kids being freed this week, now its time for the ADULTS! Everyone has the right to choose their personal comfort level of risk vs reward. This includes driving a car, eating at a restaurant, or simply leaving the house. Masks are no different. Let the people, including any employee, visitor, volunteer, or associate determine their personal need for a device which has been proven ineffective.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119622 2022/02/18 16:04:32 Anonymous Mask choice for everyone. Everyone should have the choice to mask or not mask. That decision should be an individual one, not mandated by government or even by an individual employer.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119623 2022/02/18 16:08:52 Anonymous Unmask teachers There is absolutely no logic to not allow teachers and the general work force to make their own decisions about wearing a mask. People are intelligent and responsible for their own health. ;Mandating masks does not make a work place safe as evidenced by the rise in COVID cases with mask mandates in place.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119624 2022/02/18 16:15:03 C FortinMasks I want you to lift all mandates including mask mandates for all Virginia workers. Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119625 2022/02/18 16:15:48 Anonymous There was not a 30 day discussion period when implemented Why do we now need a 30 day discussion to allow these workers freedom of choice

when there was NOT any discussion when their choice was taken away. Masks can remain for someone that wants to wear one it should not be a requirement that removes someones freedom of choice. Might I add this requirement was put into place and continued with next to zero proof of efficacy. And with a considerable amount of proof that it does not work and in fact brings more health concerns by wearing a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of a 60 day comment period and 30 day comment period and two public hearings.

119626 2022/02/18 16:18:53 Stacey pomatto End it all now! Freedom! No more masks for anyone Freedom for all! Stop the mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119627 2022/02/18 16:28:28 Brien Gregan End Masks Requirement Now The DOLI change was completely unnecessary and should have NEVER occurred.. Please remove standard at the end of the comment period. Most states never changed standards as a result of covid. It is an unnecessary burden to business owners and state/county employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119628 2022/02/18 16:31:11 Jessica Longshore Approve the proposal to revoke From the beginning there has been no need for this policy... as it is we the people highly support the decision calling for the revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-22

Thank you for doing the right thing and your jobs by supporting the will of the people as you swore to do!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119629 2022/02/18 16:31:19 David Levenson End Mask Requirements EVERYWHERE! The grave danger is over. We need to move forward with our lives. Masks should not be required on public transportation i.e. buses, planes & trains. Masks should not be required in doctor offices or restaurants. Please stop this madness!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119630 2022/02/18 16:31:38 Anonymous Unmask Teachers Unmask teachers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119631 2022/02/18 16:32:02 Anonymous End mask now End all masking requirements for employees. It should be a personal choice for someone to wear a mask. Government overreach has gone too long and it is time to get back to freedom and personal sovereignty over your own body

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119632 2022/02/18 16:38:27 CCPS Teacher Choice! I'm a 1st grade teacher in Chesterfield County asking for a choice about mask wearing. Please leave this decision up to teachers who can make the best choice for themselves. personally, will chose not to wear a mask. I am not sick and I have a very hard time talking/breathing while wearing one. I want my students to see my face and mouth while I am teaching them how to read. Please allow me to make the best decision for me! Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119633 2022/02/18 16:38:59 Anonymous Stop the Madness Masks optional for ALL. If you want to wear it, if you dont then dont!!!!!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119634 2022/02/18 16:39:40 Ben Hall, Factory worker 30 day comment period on masking
The mandatory mask mandates for businesses need to rescind. Optional yes, mandatory no. I work in a production environment and masks get in the way of communicating with co workers. It is loud from the machinery so we end up pulling them down to speak anyway.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119635 2022/02/18 16:42:56 Vance Mabry End mask mandates in the workplace I am writing a comment on behalf of the new proposed Covid standard. I see no reason we should have a mask mandate in place for employees in the workplace we are seeing a downward trend in Covid cases everywhere. Another reason is business are under staffed so the people at work are calling in Covid just to get a break because they are over worked, making it look like Covid cases in the workplace. I work in a factory 8-10 hours a day 6 days a week an wearing a mask keeping up on a assembly line can't get very frustrating. You can't hear what other employees are saying causing a very dangerous work environment working around machines an equipment that could cause serious injury/death. If you dont have to wear one outside of work why would we wear one inside of work? Its time to return the world back to normal, a this should be a big step in the right direction.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119636 2022/02/18 16:50:05 Belinda Dickerson Free from mask. The mask should be optional. We live in a lawful Constitutional nation and a lawful Constitutional state. Freedom of choice when it comes to our health is a God given right. An inalienable right. Thank God, We are free in the name of Jesus, Amen!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119637 2022/02/18 16:53:56 Anonymous citizen Unmask the teachers!! Please end this insanity of masking!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119638 2022/02/18 17:00:21 Anonymous End mask mandates for ALL. End mask mandates for everyone, including teachers, medical office workers, restaurant workers. vineyard workers...no one should be mandated to wear a mask. Individual choice, and employer should not dictate mask wearing.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119639 2022/02/18 17:11:38 Shawn Angle End mask mandates End all mask mandates now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119640 2022/02/18 17:15:14 Michele Kaloski Unmask teachers Please unmask the teachers. The children need to see our faces to learn and understand language. Students need to be able to see facial expressions and smiles to feel safe and welcome at school. Teacher should have a choice. Because of the mask, many of us are now under the care of dermatologist and have sore throats after teaching all day through the mask. (7 hours a day) As a librarian, I read to 6 classes a day, and literally feel breathless and exhausted which is causing headaches. Please give us a choice We've been on the front lines face to face in my county from the beginning. If an 18 year old senior can choose why cant a teacher?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119641 2022/02/18 17:15:57 Kelly Campbell End mask mandate Let the teachers, bus drivers, staff, and families choose. No more mask mandates. The Ill effects outweigh any small perceived benefit against the virus.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119642 2022/02/18 17:16:38 Susan Unmask Unmask teachers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119643 2022/02/18 17:17:23 Donna Remove Unmask all

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119644 2022/02/18 17:18:19 Jessica Unmask Teachers and soon No more masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119645 2022/02/18 17:19:11 Tyler No more mask No more masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119646 2022/02/18 17:20:02 Julianne Ingram END ALL MANDATES End all mask and MRNA shots now! It is being proven to be ineffective and has caused our children and country irreparable harm!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119647 2022/02/18 17:20:06 Robert Roberts Remove government mandated order requiring the wearing of masks in response to covid. Please end the government mandate that forces individuals to wear masks in response to covid. It is an individual choice and should be decided by individuals. Folks who feel better by wearing masks should feel free to do so but should not force that decision upon others. Respectfully, R.L. Roberts

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119648 2022/02/18 17:20:13 Sara Remove masks Remove masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119649 2022/02/18 17:20:58 Julianne END ALL MANDATES End all mask and MRNA shots now! It is being proven to be ineffective and has caused our children and country irreparable harm!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

119650 2022/02/18 17:20:59 Joyce Choice!!!!!!!!!!!! Choice!!!!!!!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119651 2022/02/18 17:21:47 Mike End Mask Mandate End Mask Mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119652 2022/02/18 17:23:21 Kenny Freedom from masks Freedom from masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119653 2022/02/18 17:25:31 Chris Mabry End the mask mandate There is no reason to have to still be wearing a mask especially in a work place. The mask creates a work place safety hazard. You can not hear your coworkers talking and they could be warning you of a danger and you wouldn't know it till it was to late. COVID cases are going down

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119654 2022/02/18 17:27:04 Angie Choice Choice SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119655 2022/02/18 17:28:41 S. S. End Masks..the sooner the better End masks..the sooner the better

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119656 2022/02/18 17:28:58 Alan R. Jenner Vote to Repeal This has been a travesty against the people of the World. COVID has been a cold bug since day one!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370

Both COVID-19 and the common cold are caused by viruses. COVID-19 is caused by SARS-CoV-2, while the common cold is most often caused by rhinoviruses. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/covid-19-cold-flu-and-allergies-differences/art-20503981#:~:text=What's%20the%20difference%20between%20COVID,the%20same%20signs%20and%20symptoms.>

119657 2022/02/18 17:31:07 Shannon End mask mandate If people want to wear masks that's fine but masks shouldn't be mandated when they have been proving not to stop the spread of the virus.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119658 2022/02/18 17:32:02 Linda Ketter Mask choice Choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119659 2022/02/18 17:33:29 Dan Mask Get rid of mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119660 2022/02/18 17:38:22 Anonymous FREEDOM TO CHOOSE END MANDATE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE END MANDATE

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119661 2022/02/18 17:39:12 Diana Mask Mandates Please end all mask mandates for teachers and administrative staff in our schools

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119662 2022/02/18 17:39:45 Karen Sturtevant End Mask Mandates End Mask Mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119663 2022/02/18 17:46:47 A Relyea Past time to end I have to wear a mask all day and try to teach through it. It's terrible, I have to yell to be heard. I end each day with a headache. It's past time to unmask the workforce.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119664 2022/02/18 17:48:02 Stephany Garvie, Chesapeake Public Schools END ALL MANDATES
Please end all covid mandates in schools and all businesses.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119665 2022/02/18 17:53:19 Hank Gallimore End all Mandates End all mask mandates, it should be the individual's choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119666 2022/02/18 17:56:34 Ragan McDowell End all Covid restrictions It is beyond time to end all covid 19 mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119667 2022/02/18 18:00:53 Anonymous End Masks for Teachers Two years into this pandemic, we are starting to see change. School and public mask mandates are dropping, yet there are relics of old times. VA DOLI's Emergency Standard requiring vaccinated employees to wear masks in areas of high transmission, while school students are no longer required to, is absolutely arbitrary. Teachers have been shouldering incredible stress and weight in this pandemic, and it is time to give them their breathe and their smile back. I urge you to take into account the outpouring of support for Virginia's workers and teachers, and to end this outdated standard in fairness and freedom to all Virginians. I urge you to promptly repeal this order after the 30 day comment period. Thank you. ~a Virginia teacher

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119668 2022/02/18 18:02:01 Anonymous End the mandates One's risk should be left to the discretion of the person. If you want to wear a mask and you think it works, go for it. If you don't want to wear a mask then don't. I am not in favor of anyone forcing me to wear anything. Take the mandate away and you'll find more people wanting to sub and teach

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119669 2022/02/18 18:03:27 M Nelson End Mask Mandates for College Students I think it's great youve ended the mask mandates for K-12 and Virginia state employees. Now lets please end the mandates for our college students.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not have jurisdiction over non-employee college students.

119670 2022/02/18 18:30:07 Shelly Arnoldi End all mandates! There is more than enough data and evidence to show masks do more harm than good. They do not prevent virus transmission. They are pure political theater. The ma date is and was a overreach of our constitutional freedoms and should NEVER be considered again. We are supposed to be a free country. Do your job and ensure we remain free and our rights are protected.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119671 2022/02/18 18:33:39 Anonymous End all covid restrictions and mandates It is past time to end all unconstitutional covid Restrictions all based on a lie! When not one agency in Virginia has been able to Respond to a foia request to produce evidence of the covid virus isolated, it prices our freedoms and rights were violated based on false information. End all restrictions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119672 2022/02/18 18:36:03 Anonymous Crimes Against Humanity It is well past time to end all unconstitutional covid restrictions and restore our avid given rights and freedoms. Once those are fully restored, it is time to prosecute all those involved in these crimes against humanity. Justice is coming

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119673 2022/02/18 18:38:46 Anonymous End mask mandates for college students
Remove all mask requirements for college students and refuse funding to any school that refuses to comply. Then charge the university presidents with crimes against humanity for coercing these young adults into and experimental and unapproved vaccines they have done untold And permanent damage To their immune and reproductive systems

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119674 2022/02/18 18:40:40 Anne Rothermel Unmask our teachers My youngest son told me he thinks he's deaf because he can;t hear his teacher. I went through the whole process of getting a referral and having him tested to find out he can hear fine, but struggles because he cant see his teacher's mouth. It is time to recognize the damage these COVID measures are causing. Each child

matters and each day we rob them of a normal life and quality education is a day they will never get back. Time to give our teachers the choice to unmask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119675 2022/02/18 18:58:12 Anonymous Give teachers choice Give us teachers a choice!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119676 2022/02/18 19:05:19 Preschool teacher Optional masks for school staff Masks inhibit the communication between myself and my preschool students and increase germs in our classroom as many masks are soiled. I am trained to minimize the spread of illness in the classroom and can facilitate a safe environment without any mask mandates. Let teachers decide for themselves whether to mask, and allow us to teach children in a way that promotes learning, development and the students; positive self-esteem.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119677 2022/02/18 19:07:01 FCPS Teacher Drop Mask Mandates Relationship building begins with seeing facial expressions, especially smiles. To effectively teach linguistics, we need to see each others faces. Students needs to see how letter/word sounds are formed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119678 2022/02/18 19:10:07 Jill Whitescarver Mask choice is crucial for all I am a CCPS teacher and parent in Virginia. Since students have been given a choice on masks in my district, there has been a drastic reduction in Covid positives in my classroom. I have noticed more and more students are not wearing masks, and there is more interaction between them. Every effect from this has been a truly positive one. I'm still baffled why we as teachers are going to school with the healthiest part of our communities with the healthiest immune systems, and we are forced to wear masks while trying to

muffle through the day. At this point, I am standing in front of a far majority of an unmasked class with a mask on. This is lunacy. And making any excuse about vaccinations are also lunacy, because it's obvious they have not worked in preventing Covid. I personally know people in situations where these drugs have had quite the opposite effect and have caused problems. By using common sense, we can look at the evidence and deduct that masks are not effective. On top of that, kids have been hurt in many ways by wearing them, and by their teachers wearing them. Anyone who argues otherwise does not understand child psychology or how the world of education works. When children walk into their classrooms and cannot see the faces or expressions of the people caring for and teaching them, this is a serious problem that affects them mentally and psychologically. Having a masked teacher makes it substantially more difficult to connect to him/her, and we know that when children connect to their teachers, it sets the stage for effective learning. Another part of never seeing a teacher's face is understanding expressions and how they relate to communication. This does not even address the sound issue of the importance of successfully and correctly hearing their teacher, as well as the fact that children need to see how letter sounds are formed in the mouth. Until we remove the barrier of masks, the effects of this has, is, and will continue to monumentally affect children's understanding of and their ability to communicate verbally and understand nonverbal communication. And these are vital skills all children need. Since giving students the right to choose on masks, students have been doing wonderfully. There was a palpable feeling of relief and joy when they realized they had that choice. Some have continued to wear them, and some have chosen not to, but the best thing is that they have been afforded the freedom to choose. It is important that we ALL are given that right.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119679 2022/02/18 19:18:13 Daniel Blosser Rescind the Permanent Safety Standard 16VAC25-220

I am writing to show my support for the repeal of the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 / 16VAC25-220, pursuant to Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 6 signed on January 15, 2022. A permanent standard is never the answer to an issue that is temporary and ever changing. While probably well intentioned, the adoption of this standard did not reflect evolving health and safety guidelines. Guidance by the CDC, OSHA, and VDH continues to evolve as evidenced by the recent revisions to recovery/return to work guidelines and the withdrawal of the federal Vaccination and Testing Emergency Temporary Standard. The adoption of a permanent standard saddled Virginia's employers with a standard that did not reflect the latest breakthroughs on the virus and vaccines. Employers should instead be free to work together with their employees without the need to interpret a permanent standard that may be outdated the moment it is published. This creates hazardous risks for employers and their employees. In the future more measured approaches should be considered by this board when implementing such standards. It is imperative that the vote on 2/16/2022 be upheld and this flawed standard be removed, IN ADDITION in the interim, guidance be given to Virginia employers on whether it will be continued to be enforced during this 30 day comment period. Virginia employers would like to be able to inform their employees that they can freely remove the masks in the workplace.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

119680 2022/02/18 19:20:05 PWCS teacher Unmask educators I am in favor of unmasking educators. Students now have a choice, their educators should as well. Teaching students phonemic awareness, phonics has been difficult and frustrating this year. It has become especially difficult for students with speech deficits and English language learners.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119681 2022/02/18 19:21:11 Angela Leatham End masks mandates for teachers
Students cannot hear me with a mask on. I'm like white noise to them. Students who are hearing impaired do not benefit from teachers wearing masks. Student who don't speak English or are learning new words cannot process them adequately if they cannot see our mouths forming words. Students with emotional needs or any child on the autism spectrum benefit greatly from seeing our faces. Many studies have shown the trauma and detriment not seeing faces has on children. Many teachers got the vaccine against our better judgement in order to return to normal and we haven't seen normal in two years. Masking teachers does more harm to students than good. It's truly a shame that all of this has come down to poll numbers. It is evident that what is best for students has never been a priority for our government. All of the above things I listed should already be known by leaders in our state. The fact that this has to be pointed out shows how incompetent our leaders are.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119682 2022/02/18 19:34:07 RPW No Mandates Stop the insanity! End all mandates! If you want to wear a worthless mask, have at it, but leave the rest of us alone!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119683 2022/02/18 19:37:14 Anonymous End medical office mandates. Patient care has suffered due to physicians offices being required to wear masks. It is difficult to communicate with

patients and there is too much misunderstanding and error due to masks inhibiting speech and hearing. Physicians offices are not front line and should not be required to wear masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119684 2022/02/18 20:14:24 Lynn Schelhammer Eskew No mandates! Unconstitutional. Religious freedom as well! End masking for adults in public schools. The students look to us - we are their model. Additionally, as citizens of Virginia, we should have a choice as to whether or not we choose a mask. End it now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119685 2022/02/18 20:21:17 Botetourt County Teacher END MASK MADNESS I am a Virginia educator Thank you for taking the first step in what appears to be a phasing out of mask mandates. The first day back without required masks for students was one for the books! It was one of the best days of school this year. My students did question why teachers were still wearing masks. I told them we are still required, but that I was happy to see their happy faces. They said it was unfair and I told them I agreed with them. I wish people making these decisions would have gone all in on this move and included the whole school (students, faculty, staff) in reclaiming facial freedom. I am respectfully asking you to end all covid mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119686 2022/02/18 20:24:37 CP Remove all mandates and restrictions The pandemic is over, if people wish to continue to live in fear, then that is their choice to mask or get vaccinated a dozen times. Return the freedom to people to make our own choices about our health that has been stolen away for the past year! Vaccines are doing more harm than good, and masks are more likely to make you sick or mentally ill than protect you from sickness.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119687 2022/02/18 20:25:42 Anonymous End All Covid Mandates Two years into the pandemic and we are still under forced restrictions that don' help. Mask wearing and covid vaccinations should be optional and left to the discretion of the individual. My body my choice. END all covid mandates, especially mandatory masking and vaccinations!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119688 2022/02/18 20:31:09 K powell Repeal mask requirement for employees/teachers
Hi. It is time to repeal the code requiring masks for employees in areas of high or moderate Covid transmission. students need to see their teachers without masks to feel reassured that they are safe and life is returning to normal. teachers who prefer masks can continue to choose that. The CDCs metrics on moderate and high transmission were created before universal vaccine access and are therefore now outdated. Teachers who are ready to return to normal reserve the freedom to do so. Their job is already hard and has been hard enough for two years. It is time

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119689 2022/02/18 20:41:07 Anonymous Don't wait 30 days Why wait 30 more days to move forward? The response is overwhelmingly in favor of removing mandates everywhere, including physicians offices, factories, car rental offices, colleges and universities, wineries and restaurants. Don't leave any loopholes or exceptions. Employers should not have that type of control.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119690 2022/02/18 20:45:36 Anonymous Freedom to choose should be the rule If anyone wants to wear a mask, by all means they should, so long as it is their choice, not their employers, and not a government mandate. It's been 2 years. We need to move forward and stop living this way. The mental toll is tremendous.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119691 2022/02/18 20:46:10 G \$ Reality of covid prevention I have had covid twice over the past year. During the first round My family and I were very adamant about wearing our masks and making sure those around us wore theirs. No matter, we still got it with flu like symptoms and no lasting affects. The second time only I got it, not my wife and kids. I didn't wear my mask around them nor did I quarantine from them. Still did not pass it on. Had cold like symptoms for 3 days then like I was never sick. In my case the masks did not make any difference and the virus was very mild, absolutely no difference than a yearly cold. Please remove these mandates so the kids can see their teachers and classmates smile and remove the stigma around connecting with people face to face in this time of need for personal connection

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119692 2022/02/18 20:49:27 Anonymous End mandates for everyone As someone who is in a medical office and required to mask all day, every day, for the last 2 years, I can attest to the mental toll it is taking. I am office staff, and I never intended to have a career where I would need to mask to do my job. Please please remove the mask mandate for medical office workers, and also remove the ability of the employer to require it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119693 2022/02/18 21:08:58 William K. Lee Sr. Remove, let's move on It is time to take our life back. More people die from drug overdose than Civid. This was used to bring fear over the American people.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119694 2022/02/18 21:31:55 Cindy End mask mandates for teachers It;s been long enough, time to stop mandates and let teachers decide if they want to wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119695 2022/02/18 21:39:00 AC Mask Mandate Please remove all mask mandates in the state of VA for workers to include teachers and school buses!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119696 2022/02/18 21:51:26 K Frank Choice for teachers As a substitute teacher, one of the few who has continued subbing throughout the pandemic- I implore you to let teachers have the same rights to choose that I have as a parent for my children. It has been a long 2 years, this year has begun to wear on all of us. We have been blessed to see smiles again from a good percentage of students. But, especially in certain classrooms- children need to see our smiles too. I see more children suffering from diagnosis that would have most likely gone unnoticed or not even surfaced. SpEd case loads increasing, little to no progress with SLP students because they can;t watch the teacher model the motions. While I understand this doesn;t mean everyone will make the choice to unmask, what matters most is just that- having the choice. I know personally, my decision to continue subbing in the next school year weighs heavily on whether or not I will have a choice when it comes to a mask. Let us breathe....please.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119697 2022/02/18 21:51:31 Lisa Time to end the masks for all VA workers. Time to stop the craziness. Please allow personal choices for masks.. science has changed and no one believes masks work anymore

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119698 2022/02/18 22:38:12 KKB End mask mandates End mask mandates for teachers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119699 2022/02/18 23:19:01 Barbara END ALL MANDATES END ALL MANDATES, follow the Constitution

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119700 2022/02/18 23:44:31 Allison End ALL Mandates End ALL mandates! Period!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119701 2022/02/18 23:45:35 Doris K END These tyrannical mandates they never worked Kids need to see smiling faces. There is no reason to be living in fear when HCQ IVM have worked all along. Stop the coercion propaganda and lies. Enough is enough. Its your body it should be your choice. Natural Immunity has always been better. You can't catch a fly in a chain link fence. Even the side of these boxes of masks says they can;t stop a virus. Trust is gone is All these systems run by the deep state. Let's end this “new normal Klaus Schwann, Bill Gates, Fraud Fauci and the thief in offices lies.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119702 2022/02/19 0:12:15 Jane Teacher mask choice Teachers have more than out themselves out in the line this year. They have adapted and changes their classrooms and teaching styles during this pandemic. Every day teachers have been exposed to Covid and stayed in school. Tireless teaching and planning, behaviors problems, lack of support in the workplace are just many of the issues teachers have faced this year. Teachers have have gone above and beyond what they normally what do and hope rising and kids now have that choice in masks. Let teachers choose now for themselves. They are no less important in the schools and the fight in masks needs to come to an end and let kids have a “normal” remaining four months of their school year and let teachers breathe again. No more masks, let it be done. The fight is over

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119703 2022/02/19 5:35:43 Barbara Henry END THE NONSENSE We have data now.....masks do more harm than good and the so called vaccines are extremely dangerous. And NEITHER WORKS. End the stupidity and wake up.....

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

MYTH: The ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines are dangerous.

FACT: Nearly all the ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines are also ingredients in many foods – fats, sugars, and salts.

Nearly all the ingredients in COVID-19 vaccines are also ingredients in many foods – fats, sugars, and salts.

Exact vaccine ingredients vary by manufacturer. Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines also contain messenger RNA (mRNA) and the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine contains a harmless version of a virus unrelated to the virus that causes COVID-19. These give instructions to cells in your body to create an immune response. This response helps protect you from getting sick with COVID-19 in the future. After the body produces an immune response, it discards all the vaccine ingredients just as it would discard any information that cells no longer need. This process is a part of normal body functioning.

COVID-19 vaccines do NOT contain ingredients like preservatives, tissues (like aborted fetal cells), antibiotics, food proteins, medicines, latex, or metals.

Learn more about what ingredients are and are not in Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>

119704 2022/02/19 5:39:36 Henrico County Public Schools Unmask the teachers We are done with the masks! The kids can;t hear us. It;s difficult teaching reading to my kindergarteners with a mask on. What;s the difference in a child taking it off and an adult? It should be my choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119705 2022/02/19 5:46:48 Tuyen Nguyen End the mandates So many research shows that masks isn;t 100% effective and there is no long term studies showing how lack of oxygen can affect the proper healing of our bodies. However, it definitely has an impact on social behavior as it;s preventing

our inherent ability to see others expressions and demeanor, where the most impact this has on is our younger children who are learning how to socially adapt. Remove the mandate and allow those the choice to decide whether they want to keep wearing or not.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119706 2022/02/19 5:58:24 James M. C. Bonavita Stop Institutionalized Child Abuse The time to end mandatory mask wearing in schools has long since passed. Scientific studies have proven that masks provide virtually NO protection for either the wearers, or those around them, ESPECIALLY with children. Likewise, Scientific studies also have proven the many harmful Psychological, Physical and Sociological effects of wearing them. This school mask mandate constitutes State-Sponsored CHILD ABUSE!!! UNMASK OUR CHILDREN NOW!!!

James M. C. Bonavita, Chesapeake (Virginia Beach Police Dept., Retired)

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119707 2022/02/19 6:09:48 Linda Thurby-Hay Responsible citizenry As a practicing professional nurse, I have witnessed more death from COVID-19 than any other period of my over 40-year professional career. During the first year of this pandemic, deaths were caused by a disease for which we had no treatment or preventative strategies. The elderly, immunocompromised and those with multiple chronic diseases died; the suffering was unimaginable and the death ugly. Many of those who survived continue to struggle with long-term health consequences. This fall winter season brought more death from those who chose not to vaccinate. Whole families have died!

I am weary of the political bantering and falsehoods generated by social media and networks that aren't reporting facts. Our future community health and healthcare workforce is at stake! Science is not perfect but we must rely on current scientific evidence to make the best possible DECISIONS FOR ALL, and not stand on personal rights as the only and final answer to issues affecting America's citizenry.

When the facts indicate we can stop using transmission-blocking strategies, then let's move on. If they don't, then use what we know helps!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

119708 2022/02/19 6:38:20 Angela W Repeal Permanent Safety Standard 16VAC25-220

I am writing to show my support for the repeal of the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 / 16VAC25-220, pursuant to Governor Youngkin's Executive Order 6 signed on January 15, 2022. The adoption of a permanent standard saddled Virginia's employers with a standard that did not reflect the latest breakthroughs on the virus and vaccines. Employers should instead be free to work together with their employees without the need to interpret a permanent standard that may be outdated the moment it is published. This creates hazardous risks for employers and their employees. In the future more measured approaches should be considered by this board when implementing such standards.

COVID-19 no longer poses a grave danger to employees based on Virginia's strong vaccination rates compared to other states (10th in the country as of 02/05/2022) and other studies concluding the Omicron variant is less severe, results in shorter hospital stays and less likely to result in ICU admissions.

Repeal COVID-19 permanent regulations.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

119709 2022/02/19 6:52:04 PWCS Tired Teacher Unmask Educators With students having the mask option starting 2/22/22 it is only right that teachers do as well. Our leaders here are talking out of both sides of their mouths on transmission data. I;m to the point, 2 years later, that having a mask on my face in any capacity, is creating anxiety. Even 30 more days of this is overwhelming and ridiculous. Kids and adults alike are getting sick with and without masks which at this point tells me it;s not working!Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119710 2022/02/19 6:52:25 Anonymous Time to rescind mandates/standards NOW The mandates were enacted overnight and yet here we are, having to beg VDOLI to rescind them for over a month. The citizens of Virginia deserve better than this.

Please rescind ALL covid mandates and standards. They should never have been originally put in place. Not only can employers make sane decisions for their workplace but the employees have the right to choose and the right to personal medical freedoms and privacies.

Rescind the mandates and standards NOW - no need to wait when the support to do so is overwhelming.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

119711 2022/02/19 7:08:25 A very tired PWCS teacher Double standard Please consider expediting the process to allow teachers to decide whether or not to mask. Most of us are vaccinated and boosted per requirements back in 2021 to get us back in person. As a parent, my 3 children now have a choice. But as an educator I don;t. This is not fair. Please. Expedite you decision so educators can resume some sense of normal for our students for the second half of the year. We deserve a choice as well.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119712 2022/02/19 7:21:09 Anonymous Masks Please end the mask mandate for teachers and other workers in Virginia!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119713 2022/02/19 7:25:58 Ric Sutton School mask mandate Both of my daughters attend public school in Chesapeake. Fortunately they are no longer required to wear masks in school, but every adult in the building does. This makes absolutely no sense. Please put a stop to this idiocy

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119714 2022/02/19 7:30:04 JenniferEnd mask mandates for all teachers Good morning-I'm writing to you as a second teacher who has never seen her students or her own mental state in such disarray. My students have never seen me smile And up until recently I have never seen their faces. This makes it very difficult teaching such a young age. It is a time where they are learning language, learning how to express themselves, and learning how to read the nonverbal cues of others. I realize that many of my students lack these skills. It is difficult when my face is covered when I'm trying to teach them. They have difficulty hearing letter sounds or just understanding what I have said. I have watched students get frustrated and shut down. I had a student recently ask me if I could stop wearing my mask.

I told her no at this time all teachers were required to. When my county decides that it is time to follow through with their plan vaccinated teachers will be able to take their masks off and I will not. I made the choice based on medical reasons after talking to my doctor do not take the vaccine. So how do I look at this child and tell her the way it looks now I will forever be in a mask? How do I tell her that it is OK for her other teachers who are vaccinated, but out sick with Covid not have to wear theirs? E368How do I explain to her that I have already been infected, recovered, and still showing strong antibodies a long time after having it? How do I tell her that I will be signaled out by colleagues and parents, as soon as they all know my status? I don;t tell her. I dont tell her that I have horrible anxiety for not only what they have had to endure, but what I have. The backlash that I had gotten based on my own personal choices, no one should have to deal with. I;m at the point where I'm starting to question a career that I love. Please take into consideration ending the mandate for all teachers. We are tired from all that has been going on and all we want to do is teach. Thank you for your time

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119715 2022/02/19 7:32:29 Teacher that doesn't want to wear a mask!! Teacher choice for masks Thank you for giving students the right to choose whether to wear a mask or not. Teachers deserve the same choice! I teach kindergarten and it is impossible to teach phonics with my face covered, I have 10 ELL students who need to see my mouth to know how to form different sounds. Please give teachers the choice!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119716 2022/02/19 7:45:03 Cynthia Kilmer Let teachers be unmasked! Let teachers be unmasked so students can learn more effectively. Let students see the emotion on my face so I can build true relationships and they can see how much I care. So much human interaction happens through the face and current students have never seen their teachers' whole face. The Northern Va counties will keep mask on teachers as long as they possibly can. Please do not give them another crutch to lean on as they play this political game.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119717 2022/02/19 7:46:34 PWSC Teacher End Teacher Mask Mandate! Now that parents have a right to chose whether their children wear a mask or not it makes absolutely no sense for teachers and school staff to be mandated to wear them. There are no peer reviewed studies that indicate masks lower transmission rates of Covid 19 in schools. It hinders children's learning when they can't properly hear their teacher or see their facial expressions. Please do the right thing and end the mask mandate for educators.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119718 2022/02/19 7:46:45 Amanda Unmask Teachers Please allow teachers to unmask. It is difficult to communicate clearly while wearing a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119719 2022/02/19 7:58:06 Teacher End the madness of mask and ALL Covid mandates/policy End all mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119720 2022/02/19 7:58:54 Barbi End teacher makes this is crazy end teacher masks - it should be his /her opinion if they wish to wear a mask .

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119721 2022/02/19 8:01:10 PWCS muzzled teacher Home of the free? There is NO practical, health, safety or human rights reason to keep citizens muzzled - it is actually more harmful in every way for students and teachers. It's dirty, degrading, and doesn't prevent transmission - Stop this madness!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119722 2022/02/19 8:01:37 Anonymous Remove mask requirement for physician office staff.

Remove mask mandate for physician offices. Staff are vaccinated, we were forced to do that to keep our jobs. We've worn masks for two years. It has taken such a toll and mental health is suffering. Patients are becoming aggressive and angry at being forced to wear masks in health care facilities when they are not required in other businesses. Please give us a choice, and don't allow the employer to make the decision, it should be an individual decision.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119723 2022/02/19 8:02:17 Ashlie Brittain, Teacher Assistant Ashland Elementary School END MASKING FOR TEACHERS Please end mask requirements for teachers/ staff- I chose to get vaccinated- but I did not get vaccinated three times to continue to wear a mask! Let us teachers/ staff (adults) make that choice for ourselves!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119724 2022/02/19 8:04:04 Melanie Remove mask mandate Remove mask mandate. Effects my breathing and sinuses.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119725 2022/02/19 8:12:33 Anonymous NO MASKS Vaccinated and believe in Natural Immunity
No Masks for Anyone in Virginia unless they choose..My government employer refused to accept my medical accommodations so I had to leave my job. I have lost so much in the last several year.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119726 2022/02/19 8:13:47 PWCS Teacher End all mandates in Virginia As a PWCS teacher, it is extremely disheartening to have to wear a bacteria, germ filled muzzle on my face all day to teach children. We are two years into this pandemic and the madness needs to end. Vaccines have been found ineffective in preventing transmission and spread. Masks have also been found to cause more mental and emotional harm than good and don't prevent the spread. At this point, two years in, vaccines and masks should be a choice for all citizens of Virginia in all jobs and places of employment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119727 2022/02/19 8:17:58 Anonymous Take the masks off of my doctor's office staff. Why should fully vaccinated medical office staff need to wear a mask to care for a patient who they can associate with anywhere else (costco, grocery store, restaurant) without a mask? Hypocrisy at its best. It is purely political and there is absolutely no science involved in this decision. Beyond that, most staff are wearing surgical masks, and patients cloth masks, neither of which stop viruses. Contrary to what many believe, masks really do not work. Again, political. Healthcare workers are mentally burned out, fragile and just plain done with it. They are leaving this field in droves. Help us, please. Getting us out of these masks is the first step

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119728 2022/02/19 8:18:00 Caly Bruton End All Mandates Please end all mandates for all. There is no logical or rational excuse to impose masks on healthy, or any, people. It should be a personal choice to wear personal protective medical equipment, and personal choice to go about life as normal.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119729 2022/02/19 8:22:17 Anonymous End ALL mandates for ALL Not a single mandate has helped a single but. Stop all mandates and let us FREE Americans be FREE rather than having to continually fight the tyrants. All the tyrants need to be put on notice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119730 2022/02/19 8:23:08 Natalie End mask mandates and make it law I live in a county where it took a law to be passed for masking to be optional. Even when it was announced by our superintendent of schools in a c email you could clearly tell she was mad and upset that she had to comply. My daughter struggles with phonics in school and reading and the masks are t helping her not seeing how the teachers mouth moves when she articulated words. The teachers who want to wear masks should be able to and should be probably fitted with N95 masks so they are at least getting the best protection. We can't count on our local government to do the job we need so we need Richmond to step in once again!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119731 2022/02/19 8:30:10 Anonymous Mask Choice As stated in the notice, “based on emerging scientific and medical evidence that the current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace,” adults should be given the freedom to make choices that are in the best interests of their overall health.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119732 2022/02/19 8:32:46 April Youngblut Mask choice for all teachers and school staff!! Adult professionals have the ability to decide for themselves whether they want to be masked all day. Mask choice for all!!! No more mandates! Stop the overreach.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119733 2022/02/19 8:36:49 School nurse Make masking optional for all employees Make masking optional for all employees

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119734 2022/02/19 8:38:44 Carrie Beyond the Scope? Public Health Issue regulated by DOLI?????

Federal court ruled against OSHA in that they do NOT have the authority to regulate a public health issue. It would appear the same rationale is applied here and under what statute gives DOLI the authority to regulate a public health issue and mandate workplace safety? The initial regulation should be challenged, how did DOLI even have the authority to create this regulation at the onset; and therefore, repeal without the 30-day waiting period or expedite the waiting period. How can we not expedite this and/or challenge the legality of the regulation itself?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119735 2022/02/19 8:38:46 TeacherEnd Mask Mandates. It's time for this to be over. Let teachers make the choice alongside the kids.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119736 2022/02/19 8:40:17 MDeveau Unmask the teachers! It is time to end this! Masks do nothing but hold in fear! It should just be a choice for EVERYONE!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119737 2022/02/19 8:40:27 Dakota Dean Stop tyranny Take mask off teachers Stop the craziness

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119738 2022/02/19 8:40:35 Anonymous Do we really need 30 days here? Do we really need 30 days to figure out that people do NOT want to be required to wear masks? Make them optional. If someone wants to wear them, they should, but their employer and their government should not be permitted to force them to do so.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119739 2022/02/19 8:42:36 PWC teacher Mask choice Please remove the mask mandate and give us teachers the choice to wear or not wear a mask. Children need to see our faces, our smiles and our mouths especially when we are teaching them how to read. The science is there, most of us are fully vaccinated and have had covid already. Please let us choose!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119740 2022/02/19 8:42:43 V Parker End mask and ALL Covid mandates/policy End the mandates and policies put in place because of COVID — freedom of choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119741 2022/02/19 8:45:43 Anonymous Un mask the teachers! What is everyone holding on to? It's over!! Stop forcing masks that do nothing on people! How does it help the kids if the teachers are masked? What is so magical about 30 days? I'll give you a hint, nothing. End this charade now.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119742 2022/02/19 8:46:20 Haylee Cameron Remove ALL mask mandates for employees!
Remove ALL mask mandates for employees!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119743 2022/02/19 8:50:19 Rachel Stop Mandates Stop all of the mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119744 2022/02/19 9:05:06 Danielle Stehley, substitute teacher PWCS No more masks!
As a substitute teacher, I am ready to be rid of the masks in the classroom I enter. I want to the students to see my facial expressions and be able to understand me more clearly. I got vaccinated so I wouldn't have to wear a mask. The time for choice is now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119745 2022/02/19 9:21:28 Nicole Naples STOP MASK MANDATES FOR TEACHERS Please stop the mask mandates for all teachers. Let the teachers educate our children without any hindrances. Our children need to hear them clearly so they can learn and grow. Our children need to see their smile, mouth and facial expressions. Seeing their teachers face is a part of emotional development. It's time to stop

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119746 2022/02/19 9:21:31 Brayden D No More Masks I am a teacher and the fact kids don't wear masks and teachers and staff do is ridiculous. This is not a pandemic anymore. Hospitals are not packed. The "curve" lol is not flat but dropping. It is beyond time to give people the option of wearing a mask or not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119747 2022/02/19 9:24:29 Tammy Tribett Mask CHOICE for ALL It;s far past time that we give EVERYONE the choice to wear or not to wear a mask! This includes TEACHERS! This has spun so far out of control, and that;s truly what the issue has become-a control issue. ; This country was founded on the belief of individual rights and freedoms. We are quickly losing that and descending into socialism or a monarchy, which we fought, and many gave their lives, to escape! I am 100% behind vaccines- but that;s my CHOICE. I am 100% behind NO MASKS, but that;s also my choice. Every American has the right to choose freely for themselves and their own personal health. Teachers have been forced to teach all day in a mask. I cannot even begin to imagine how miserable this must be. Unable to breath, unable to be heard by their students, and, above all, unable to make their own personal health choice! From a students perspective, my daughter continues to say it;s difficult to hear her teachers and in a foreign language class such as her Spanish, it;s equally important to SEE her teacher verbalize. It;s time to unmask our teachers and allow everyone to get back to normal and make their own choices!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119748 2022/02/19 9:34:17 Anonymous Give teachers choice Giving everyone choice is the only way this should be done and we shouldn;t have to wait 30 more days. Do it now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119749 2022/02/19 9:46:26 Mindy Noles Unmask teachers! Give us choice! Please help give teachers the choice to unmask just like our students! Mindy Noles 6th grade tracher.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119750 2022/02/19 9:50:23 Anonymous Please unmask teachers Teachers deserve the right to choose whether or not they wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119751 2022/02/19 9:52:05 Anonymous Mask choice for teachers I am a primary teacher in PWCS and have been teaching for over 20 years. Masks not only do not work with the latest variant, they are a detriment to teaching primary students, in my opinion. I am a healthy person who has followed the recommendations and am double vaccinated and boosted. I understand that everyone has different beliefs and support that, but it should be reciprocal. It is my belief that we should have a choice to mask if that is what makes us comfortable. However, I do not believe that it is beneficial to myself or my students to remain masked until some unreasonable date is put forth. This is not going away and I refuse to teach the rest of my career in a mask. We need to start allowing teachers to live a normal life without the shackles of these masks. I am a U.S. military veteran and I have risked my life for my country and its freedoms. I have also dedicated my life to improving my community by teaching. The very least you can do is allow me the freedom to do my job effectively by respecting my right to teach without a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119752 2022/02/19 9:53:03 Anonymous End mandates It is time to end the mandates. Please.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119753 2022/02/19 9:54:15 Anonymous Masks for Teachers Optional NOW All teachers, not only the vaccinated, should have a CHOICE! End mandatory masks immediately and give teachers their rights! There is no threat to anyone and the masks do not prevent anything. And to say that ONLY vaccinated get a choice is DISCRIMINATORY and wrong! Do not make us wait until March!!! End it now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119754 2022/02/19 9:54:19 Anonymous Stop the mandates The mandates don;t help.
Please end them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119755 2022/02/19 9:56:43 Anonymous Do not wait until MARCH! Students now have a
choice, so why make teachers wait? Where are their rights? ALL teachers deserve the same courtesy and
freedom to teach and BREATHE. Do not wait until March, and do not discriminate!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119756 2022/02/19 10:02:45 Nicole Stracener Make it teachers choice to wear a mask It
should be the teachers choice to wear or not wear a mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119757 2022/02/19 10:08:16 Me Mandates need to stop Emergency Orders need to stopped!
Unconstitutional! The masks are ridiculous! They do not work! They do more harm! How about some
common sense and hand washing!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119758 2022/02/19 10:10:59 Jodi Halo Teachers should have the choice Teacher's
should have the choice to wear a mask!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119759 2022/02/19 10:12:23 Anonymous Mask choice Teachers should have the option to
wear a mask or not.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119760 2022/02/19 10:14:49 School Nurse No more masks and mandates!!! So much waste of PPE!
We have wasted so much money on PPE and wasted it!! Humans are suppose to see each others
faces!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119761 2022/02/19 10:20:04 Anonymous TEACHER CHOICE!!! If students dont have to wear
one why should teachers?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119762 2022/02/19 10:22:41 Glen Sturtevant Remove the Mask Mandates Remove the mask
mandates. Let Virginians get back to normal. It;s time to move forward.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119763 2022/02/19 10:33:05 Anonymous Teachers right to choose. Teacher should have the right to choose whether or not they wear a mask or not.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119764 2022/02/19 10:33:50 Katie Paarfus UNMASK TEACHERS! PLEASE UNMASK TEACHERS!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119765 2022/02/19 10:34:30 Anonymous Freedom of choice!!! This is ????. Let teachers have the choice!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119766 2022/02/19 10:38:32 Anonymous Remove the Mask Mandates for Workplaces. They don't work. Removed the workplaces mask mandates. They do not work.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119767 2022/02/19 10:42:26 anonymous Mask mandate Stop the mandate.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119768 2022/02/19 10:43:13 Anonymous End All Mask Mandates Masks obstruct interpersonal communication and collaboration. Those that are concerned can wear them, but people should not be forced to wear masks. Freedom of choice is a good thing.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119769 2022/02/19 10:46:41 Amy Brink Mask mandates Please eliminate mask mandates. These are unhealthy both physically and mentally. Individuals need to be allowed to make the choice to mask or not that best meets their needs. Sincerely, Amy L Brink Chesterfield, VA

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119770 2022/02/19 10:47:51 Anonymous End ALL mask mandates! Get rid of useless masks! End all mandates!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119771 2022/02/19 10:49:59 Joanne NO Vaccine Mandates - unknown long-term side effects End all mask and vaccine mandates - already harming children with learning and speech problems

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119772 2022/02/19 10:53:03 Kristina K Mask Mandates Time to end all mask mandates for stores and businesses - even healthcare providers. Don't need a mask to wait in a doctor or dentist office - didn't do this before COVID even with seasonal flu

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119773 2022/02/19 10:55:47 Theresa Bartholomew Please remove all mask mandates . Masks should be optional . Remove all mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119774 2022/02/19 10:58:54 E N Gemelos Time to end mask mandates Mask mandates must end particularly for the young and healthy. Science has found little value in use of mask with few exceptions. In addition masking the young healthy has been identified with serious health issues

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119775 2022/02/19 11:27:42 Anonymous No Masks No more masks! It's time to move on and lift All restrictions. Thank you Governor Youngkin!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119776 2022/02/19 11:31:34 A.MillerPast time Its way past time to make this a personal choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119777 2022/02/19 11:34:25 Elementary teacher No more mandatory masks! This has got to end. If kids get a choice then I think I'm fully capable of making the decision on whether I want to wear a mask or not. I want my freedom to choose! It's past time

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119778 2022/02/19 11:34:43 A.m.m. STOP I chose a long time ago...

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119779 2022/02/19 11:39:50 TeacherTime for the government over reach to end. The state department needs to end all mandates relating to covid-19. The risk to the general public doesn't warrant the government over reach

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119780 2022/02/19 11:41:02 Charles Willis Mask mandates Time to stop all mask mandates Let's make it optional for each person We don't need government to tell us what to wear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119781 2022/02/19 11:41:07 L. Weaver Masks and vaccination MUST be voluntary! It is paradoxical in the land of the free that any governmental agency would mandate that people must have any injection or wear a ineffective mask. Please leave these and other such personal choices to we the people.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not mandate vaccines.

119782 2022/02/19 11:47:24 Anonymous Useless Scientifically Masks are totally useless scientifically. Virus goes through masks just like mosquitos going through chain-links. They also deprive of human dignity and valuable human interactions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119783 2022/02/19 11:48:16 Cathy End mandates End all mandates regarding COVID-19. Any decision regarding masks or vaccines should be voluntary and decided by the individual. Businesses should not be allowed to force vaccines or masks on their employees or customers. Provisions should be put in place so no governor or governmental body can use a health crisis, manufactured or real, to strip citizens of their Constitutional rights

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119784 2022/02/19 11:57:37 Anonymous No more masks Masks and vaccines should be voluntary

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119785 2022/02/19 11:58:03 Anonymous No more mandates! No more mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119786 2022/02/19 12:13:58 William J Deutsch It is time to lift the mandates on employees
We are at the end of the pandemic. It is time to lift the mandates on employees. Vaccines and masks are readily available. People who want them should use them, people who don't should be free to protect themselves the way they believe is best

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119787 2022/02/19 12:21:48 Laura Letiecq It's time to lift the mask requirement from employees.
Continuing to mask employees continues to cause discrimination against the Deaf and hearing impaired in all aspects of society. We also seem to be creating a faceless servant class with the very people who were out there working in public the entire time others were sitting at home

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119788 2022/02/19 12:34:19 JR Masks should not be mandatory anymore Let the people make choices

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119789 2022/02/19 12:43:10 Anonymous Repeal the standard The standard is cumbersome and confusing and at this point, an unnecessary burden on employers. It is often difficult to even understand and implement. Employers cannot control what their workforce does the moment they leave the workplace so positive cases is not a reflection of a lack of an employer's concern for their employees. And the face covering has been proven for quite some time, that it is not going to protect you or protect others. This was the case even before Omicron

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119790 2022/02/19 12:44:24 Anonymous Please end mask mandate Please end mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119791 2022/02/19 12:50:06 vincent ikley end mask mandates

After 2 years, it should obvious that masks do not stop the spread of a air borne virus

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119792 2022/02/19 13:04:38 Anonymous mask mandates

Time to end all mask mandates in Virginia and the U.S.A

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119793 2022/02/19 13:10:31 Anonymous Lift Mask Mandate for Employers

Give adults the choice too. End mask mandate in the workplace

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119794 2022/02/19 13:36:32 Anonymous Freedom to Choose

From the start of this pandemic, freedoms have been infringed upon for the sake of the greater good. We have been told it was based in science but that has been proven time and again to be false. It is high time we lift mandates on things that should be a personal choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119795 2022/02/19 13:43:33 PWCS Employee choice

PWCS employees must be given the same consideration as PWCS families. Continuing to require us to wear masks while allowing students to opt out is insulting both personally and professionally

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119796 2022/02/19 14:03:05 Alan Masks are fine if chosen by individual. Mandates are not.

If an individual wants to wear a mask because she believes it will protect her from getting or spreading a disease, I am all in favor of her having the freedom to do so. But no one should be forced to wear one. Mask mandates are incompatible with our system of individual liberty

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119797 2022/02/19 14:08:41 Doug White End mask mandates

Please end the mask mandates. They do little to no good and are uncomfortable

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119798 2022/02/19 14:12:17 Heather Scrap the entire standard - was always bureaucratic overreach

Please revoke the Covid prevention standard. All of it. Every part of it was overreach on so many levels, burdening employers, employees, and taking away basic rights. Nobody has the authority to require any public or private employee, consumer, healthcare provider or patient to wear a mask, especially since masks are considered Emergency Use Authorized (EUA) medical devices under Federal Law. Most importantly, free the teachers. They can't fully teach and are harming themselves and their students by still being forced to wear masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119799 2022/02/19 14:22:03 Jill Moser Teacher FREEDOM

Teachers should be given the choice similar to the law for students to opt out

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119800 2022/02/19 14:26:35 PWCS Teacher Unmask Teachers-we've done our part

I am have been a teacher in Virginia for 15 years. I embraced virtual teaching. I embraced concurrent teaching. I embraced teaching in person in a mask while my students were masked and behind plexiglass. I have embraced it all. For the kids. Now the kids can unmask. I am so thankful for that. I look forward to the day when I will be ale to see ALL of my students' faces again. However, it is just important for my students to see MY face (especially at the elementary level when students are learning to read).

Please, give teachers the same freedom you gave the students today. Let us unmask. Let the students see their teachers' faces again. It's been two years. We've done our part

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119801 2022/02/19 14:27:48 Anonymous Let people choose
If you want to wear a mask, that's your prerogative. Allow me to make my own choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119802 2022/02/19 14:32:39 James Hudson Making should be optional, not mandated
I have had covid, the antibodies, both vaccines and the booster

I feel like a superman, and if I get covid again it will not be severe

I choose to not wear a mask, but respect those that want to. But do not want a mandate to have me or my kids wear one

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119803 2022/02/19 14:33:39 You don't own me or my choices Stop the political theater.
Those with brains (the majority) know what is going on!
Stop. Enough. Everyone knows now. All you will be remembered for is your tyranny

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119804 2022/02/19 15:00:49 Teacher Stop violating God given Rights for We the People to Choose

You are in violation of the Constitution. It is clear in protecting human rights from government

overreach such as these attempts with unelected officials who are not under authority to supersede laws with policies in the name of health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119805 2022/02/19 15:07:13 Ana It's over

It's well past time to end the masking recommendations. The current variant is nearly identical to the common cold. If not now, then when?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Both COVID-19 and the common cold are caused by viruses. COVID-19 is caused by SARS-CoV-2, while the common cold is most often caused by rhinoviruses. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/covid-19-cold-flu-and-allergies-differences/art-20503981#:~:text=What's%20the%20difference%20between%20COVID,the%20same%20signs%20and%20symptoms.>

119806 2022/02/19 15:07:19 Kai Li Brunda It's time...

It's time, people. This masking our educators has been going on long enough. How many new updates do the CDC have to give, all over the place with their suggestions for masks and vaccines until we all wake up as a nation and come to realize this entire process has wrecked our children? The juice has definitely not been worth the squeeze as far as masks are concerned. They don't work. Even knowing this, deep down (you do), you'll still support masking teachers. Why? Because our children's lives are at risk? Bullshit. Because their lives are at risk? Let them make that choice to wear or not to wear. They're grown ups; they can handle it.

You messed up. Ok, shrug it off and admit it. Let's drop this sham and get back to what's important….normalcy for our kids and their learning environment.

Kai Li Brunda

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119807 2022/02/19 15:08:33 Teacher and PWCS Parent Choice for ALL! Let Freedom Ring!

As a PWCS employee I am asking that you give all teachers and employees the choice for masking. I am thrilled that my children now have the freedom to mask or unmask as they see fit. This is now what I am fighting for as a teacher. The beauty of living in the United States is that we have choice. This should be no different. Teachers will continue to do what they do best and show up for their students but I can tell you that after 2 years of mandates and divisiveness, why don't we do the right thing and just allow choice? Our jobs as educators are already hard enough. The beauty of choice is that it allows everyone their God given freedoms- those that choose to unmask and those that prefer to keep masked. Please consider mask choice for all!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119808 2022/02/19 15:13:40 Victor Lantz Masks

Let us decide if we want to wear a mask or not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119809 2022/02/19 15:16:18 Jeffrey D Murray & Co., LLC proposal to eliminate the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention.

Please vote to pass this proposal

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119810 2022/02/19 15:37:43 Dr. Victor H. Gehman, Jr. Reckless Endangerment

People who are old, very young or immune suppressed, are vulnerable to COVID-19. The scientific facts are indisputable. Those who advocate for reduced protection designed to protect the vulnerable are guilty of reckless endangerment. In effect, the healthy who do not choose to mask indoors or follow other reasonable precautions are saying that their convenience is more important than the lives of young children, older citizens or the very sick

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119811 2022/02/19 15:56:51 Carolyn Stop this unconstitutional power grab
The mask mandates have NEVER been about science. They have always been about compliance and control. Masks are virtually useless at protecting other people so stop the political theater

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119812 2022/02/19 16:05:17 Heather Please give teachers/staff the option to opt out of masking

Now that a law has been passed for parents to opt their students out of masking, it is time to let the students/staff opt out of masking as well

Particularly for teachers and instructional assistants, wearing a mask makes it difficult to communicate with students. Non-verbal communication/facial expressions are also important and removing the masks would help in this regard

I know when we go into a restaurant or other business where staff is wearing masks, we often times have a difficult time hearing or understanding what they are saying. I've seen teachers comment that this is also common in the classroom

Teachers and staff members likely take off their mask as soon as they exit the workplace and they travel to other places where they may or may not be required to mask, including the grocery store, restaurants, other stores, gyms and bars among other places. Why should they be required to mask at work when they are not required to mask at other locations where they come into contact with the general public?

It is for these reasons that I believe that teachers and staff should also have the opportunity to opt out of forced masking

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119813 2022/02/19 16:22:17 Mark Robinson It's time to end the mask mandate and any requirements on vaccines for workers

Please end the unnecessary mask mandate on workers in Virginia

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119814 2022/02/19 16:26:39 Jennifer L It's time

We have all done our due diligence in following the mandates. Science has shown us that masks are ineffective. In years to come we will see the negative impact on all ages psychologically. Luckily we have a governor who let the children unmask. Adults need to have that option as well. I don't care if others want to wear it and they should have that option. We need to move forward on this decisive and stop being divisive

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119815 2022/02/19 16:29:37 Kathy Chenault Since vaccines don't work and masks are not proven to help, give us back our freedom!

Science has obviously proven the vaccine does NOT protect people from the virus. People who have been jabbed twice and again with a booster have gotten sick with the virus. So how can people be forced to submit to an experimental drug?! Masks don't keep you from getting the virus either. Plus, for some people, the masks themselves negatively effect their health! All of this has to stop!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

119816 2022/02/19 16:33:58 Anonymous Let Freedom Ring!

As a teacher for over 20 years I left my profession because I can't stand wearing a mask and making my little 5 and 6 year old students wear one was horrible. If adults want to continue with this mask wearing, let them, but it needs to be a choice

Let Freedom Ring!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119817 2022/02/19 16:37:23 Mandy Stop the communication barriers!! Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted

them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119818 2022/02/19 16:40:00 Teacher-11 years Remove the masks

I have been teaching for 11 years now and I have never worked so hard then in these last two years. If you want a mass exodus of qualified teachers continue this felonious absurd mandate. You may want us gone to push CRT and other crazy anti-American beliefs. Guess what, I don't. My hope is that we will be great again. I am a patient person but enough is enough for all this crazy nonsense. All of what has been pushed I am not interested in. The science does not back this ridiculous mandate any more. We want to be free. This mask is a control mechanism and we all know it. First time shame on me, second time shame on you. Do your part as elected officials and end this mandate. That's the beauty of an election system… you may be walking soon to a different job

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119819 2022/02/19 16:45:19 Jennifer Keene Teachers/ masks Please allow teachers to make the choice of wearing or not wearing a mask for themselves. It is really important for children especially in early education to be able to see their teachers faces. We are hurting children's development by not allowing this. And now that parents are allowed to make that mask choice for their children, teachers should be allowed the same choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119820 2022/02/19 17:03:08 Alana Johnson End mandates I support the proposed revocation. The mandates have been unlawful.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119821 2022/02/19 17:06:53 Merianne jensen End teacher mask mandate Children will never feel normal until they can see their teachers faces again. End the mask mandate for teachers….NOW!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119822 2022/02/19 17:31:44 A parent End all covid mandates and coercion End all masks mandates for every human being. End I contact tracing and testing and vaccine bullying for every human being.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not mandate contact tracing or vaccines.

119823 2022/02/19 17:35:17 Anonymous When will everyone wake up. Stand up for human dignity and freedom <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/labs/pmc/articles/PMC8656165/>

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/02/18/bill-gates-covid-risks-have-reduced-but-another-pandemic-will-come.html>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119824 2022/02/19 17:40:08 Freedom For AllMasks Unmask our teachers and bus drivers! Investigate the VEA, CDC, VDH. Keep politics out of schools! VEA is corrupt. Follow the money.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119825 2022/02/19 17:43:32 CHOICE Unmask our teachers and bus drivers! Investigate the VEA, CDC and VDH. Keep politics out of schools. Follow the money and you will find the problem. VEA is only worried about supporting Democrats. They are ruining our public school systems

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119826 2022/02/19 18:02:19 Anonymous Teacher choice Please allow teachers to make the same choice as parents are allowed! It is insulting and ridiculous that the teachers don't get the same options as a 5 year old child. We are the ones who are vaccinated.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119827 2022/02/19 18:10:53 Lindsey Folkes Teachers given a mask choice I'm hoping to see that teachers/school staff get a choice as to whether they want to wear a mask or not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119828 2022/02/19 18:26:58 Anonymous Elderly, very young, very sick, immune compromised should mask, not everyone else.If masks work, then the elderly, very young, very sick and immune compromised can continue to wear them and they will be protected. If masks work, not everyone needs to wear them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119829 2022/02/19 18:42:47 Dedra R Thomas Ridiculous Prince William Co School Leadership

I sent this messsge to our Governor with the latest insulting communication from the PWCS Superintendent, Dr McDade. The students are provided choice regarding masks, but the adult employees do not have that same choice? This controlling tyranny has nothing to do with public health and well being. It is all about control. Our state leader, Governor YOUNGKIN is doing what is right and American for us and I expect the freedom to decide for myself what I wear or don't wear on my face or put in my body.

STOP THE MANDATES?????? Governor Youngkin,
Thank you so much for your determination to obliterate these ridiculous and unscientific mandates and giving choice back to the parents. Now I am asking you to do the same for teachers. We received the following message from Dr. McDade this afternoon. The insanity of teachers still being told we cannot remove our masks as if that bears any weight on the spread of Covid. I am infuriated by the nonsensical nature of this power control grab. So the virus now knows that adults are the only transmitters of Covid? We should have the same choice as the parents regarding their children. Most of us are parents with children in the county also.
I know Lt Gov. Sears said to have patience through this process and I will.....however this email made me fume. I am feeling the need to support my students by removing my mask as well.
Please help us teachers communicate our faces to these now unmasked students. It is essential and way past time.
So grateful to have you and your entire team heading our state.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119830 2022/02/19 18:44:14 Anonymous Please end the mask mandate ASAP The only places I am required to wear a mask in Virginia are in a hospital and in my mostly empty agency office, it's ridiculous. The mask mandate was a useful in controlling the spread of Covid, but outlived its usefulness months ago.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119831 2022/02/19 19:00:38 Jill Kochan No more masking! Please stop the madness of mask mandates! If masks actually work, why don't they? You've made hearing more difficult and taken away facial expressions. Everyone, including teachers and bus drivers, should have a choice when it comes to wearing a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119832 2022/02/19 19:09:17 25 Year Teacher Enough Already Enough already. Enough masks, enough plexiglass, enough separation. The CDC is dragging its feet, but the data shows we're at the end of this nightmare. Get rid of masks! Enough already!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119833 2022/02/19 19:24:04 Anonymous Please remove mask mandate, including in medical offices. Masks do not work, and that is factual, especially given that most wear cloth masks. Medical office employees have been forced to be vaccinated. We've also been forced to wear masks for 2 years now. We've sacrificed, and we've been there. Every. Single. Day. Never once did we close down. We're weary. Morale is terrible. Good people are leaving the profession because they see no end to the masks. Please, please allow Medical offices to stop wearing masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119834 2022/02/19 19:29:24 Retired missionary Remove masks We are long overdue for removing the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119835 2022/02/19 19:46:38 Dawn Evans Teachers and masks I am a teacher of over 30 years. I have taught all my years in Virginia, specifically Prince William County. On Tuesday, February 22nd parents will have a choice to send their students to school in a mask or not. Even visitors don't have to wear a mask. However, teachers do! In PWC over 93% are fully vaccinated and many have received their booster. I am fully vaccinated and boosted and still have to wear a mask. When will I have the choice for my health? It is time now for adults to have the choice and choose what's best for them. Please rescind this policy as soon as possible. I support those who want to wear a mask and those who don't want to wear a mask. We should be given the same choice as students.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119836 2022/02/19 19:49:00 Cary Nunnally, Citizens for Constitutional Government Social distancing? Sure. Masks? NO The covid virus is worthy of fighting, but masks are not effective against it. If you want to know how effective they are, get a cigarette, light it, and see if the masked person can smell it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119837 2022/02/19 19:57:40 Anonymous Unmask Teachers Teachers should be allowed the choice to mask or not. It is important for students (especially young students) to see their teacher's facial expressions and mouths when speaking. This is how our children learn! Especially children who have special needs, including auditory processing delay. They NEED to see their teacher's faces (especially mouths when talking). These masks are hurting our children educationally and mentally!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119838 2022/02/19 20:11:48 Anonymous Please unmask all... I believe it's past time to remove all mask mandates... regardless of vaccination status. Herd immunity is science. Thank you for your time and service!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119839 2022/02/19 20:28:42 Anonymous Remove mask mandate Most of the population has already received the vaccine or has had and recovered from Covid. We have to continue to go on with our lives. So remove the mask mandate and allow individuals to make the right choice for themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119840 2022/02/19 20:46:58 Anonymous Drop the masks!!! Get the masks off of the kids, teachers and all staff!

The Virginia Standard does not apply to non-employee children.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119841 2022/02/19 21:07:12 Christine Marks It's Time To permanently END The Panic! People are FINE. Breathing air is not a crime!<UNMASK The CHILDREN!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119842 2022/02/19 21:24:47 cindy Denny Please give teachers a choice Everyone should have freedom of choice. Please respect my right to not wear a mask and I will respect your choice to wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119843 2022/02/19 21:50:44 Anonymous Allow teachers to remove masks My grandson needs to be able to see his teachers' mouths when speaking with a possible auditory processing delay.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119844 2022/02/19 22:04:40 Lucy Squarzini Masks Please end the mask mandates which are totally useless and dangerous to those who are forced to wear them . Medical doctors have said they are useless for stopping the spread of Covid. When will we begin to follow the true science?? Enough is enough

Thanks, Lucy Squarzini

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119845 2022/02/19 22:06:53 Sarah Stop all mandates Masks do not protect from the virus - but they do give headaches, dental problems, muffle your voice so it's hard to hear you, etc. Vaccines don't work - but they do cause side effects, disability, and death. Social distancing doesn't work - the virus travels easily farther than 6 feet through the air. Lockdowns don't work - but they bankrupt businesses, interrupt education, cause depression and suicide, etc. Vaccine passports are communist-style tyranny - there's nothing good about them. Revoke it all.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119846 2022/02/19 22:07:41 Anonymous Unmask the Teachers I have a grandchild entering kindergarten in the fall of 2022. They have an auditory processing delay and it is extremely important for them to be able to see their teacher forming their words and hearing them clearly. Unmask the teachers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119847 2022/02/19 22:12:24 Reading Specialist Look at the Data! Children learn how to read first by oral language. Those who think these children aren;t continuing to suffer from masks, have their eyes closed. Follow the science and examine the data!!! A minuscule death rate does not outweigh the negative emotional, psychological, and academic impacts we've placed on students. Do these same

people put their children in cars or buses everyday? Do they let them play on the playground? Teachers need to see their students and students need to see their teachers in order to learn to their full potential. Make the insanity stop!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119848 2022/02/19 22:22:06 Robert Kinsler If it's good enough for Sweden it's good enough for us, end mandates End mandates. Sweden, England, Ireland, Mexico, and, Denmark, and more countries aND states every day are ending theirs. If it's good enough for them, it;s good enough for us to HAVE CHOICR BACK. No one.fo forces others to NOT wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119849 2022/02/20 6:19:26 Anonymous Masks hinder society, not help Is COVID dangerous?(Look at CDC death and hospitalization rates which are extremely low). No, and the numbers are only waning

Even if COVID were dangerous enough, are masks effective? Based on data I think we can answer that they may have minor efficacy at stopping droplets, but not much. And that assumed ideal conditions (people wearing them properly, high quality fibers, etc), which rarely happens.

Even if COVID we;re dangerous enough and masks were effective, are the risks of mask wearing worth the purported benefits? Potential minor benefit to keep people well vs. psychological detriment, not seeing faces, breathing in CO2 for 8 hour shifts.Please get rid of masks for the good of society.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119850 2022/02/20 6:33:35 Tracher Follow the science From the beginning you have failed to follow basic shahcience. Masks for two years have been nothing but a fake prevention. We have suffered enough. Repeal all restrictions do to the pandemic.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119851 2022/02/20 7:30:20 Elizabeth Please give people a choice I can;t wait to watch the documentary that comes out about masking ;like the one on Boeing jets on how the government and agencies like yours that fraudulently hide and coverup to make people believe what you want them to. People should be given a choice to wear a mask. There are vaccines and people can isolate if needed. You are harming the next generation of children by keeping their teachers masked up. They can;t see their emotions or learn how to manipulate sounds because their teachers are behind a paper mask that doesn't even do anything!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119852 2022/02/20 8:29:00 Anonymous preserve the freedom of choice As a former Marine, having fought for our beautiful country, there are few things I value more than the rights we are granted through our Constitution. Removing ALL mask mandates is the only way to preserve our freedom to choose! For those that make a personal choice to continue to wear them- by all means- it is their choice to do so. I too should have a choice to fully breathe the fresh air of freedom I worked tirelessly to preserve!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119853 2022/02/20 8:41:22 Anonymous Teacher Rights As a second grade teacher, I talk nearly all day. I comfort, I engage with students, I reply, I instruct, I give directions;. all day, every day of the work week. I love my job, but wearing a mask is inhumane for educators. The requirement to wear a mask all day every day, leaving teachers in a position to rebreathe their own air, constantly- is much harder than you may think. In January, after returning from long break of not wearing a mask for an extended period, I was suffering from episodes of hyperventilation due to mask wearing. I literally had to see the school nurse on multiple occasions as a result of wearing a mask while teaching. It is fair and just- in alignment with our constitution- to allow personal choice. Please free us from the mask mandate!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119854 2022/02/20 8:56:34 Meg Teacher Gotta Teach Teachers job is to role model. If they are not free to show what freedom of choice looks like, how are our children going to learn. My children are young and need to see facial expressions for reassurance and emotional communication. Why give parents choices if the teachers are forced to model ;regulationand &lack of freedom? My students are afraid to take off their masks because they have been conditioned for years it;s not okay to take them off, even though we went to Richmond and stood on the steps with the Governor when he signed SB739. They need teachers smiling at them free to model the same freedom of choice.

masks can stay for those rhat want them. Vaccines can be available for those that need them. But the ability to dress for success with a smile on their face should also be available for ALL AMERICANS at this point. Available, not demanded. Live free or die trying! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119855 2022/02/20 8:57:53 Anonymous Give people a choice. Remove the mandates
Because of the high percentage of vaccinations and recent studies to show the ineffectiveness of masks, I think families should be given a choice about vaccines and masks. Remove the mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119856 2022/02/20 9:04:58 Wayne Painter 16VAC25-220 Thank you for placing reason, science and citizen empowerment back in to Virginia.The masks do not work. The vaccine is not a vaccine; they do not work or, at least after 90 days. This pandemic became all about politics and I applaud repealing the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. While the Biden administration continues to push authoritarian mandates for the sole purpose of gaining power and control, Virginia is now leading the way back to sanity.; I wholeheartedly support repealing this Administrative Code.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119857 2022/02/20 9:09:11 R. E. H. End this debacle NOW! COVID-19 can indeed be a danger to some individual - i.e. those with underlying conditions. Understanding ; acknowledging this is a given. As a nation we celebrate and value the principle of the American Spirit of self-determination.

There are many, many medical threats we face daily in this country, in this state. What in the world is the rationale, medical or otherwise, to issue draconian mandates for a virus circulating among us and ~1% of the population. Positive testing is one thing, maybe to be watched over, but certainly not to be used to infringe upon individual liberty.

Let the Commonwealth go back to work, and our citizens take the right steps on their own!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119858 2022/02/20 9:32:16 Joseph F laquinto I support ending the mask mandate

Although the mask mandate was well intended, its hasty adoption led to the inevitable unintended consequences of making hasty decisions about technically and medically complex matters without debate or experimentation.

If fact, this experiment in public health has yielded considerable evidence that the costs of a mask mandate in medical and social terms far Socially, this mandate has led to an unintended level of civil unrest between the believers and the skeptics / people medically unable to tolerate this airway obstruction. Again, this suggests that the mandate should be ended, but with an accompanying attempt by the government to assure those who are fearful of unmasked citizens.

Therefore, all mask mandates should be eliminated, and all private organizations encouraged if not required to end their mandates on their employees, customers and patients.

Thank you for your kind attention to my thoughts,

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119859 2022/02/20 9:48:49 Pamela Matassa Ending the mask mandates for teachers I support a teachers right to make that choice for themselves. I agree ALL mask mandates should end effective immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119860 2022/02/20 10:05:39 Jim Andrews Educator Masks The purpose of a mask is to provide what and to whom? This mandate to require educators to wear a mask should be an option not a requirement. There are plenty of real world experiences where educators in other jurisdictions do not wear masks and there are no adverse medical consequences. This is simply a waste of time, money and effort. If an educator wants to wear a mask fine. If not fine. Adults can make that decision for themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119861 2022/02/20 10:32:30 Anonymous Mask choice for teachers and staff There is no need to wait 30 days to make this decision. Studies have shown that the virus follows the same patterns whether people are masked or unmasked. Follow the science, examine the evidence, and then make the logical choice. Now that students and parents have a choice, it is imperative that masking be optional for all teachers and staff, effective immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

119862 2022/02/20 12:08:29 Elementary Teacher Time to move forward and unmask Teaching with a mask at this point is unnecessary. ;It is extremely uncomfortable. As an older teacher I find myself short of breath while reading or doing movement activi;I see more communication among them as well. ;It is time to move forward. ;Covid is here to stay. We need to build our immunities.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119863 2022/02/20 12:17:46 Jay Burkhart Remove the masks... Remove the masks in school for students and teachers. Anyone not feel safe then wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119864 2022/02/20 12:40:43 Helen Tower All mandates I am over all mandates. Ive been cleaning offices all through this and its not spread like was said. Its not airborne. Keep your immune system strong and your fine. Eat clean foods and educate yourself. Turn off main street media fear mongering. Its pathetic. And yes I got covid.i took Ivermectin the horse paste and it worked in 4 days.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119865 2022/02/20 12:41:29 Anonymous End Mandates--Ensure Right to Refuse I love my (adjunct/non-tenured) job teaching for a state university.; Due to the vax and mask mandates on campus, I have not been able to meet with my students outside of Zoom, or set foot in an office, or even meet my bosses and coworkers

While I have been able to keep my job due to a religious exemption, the mandates still in place on campus are oppressive. I dont recall Virginians acceding their God-given rights to man-made mandates, and it is time we were made whole.

Frankly, I would love to add my name and email address to this posting, but because of the prevailing political views on campus, I fear adverse reaction if my Conservative views and general opposition to campus policy were made public. Yet another right that has been compromised, especially at universities with a decided liberal party line.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not mandate vaccines.

119866 2022/02/20 12:54:41 Anonymous They deserve to choose! It's been 2 years. Please give teachers the option to unmask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119867 2022/02/20 13:49:22 TeacherMake masks optional Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now.As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can;t see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the

mask. I;m not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. ;It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119868 2022/02/20 14:49:18 John Owens It's time to make masks optional I am writing to show my opinion that the state employee mask mandate should be ended immediately

Perhaps the mask mandate made sense at the beginning of the pandemic, but now with vaccines available for all that want them, and improved I personally find wearing masks annoying and uncomfortable. I do not wear a mask anywhere in life but in meetings with other state employees at my job at VDOE. We are all vaccinated. We also know that the Omicron variant seems to infect people regardless of masks and vaccination.

Now is the point to accept that COVID will be with us forever, but it is manageable. It;s not an emergency. People should be free to wear masks if they want to wear one, but I shouldn;t be forced to continue to wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

119869 2022/02/20 14:53:29 CCPS parent Make masks optional for school admin/teachers
Everyone should have a choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119870 2022/02/20 15:16:27 Michele Rogers It's high time to let people measure their own risk
With Omicron tearing through and infecting most and everyone being exposed if not ill, it;s absolutely time for society to manage their own risk in whatever way they see fit without government interference.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119871 2022/02/20 15:17:18 C. Williams Restore our rights Please restore our rights. We should not be required to wear a mask or be vaccinated. It is ludicrous for students to have the choice to wear a mask or not but staff be required to wear them. This makes absolutely no sense. The positive case numbers have decreased in our school since student;s have stopped wearing masks. Please allow adults to choose for themselves weather or not to wear a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119872 2022/02/20 15:32:52 Rob Make masks optional. The decision should be an individual choice Over the past 2 years viruses have shown not to care about face coverings or vaccines. It;s time to make covering your face optional for all individual Virginians, regardless of whether that person is in a business or a work environment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119873 2022/02/20 15:51:30 Anonymous Unmask the truth Its time for people to have the freedom to chose and not be dictated by a government that is severely overreaching their Constitutional powers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119874 2022/02/20 15:56:45 Anonymous End the mandates; all of them Stop the tyranny.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not mandate vaccines.

119875 2022/02/20 15:58:56 Anonymous Please stop masking on airplanes Please stop masking on airplanes. Airplane air purifying systems do a superior job of protecting.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119876 2022/02/20 16:07:50 Eleina Espigh Stop Teacher Masking Teachers have been reaching out around our county and state as we have worked to remove masks for children. They want to be equally free. They can choose to mask. They can choose to vaccinate. They can choose their levels of risk. Lets let them make their own educated choices. Take of their masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119877 2022/02/20 16:29:20 Anonymous Unmask the teachers!! Please give teachers the choice to wear masks. It;s is vital for our littlest learners and ESL students to see our faces. We are dealing with a huge uptick of speech delays with these masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119878 2022/02/20 16:39:20 Sharlyne Fox Drop ALL Mandates No more mask and COVID-19 JAB for all schools (public/private), daycares, colleges, small and large businesses (LLC, private, corporations, etc).

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119879 2022/02/20 16:58:04 Mary Persinger Masks optional It should be personal choice whether or not a teacher or staff member wears a mask. Myself, I;m against masks. They have been proven to be ineffective. And you should;t be forced to take a vaccine to go maskless.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119880 2022/02/20 17:10:59 cburgess Mask mandates Please lift ALL mandates now! Protect our young children by letting them breathe freely again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119881 2022/02/20 17:18:31 TeacherDrop mask mandate Please drop the mask mandate. This is most unfair to make teachers sit masked in a room full of kids unmasked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119882 2022/02/20 18:40:59 TeacherLet Teachers Breathe! Teaching in front of a classroom in a mask is miserable. It;s challenging not only to breathe but to connect with the students. Make masks optional for all teachers and staff!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119883 2022/02/20 18:42:08 Karen Zirkle No teacher masks Please stop requiring teachers to wear masks in school. There are many students of all ages who need to be able to see our mouths when we speak. Our children have been through enough and too many have fallen behind. These are the ones who would benefit the most to have teacher with no mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119884 2022/02/20 18:58:44 Anonymoud NO MASK MANDATE IT IS TIME TO STOP THE MANDATE OF MASKS! CHILDREN ARE BEING HARMED. COVID 19 IS NOT A SEVERE THREAT TO THEM. PEOPLE ARE BEING PSYCHOLOGICALLY HARMED. THE MASKS DO NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119885 2022/02/20 20:09:27 TinaQue END ALL MANDATES End all mandates - emergencies don't last for 2+ years.. ENOUGH.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Virginia Standard was not based on a finding of an emergency situation, but of the virus presenting a grave danger to employees.

119886 2022/02/20 20:24:45 Anonymous End mask mandate The mask mandate is ineffective and causes a false sense of security. Masks and lockdowns have failed to protect the public. We need to get back to work in a normal manner.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

119887 2022/02/20 20:28:10 Anonymous End mandates for Virginians Enough is enough. Power has been abused to the point that it quit making any sense and businesses suffered. So have our kids.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119888 2022/02/20 20:31:08 Elizabeth End mandates! Stop forcing us to wear masks. It needs to be optional now. I work in a school where kids do not have to wear a mask. What good is it doing by making less than 10 percent of the building wear one?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119889 2022/02/20 20:34:32 Rhoda Rose End Dictatorship in America Covid has been a brutal hoax! Follow the money. End the mandates and be Americans again. Only the Biden regime and Big Pharma has prospered. Americans have suffered under this regime. Act as if you have some sense and can detect the BS!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119890 2022/02/20 20:34:36 Anonymous End ALL Mandates people breathe again. We need to get back to normal. People need to get back to work

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119891 2022/02/20 20:35:48 Anonymous End Mask mandate for employees End mask mandates for all employees

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119892 2022/02/20 20:36:51 Anonymous END ALL MANDATES

We are over all of the bullcrap mandates. Get rid of them ALL

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119893 2022/02/20 20:37:43 Anonymous Mandates

End all mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119894 2022/02/20 20:38:19 Philip Newton In favor of masking mandates We will get back to something approaching normal if we follow the regulations that have been established by the CDC and NIH. Dropping mask mandates established by private employers is purely a political move and has no basis in science.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119895 2022/02/20 20:40:56 Anonymous End all mandates! End all mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119896 2022/02/20 20:46:38 Amber Eades End all COVID mandates Virginia Please end all COVID mandates for Virginians

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119897 2022/02/20 20:51:01 S.Roberts End Mask Mandates wearing of a mask should be an individuals choice and use of common sense when in a large crowd or high risk infection area.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119898 2022/02/20 20:52:08 Steve Puckett Masks should be optional and personal preference. Allow teachers the choice. Masks should be a personal choice and optional. Teachers should have the choice as we work away from mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119899 2022/02/20 20:52:23 Travis Mullins Masks Should Be Optional Masks and vaccines should be optional for everyone. We should have the freedom to choose the best option based on individual circumstances

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119900 2022/02/20 20:54:00 BK End mandates for all It is time to end this debacle, we are free citizens, and can make decisions based on our health and well being.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119901 2022/02/20 20:58:04 Anonymous End COVID mandates Covid is never going away. Let everyone make their own decisions concerning their health.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119902 2022/02/20 21:04:04 D. L. Adams Revoke all mask mandates Revoke all mask mandates. Outside of the invocation of a State of Emergency, it is clearly unconstitutional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119903 2022/02/20 21:06:59 Anonymous No mask Take away mask mandates. Let the choice be up to each individual.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119904 2022/02/20 21:12:45 Anna Dean Covid mandatesEND the covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119905 2022/02/20 21:14:09 Anna Dean Covid mandatesEND COVID MANDATES!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119906 2022/02/20 21:18:48 5th grade teacher Please eliminate Covid restrictions Virginia kids deserve to be able to be a kid and not live in fear. ;Our older generation would rather be with their families rather than dying in isolation

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not apply to non-employee children

119907 2022/02/20 21:22:23 Kathy Anderson. School staff No more mask mandate! Please end the mask mandate. Enough is enough. Its been 2 years. Ive been vaccinated, plus, worn a mask every day for 2years and still had covid. They don;t work. It is affecting my breathing.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119908 2022/02/20 21:26:29 Wade Dickenson End all mandates

End all mandates now!!!!.This is ridiculous!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119909 2022/02/20 21:26:43 Cynthia Clark NO MORE COVID MANDATE Government, employers and the like should not be able to tell individuals that they must take a vaccine.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119910 2022/02/20 21:31:47 Loretta Mays End all COVID mandatesIt;s beyond time to lift all COVID mask and vaxx mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119911 2022/02/20 21:32:27 Anonymous End mask mandates End mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119912 2022/02/20 21:34:10 Richard Rose End COVID mandates End COVID mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119913 2022/02/20 21:34:55 Yvonne Rhodes No more masks! No government should be allowed to mandate the usage of masks, especially when its been proven that they are not effective.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119914 2022/02/20 21:37:09 Christopher Heath, BVPS END MASK MANDATES As a newer teacher, I have only been able to experience teaching in a mask. I am so tired of this pointless measure that is preventing me from doing my job to its full extent. Please remove all mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119915 2022/02/20 21:37:32 Ryan Long Optional masks Masks should be optional for everyone. Vaccinated or not.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119916 2022/02/20 21:40:03 Anonymous Please discontinue the pandemic response mandates for employers >As we enter our second year of mitigating COVID-19 and having the burden of mitigation enforcement mostly fall on employers in Virginia, it is time to repeal the DOLI pandemic response standard and allow businesses to decide for themselves how best to keep customers and employees safe and healthy. Many businesses in Virginia - small businesses especially - are still recovering from the economic impacts of COVID, and the additional burdens of reporting, monitoring, and constant changes to mask and vaccine guidance is causing that much additional stress on employers. As an HR professional, the burnout I feel from two years of rapidly changing rules, regulations, and keeping up with vaccine status and positive cases cannot be put into words. Add to that the constant friction between trying to abide by state mandates and customers/employees who refuse

on various grounds to wear masks, keep distance or be vaccinated - there are no words. Even with all of the protocols and protections we put in place at work - we still have at any given time 5% of our workforce out with COVID because they are exposed at home or in social situations. Employers cannot keep bearing the burden of preventing COVID spread when individuals choose the amount of risk they are willing to take both at work and at home. Please consider discontinuing these burdensome and ineffective employer mandates and allow employers to focus on the aspects of the workplace they can control.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119917 2022/02/20 21:44:30 Anonymous Remove all mask mandates and make requiring proof of vaccine illegal! Remove all mask mandates. Make asking for negative test or vaccine proof illegal for businesses and schools SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119918 2022/02/20 21:44:34 Samantha Allred End Covid restrictions My husband is a business owner. Covid restrictions and protocols have forced us to increase costs dramatically along with seeing fewer patients which decreases revenues. We are at a point where everyone age 5 and up can make an informed decision for themselves. Please end Covid restrictions, especially on business. Lets keep Virginias economy strong.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119919 2022/02/20 21:44:58 John McCormick COVID Mask Mandate End the mask mandate.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119920 2022/02/20 21:51:27 Anonymous Please end ALL mandates - both mask and vaccine mandates for EVERYONE! It is past time. Please end ALL mandates - both mask and vaccine mandates for EVERYONE! Everyone includes all workers, students, healthcare workers, state workers, general public, event attendees - EVERYONE! It is past time

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119921 2022/02/20 21:59:14 Donna Bullion Please remove all covid mandate restrictions Please remove all covid mandate restrictions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119922 2022/02/20 22:02:36 Christin Claybrook End All Covid Mandates The highly politicized issue of the Coronavirus has been used by VA's previous Governor Ralph Northam and his administration to divide the people of Virginia. From the beginning, we have been given ambiguous and error-ridden information that has preyed on the fears of everyone as a whole while robbing every single citizen the right to choose. Remove these unlawful, freedom-treading, oppressive mandates and let Virginians think and choose for themselves!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119923 2022/02/20 22:06:19 Joseph Creed Mandates in n my opinion are unconstitutional. Please revoke all mandates. The science doesn't support them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119924 2022/02/20 22:08:30 Terry Belisle End The Mask Mandate The mask mandates are unconstitutional, and must be repealed, otherwise, we are no better than a communist country

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

119925 2022/02/20 22:17:58 Anonymous ABOUT TIME TO CEASE AND DISEST Stop VA from catering to the agenda and coffers of Big Pharma!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119926 2022/02/20 22:18:16 Anonymous End all covid restrictions End all covid restrictions and mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119927 2022/02/20 22:23:12 Anonymous End all state workplace Covid restrictions You are not following the current science. We are all fed up and over all these Draconian restrictions. End all masking and distancing requirements in all state workplaces asap!!!!!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119928 2022/02/20 22:29:32 Kathy L Branson COVID-19 Mandates COVID-19 mandates in the workplace should be removed! All mandates should be ended!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119929 2022/02/20 22:34:01 Gidget Reed Mask mandates This needs to stop. Masks do not work they never had. This pandemic is over and we are tired of the continued narrative. No more covid restrictions. Its like beating a dead horse

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119930 2022/02/20 22:42:04 Anonymous Mask mandates for teachers need to END ASAP! Please end the mask mandates ASAP, students learn easier, quicker and more effective when they can see their teachers faces! Teachers are having a hard time already trying to teach their kids with their masks on and we can't do our jobs! For the sake of all children, please end these mask mandates NOW don't delay any longer please, we are already at risk with development skills for all children in America

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119931 2022/02/20 23:09:21 Crystal Baker End mask/vaccine mandates work as a Frontline Healthcare worker and surgical masks have not kept employees from contracting Covid. The only thing that has worked is N95 masks. Please put an end to forcing Americans to wear masks and/or be forced to take a vaccine for fear of being fired. Yes, there are exemptions that can be filed, but we are a free America who should have the choice to make for ourselves. Thank you for your consideration on this matter

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119932 2022/02/20 23:11:29 Tanya Berresford (Bristol VA Utilities, Bristol VA) Team Lead of Billing & Cash Receipts Please end all mask mandates. It is not healthy to wear a mask all the time, breathing in your own carbon dioxide. This is making people more sick. If people want to wear a mask, they can. But no one should be under a mandate. It's past time to end all COVID mandates. Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119933 2022/02/20 23:29:32 Anonymous End Mandates! End mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119934 2022/02/21 1:26:52 Jon Copley End all Mandates End all Mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119935 2022/02/21 3:29:31 Kevin W. Jerrell End covid mandates Stop government covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119936 2022/02/21 5:16:41 Anonymous End All Mandates We have worn masks for two years now, vaccines are available, but nothing has changed? Where is the science in that?? People should have a choice as to whether they want to wear masks and get a vaccine or not. We need to get back to normal, and that will be done by ending all COVID mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119937 2022/02/21 5:28:11 Danielle J Butler CDC Recommendations Why do we listen to the CDC Guidelines if we are not willing to follow them? These are trained doctors and medical personnel. I think recommendations from subject matter experts should be followed when done to save lives

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119938 2022/02/21 7:32:33 Anonymous Mask mandates End all Mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119939 2022/02/21 7:39:28 Noah Clark No mask no vaccine mandate It's been proven masks don't work. It's been proven you can still catch Covid even though you get vaccinated but it should be each person deciding for themselves to get the vaccine or to have their child vaccinated against a virus that has a survival rate of 98.2%

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119940 2022/02/21 8:22:04 Noah Smith End Mandates There should be an end to ALL COVID-19 related mandates, including mask and vaccine mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119941 2022/02/21 8:23:35 Anonymous Remove all Covid Mandates The effectiveness of masks has proven to be minimal at best and vaccines only benefit the individual receiving them. All forced measures regarding the prevention of Covid haven't worked and need to cease immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119942 2022/02/21 8:24:13 TeacherLiving normally with Covid I am a teacher and a parent of a student in Prince William County Schools. It has been inhumane to mask children and teachers at school. The masking and the unnecessary fear of Covid that has been instilled in our children, is criminal. Covid is a virus that has a 99.98% recovery rate and schools as well as the public need to be urged to live life as normal not in fear. There is no need for Covid mandates for the shot nor masking nor quarantine periods. It is time that move on and go back to living our lives normally. Please make Virginia free again!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119943 2022/02/21 8:46:13 Anonymous End this madness the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119944 2022/02/21 8:47:01 Sarah End the Mandate Please end the workplace mask mandate. Those who want to continue masking can do so, but those who want to remove their masks should have the option. If not now, when?!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119945 2022/02/21 8:47:03 Anonymous mSK REQUIREMENT
i believe that the deal to wear a mask or not as of today 2/21/2002 this deal should be up to the parents of the child. the parents should know what is best for each child the school should think about what is best for the child also but the parents should be first

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119946 2022/02/21 8:49:58 B. Sexton End the madness of mandates! I work with small children on a daily basis. The company I work for enforces masking on children 2 and up as well as staff, regardless of vaccination. These babies have gone 2 years without seeing emotions on our faces or seeing a smile from their teachers…two years of not learning CRITICAL social development skills. Enough is enough. Covid is here to stay. I am done with masks. The workplace is the ONLY place I wear one for fear of losing my job. It's time to live with this virus that has a 99.8% survival rate and move on with our lives!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119947 2022/02/21 8:53:23 Santana END MASK MANDATE!!! END ALL MANDATES!!
We have lived with this mess for 2 years and it is time to move on with our lives! Masks DONT work and if they did we wouldn't be spreading like we are. Let the people decide how they want to live their lives and stop controlling it. COVID is here to stay so let our bodies do what they were created to do and fight it off just like any other sickness

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119948 2022/02/21 8:53:39 Anonymous End all Mandates!
People are being treated like fools. Educate, don't mandate!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119949 2022/02/21 8:55:04 Steve Shumaker Taxes
Are taxes being cut

No response

119951 2022/02/21 8:57:22 ELAINE End all covid mandates
Please end all covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119952 2022/02/21 9:01:10 John Miller Masks Do Not Stop Viruses - End All Mask Mandates

Science never supported the use of masks to stop viruses. Over a dozen randomized Control Studies over the past 10+ years all showed no benefits to wearing a mask to prevent viruses. The most comprehensive study done by the Danes in 2020 showed no statistically significant differences between (surgically)masked and unmasked groups

Our government finally admitted cloth masks are a decoration. Surgical masks can filter out particles as small as 2 microns. That's effective for bacteria, but not for viruses (0.126 microns). Mask mandates did not prevent all the case surges we've seen over the past 2 years. Case surges were the same in states with and without mandates

It's been shown that masks reduce oxygen intake by over 15% and trap large particles like bacteria. We need a study to show the ill effects of reduced oxygen over time

Mask (and vaccine) mandates have no place in a free society

Many countries and U S states have ditched their mask mandates recently. It's time for Virginia to do the same

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119953 2022/02/21 9:04:22 Melissa R Remove all Covid Mandates

I support removing all Covid related mandates.
No more masks required, anywhere. No more vaccination requirements. No more proof of vaccination for events etc. Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

119954 2022/02/21 9:05:05 Emil Groth Remove all mask mandates

Remove all mask and political mandates related to the Wuhan flu debacle

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119955 2022/02/21 9:10:45 Jessica S. End all mask mandates

Please end all mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119956 2022/02/21 9:16:31 Chris Faraldi Empower Virginians - Repeal Overbearing Mandates

Good morning,

I write to you supporting the proposed February 16th actions taken by the Department of Labor and Industry's (DOLI) Safety and Health Codes Board, that repeal overbearing, cumbersome, restrictive, and mandatory regulations

As one representative of the Lynchburg community, I hear far too often how it is past time working Virginians no longer be under the yoke of unelected bureaucratic policies. These professional women and men, and the organizations they work for, must no longer have these policies dictate their operations. Instead, properly recognize the responsibility of an individual to make decisions on their own behalf

I wholeheartedly support the actions proposed on February 16th, and ask you to do the same

Best,

Chris Faraldi

Ward IV Representative

Lynchburg City Council

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119957 2022/02/21 9:18:52 Fotini Restore Personal Freedoms and Choice

<p style=text-align: left;>Please end unnecessarily extreme mandates of any kind on the American people. Help preserve our freedoms

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119958 2022/02/21 9:19:51 Burns Stop Teacher Mask Mandates

Let teachers teach without constraints of mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119959 2022/02/21 9:27:37 Anonymous Remove mask mandates

Remove mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119960 2022/02/21 9:29:10 Kim It's time...

We have complied for two years and we've seen that doing so has done more harm than good and has not decreased the spread or death rates from COVID, which did not warrant these measures to begin

with . It's time to let people go about their lives again, as normal as they possibly can after being traumatized and manipulated by fear mongering for two years. Start educating people on how to be healthy, bring back personal responsibility, and restore our basic human rights

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119961 2022/02/21 9:32:35 Susan W. We no longer have a pandemic Since Covid 19 has become endemic rather than pandemic, it is time for us all to back to our normal lives and stop living in fear. Virginians need to be able to have the freedom to decide what is best for their own health and families once again

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119962 2022/02/21 9:38:45 Daniel Mais Burn your masks People should not be forced to wear a mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119963 2022/02/21 9:38:54 Anonymous NO COVID MANDATES-LET STUDENTS SEE THEIR TEACHERS! STOP WITH THE MASK MANDATES AND COVID RULES FOR EMPLOYEES AND TEACHERS! RESCIND THIS RIDICULOUS ORDER!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119964 2022/02/21 9:39:17 Robert Talmage End state mandates It is overdue that state required mandates for Covid-19 be repealed. We the people of Virginia are well informed and able to make our own decisions without government mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119965 2022/02/21 10:05:10 Shannon Coppedge-Teacher End ALL Masking and Business Restrictions I implore you to lift the mask mandate that has been placed on us for so long. At this point, people have the tools to protect themselves through vaccination and FDA proven treatments for COVID-19. It is no longer necessary to place the burden of protection on the community. It is apparent that we will have to learn to coexist with COVID just as we do with other diseases. We have been denied individual freedoms and have watched our communities crippled by business closures. We have complied with masking, as directed by guidance from the CDC, and told how protective this was and then told that the masks that were supposed to save us were really not effective unless they were medical grade. The CDC has not given clear guidance and the data they use to support their stance is flawed and does not take into account numerous variables that must be considered in order to have reliable and valid data. As a teacher, my students have suffered under masking conditions. They have been restricted and denied valuable facets of their education. They have been unable to learn social cues from facial expressions and masks have denied them the ability to learn basic letter sounds. They become frustrated when you cannot understand what they are saying and when they cannot understand what I am saying. Masks have been lifted from the faces of our children, although I fear with long lasting damage, and it is time to lift the rest. It is the responsibility of each individual to take the steps, they feel is necessary, to keep themselves safe

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119966 2022/02/21 10:07:03 Anonymous End all mandates Please end all mandates. We the people have a right to choose what works best for us as individuals. I'm asking for full dropping of mask and vaccine mandates.
Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119967 2022/02/21 10:19:15 Tom McDonald communist china vrus mandates End all these mandates now and forever. It is up to each and everyone to make any decision regarding masks, vaccines and all other rules pertaining to these and any other so called pandemic, epidemic and any other demic bull. It makes me wonder about the letters dem found in said words

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119968 2022/02/21 10:22:07 Misc Time for Prudence Despite the crass manipulation of science for questionable (political and personal) motives, science can serve as a useful *guide* for policy. Take the science behind anti-smoking efforts as a good example. But if politicians use science as a true guide, then they will recognize that science changes, as it must. Otherwise, people will distrust science, as seems to increasingly be the case. Currently, science indicates that covid is waning and thus it is time to remove the onerous restrictions (bad science??) imposed by politicians. It is time for politicians and government employees to self-assess their motives as to why they imposed such draconian measures and penalties, at the expense of societal health, norms, and decorum. Anything learned? Protected freedom of choice (and speech) always trumps government mandates and over-reach. Repeal the COVID-19 restrictions and restore common sense and freedom of choice. That is what the majority of Virginians voted for

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119969 2022/02/21 10:24:39 Anonymous Remove mandates The only way to prevent or lessen the effects of Covid is crowd immunity. Remove mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119970 2022/02/21 10:28:36 Tereasa S Repeal ALL CoVid 19 mandates. Mandates have been harmful to our citizens, or economy and our freedom.
Repeal now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119971 2022/02/21 10:35:10 Mother of 3rd grader, healthcare worker Make optional, no mandates, FREEDOM of Choice Remove all mandates - folks have had the opportunity to be vaccinated if they so choose

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119972 2022/02/21 10:42:47 Jenni Dingus End mask mandate It is time to bring life back to normal and end the mask mandate. Please put a stop to having to work and do your job (that normally doesn't require a mask) with something covering your face all day

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119973 2022/02/21 10:47:52 Mom of 2 Mandates End all Covid mandates!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119974 2022/02/21 10:49:15 Jeffrey L. Zvengrowski No More Mandates! End all public health mandates, particularly those related to covid! The people can and should make their own medical decisions with doctors and governmental bodies merely providing advice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not have jurisdiction over public health measures, only workplace exposures to COVID-19.

119975 2022/02/21 11:25:28 TAMMY PICKUREL NO more mandates Its time to stop torturing our workers, set them free. They have been bound long enough. It should be their choice. Its over quit trying to keep the power you never should have had in the first place. Its OVER

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119976 2022/02/21 11:36:40 Kirk Barley Eliminate all COVID Regulations COVID-19 is endemic like the common cold or flu. Virginians are well enough educated to manage their own exposure and preventative care

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119977 2022/02/21 11:45:30 Sam Neese Ending mandates I strongly support ending the mandates so we can continue to be the

land of the "free" as it was intended to be

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119978 2022/02/21 11:56:11 Audrienne Welborn End Covid Regulations Please end all Covid Regulations. I have been following the numbers and news for two years now, we are in our 70's, have avoided contracting Covid, have been watching the numbers for two years, it is obvious we are on the downward trend. Our daughters are teachers, the impact on our children has been enormous, time to end them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119979 2022/02/21 12:13:20 Anonymous fully support ending this and other disease mandates
<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>There is no such thing as an emergency that lasts 2 years. A virus isn't a workplace issue, it is simply a reality of life and efforts to mitigate it on the back of businesses in the commonwealth is a fool's errand. This standard has never been effective, was poorly implemented, unenforceable, on shaky legal ground, and completely unnecessary

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>Like many small business owners and managers, early in 2020, I immersed myself in every piece of data I could to find out how to best make sure our business could continue to safely operate without risk to our 55 team members. Very quickly, it was obvious that the new virus circulating targeted people generally beyond working age (70 and older) and/or people who were overweight or had some other underlying health conditions. Generally healthy people in the cohort of employment age seemed safe from any serious issues including any hospitalization or death. Of the 13,518 confirmed deaths in VA as of reporting on 1/31/22, 81% of them were in people 70 or older (and VDH doesn't disclose if there were comorbidities). So, we're managing the entire state as if all citizens exist in that cohort even though that is nowhere near accurate. It has never made sense to me that businesses who had already been negatively impacted with revenue loss, capacity limits, etc would also be asked to bear the burden of mitigation for the most un-impacted segment of the population.

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>Even with this obvious early data, VA decided to implement standards that exceeded the already ever-changing guidance from public health officials at the federal level. Schools were impacted which impacted employers who had to make accommodations for their employees to care for children. VOSH came up with this ETS, which was confusing and cumbersome, not to mention expensive. No real instructions were given and still some guidelines remain ambiguous. Example, floor to ceiling barriers between workstations if less than 6' apart, but how wide do the barriers need to be? Could they be a shower curtain or did it need to be plexiglass? We made sure no meetings lasted longer than 10 minutes, masks required in the offices, reduced the amount of chairs and tables in our lunchrooms, etc. For that we impacted the spread of the virus in our workplace exactly 0%. We still had cases, lost time, a few folks (who had the above comorbidities) hospitalized, but fortunately no loss of life. I hear this same story from the scores of other small to medium sized businesses I interact with weekly

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>Fast forward to today. Across the country, even across the world, from the most stringent protocols to the most lax, the appearance of this virus is everywhere. We've had a year(2021) where after the availability of an injection and more and more interventions, more people have perished than before any of this was available. What is also now more known is that well over 99% of people who have or will encounter this pathogen have a positive outcome with no intervention at all.

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>It also seems simple logic should be allowed to apply although it seems that concept has been tossed aside in the name of science (which has also been tossed aside). If I'm an office manager in Virginia, and my group of 8 or 10 folks comes in to their separated/distanced spaces, mask all 8 or 9 or 10 hours, wipe down every surface, then all decide to hit happy hour at a bar down the street after work, unmasked, un-distanced, what good did the previous 8-10 hours of mitigation strategy do? What if they each, one night during the week, have friends or family over for dinner and a game night?

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>Tracing and reporting has now basically become just an act of checking a box. On Monday, Jan 31, we got a call from

VDH to let us know an employee had a positive test result. The employee asked that their name not be released. So, we asked the VDH rep what we were supposed to do with that information, they admitted they didn't know but were required to alert us.

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>

<p style=margin: 0in; line-height: 107%; font-size: 11pt; font-family: Calibri, sans-serif;>My guess is there was a desire to 'do something' when this standard was put out which got us to where we are today. That's honorable but it is misplaced in this case. Please rescind it in full.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

119980 2022/02/21 12:14:04 KH Masks for Teachers Please remove mask requirements for teachers and staff in all school settings

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119981 2022/02/21 12:17:11 Dara Hill End masks for teachers I'm a reading and writing teacher in a public middle school. Please allow me to take my mask off so I can be a better and more effective teacher!!
The masks are useless and hinder my ability to communicate effectively

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119982 2022/02/21 12:17:27 Anonymous Cdc recommendation suits their narrative and can't be trusted Initially the cdc recommended no masks, because it suited their needs. Then, cloth masks, because it suited their needs, then suddenly surgical masks, the n95. It was never beneficial to mask. If masks of any type really work, how can we still smell coffee, smoke, perfume etc through the masks? It's time to do away with the mask mandate for everyone, including medical offices. Vaccine is available. Do away with mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119983 2022/02/21 12:33:42 Anonymous End the mandates Please remove ALL mask and vaccine mandates ASAP

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119984 2022/02/21 12:36:42 Substitute Teacher/Licensed to Teach UNMASK TEACHERS There is NO credible proof to support logical unmasking of children and NOT the teachers staff and administrators as well. Stop injecting politics and start empowering critical thinking. I will not step inside any school with a mask on my face or where my colleagues must be masked. I have not been in a classroom since early 2020 and will not subscribe to this farce. UNMASK TEACHERS

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

119985 2022/02/21 12:47:22 Melanie T My students need to see my face! As a reading specialist who works with young students who are just beginning to read, it is essential that I be able to show them the shape of my mouth when I'm making various letter sounds. Wearing a mask makes it impossible for my students to see correct mouth positions for the letter sounds that I am teaching them. It also makes it difficult for all of my students to clearly hear me when I am instructing them, because wearing a mask muffles my voice.

As a parent I can choose whether masking is the best option for my school-age children. Just as my students and their families have been given the option to choose whether to wear a mask or not, I should be able to make the same choice for myself.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

119986 2022/02/21 13:10:52 Goose Creek Farm, LLC End mandates Covid 19 is a 1% vaccine resulting in 99.8 % of the subjects survive . This is not a Pandemic. Also masks are unhealthy because they increase blood pressure , inhibit Herd Immunity which results in more infections and Masks force

stale air back into the lungs which is unhealthy . The Amish communities did not lock down , did not wear masks , did not take the MNRA Vaccines . They had no deaths . Their infected people survived after 5 days at home . Now it is time to end the mandates and start living healthier. Better health , better business and a better economy in Virginia

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119987 2022/02/21 13:19:20 Verna Lamb Masks don't work You have been mandating masks and pushing vaccines and all that has happened is record numbers of absences of staff and students. You will have plenty of staff that will choose to wear a mask. Great for them. I choose to take care of my health through real food, exercise, reducing stress, hydration, and good sleep. That's what you should be mandating

Good day

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119988 2022/02/21 13:25:41 Glenn Randolph End all mask mandates If the mandates ever made sense, they no longer do. End this ridiculous farce

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119989 2022/02/21 13:32:11 Anonymous Unmask our school staff! With parents having the option to send their children to school masked or unmasked, please extend that same option to school personnel

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119991 2022/02/21 13:36:22 Malia King No masks for teachers Teachers are educated enough to make our own choices. We can make the correct choice for our own health. Teachers don't need to be told to wear a mask. We will do so if we feel it is necessary for our individual needs

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119992 2022/02/21 13:42:45 Anonymous Allow Employers to Make Decisions About Workplace
Allow Employers to Make Decisions About Workplace SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119993 2022/02/21 13:45:58 Sandra Esposito Masks on Teachers and others The masking policies are so illogical. No one need to be wearing a mask unless you simply want to signal that you are sick. It is a well established fact that these masks do prevent transmission of a tiny virus and they are not good for anyone's health. Simple biology states you are more susceptible to things because you create the perfect environment for all sorts of bacteria and things to grow in warm moist areas especially close to you skin, mouth, and nose. Masks are a great way to weaken you immune system. Let's look at how unsanitary any of them are because there is no way you can keep your hands off of them, readjustment and simply touching them for any substantial length of time. The also prevent easy communication between people. You are muffled behind a mask. Please remove masks in schools and other public buildings immediately!!!!!!! End the hypocrisy and the idiotic rules that are simply nonsensical. Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119994 2022/02/21 13:54:27 Mr. Phillips Masks should be a personal choice I will not judge someone who choses to wear a mask. Their choice does not infringe on me and my life, and it is none of my business why they choose to wear one. It would only make sense that if I choose to NOT wear a mask, my choice would be respected as well. This little theory of mine works for teachers AND students. Protect yourself with a mask if you choose to, or don't. While it may be wise for a teacher or students with multiple health problems to wear a mask, it makes little sense for a physically fit 35-year-old or healthy 6-year-old to be held to the same standard. The idea of one size fits all is an outdated theory in the classroom, and should certainly not apply to our current situation

Also, with student mask mandates coming to an end on March 1st, having one person masked (the teacher) among 20 unmasked individuals (the students), hardly seems to make sense. The only reason I can see for the continuation of teacher mask mandates is to keep the teachers safe. I do not feel that sacrificing personal choice for safety is a wise bet to place (it has historically worked out very badly for the little-guy). We are not doe-eyed sheep, we are adults and professionals who are capable of taking care of ourselves and making our own choices. Treating us as anything less is insulting

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119995 2022/02/21 13:56:55 Counseling Works, LLC Business DOLI Reporting Should you make any changes to the reporting of outbreak cases please amend the requirement but do not revoke. Being able to assist with containing outbreaks will help keep our communitie at a manageable level of safety if not help eradicate the problem lin our communities. The latter which seems most likely not doable

How else if not in business and school locations can the health dept receive outbreak information in a timely fashion

Please think about the welfare of the people and not the politics of the matter. Thank you for this opportunity to give input on this public safety matter

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

119996 2022/02/21 14:09:45 galen d masks I applaud lifting the restrictions on masking. Let the family leadership make that decision

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119997 2022/02/21 14:15:17 TIRED TEACHER END MASK MANDATES I am begging you to stop the mask mandate for teachers immediately. Please do not wait until after March 19th. This is madness. Our students deserve for their teachers to be mask free if they choose. I wish you could go into a school right now and ask students their thoughts on this. I can guarantee you they would tell you they want their teachers to have a choice just like they do. One said to me Teachers are the reason we are here at school, we learn from you. It makes no sense that you cannot go without a mask if you want to

We are losing more teachers daily. Please give us freedom

There is enough information in all of these comments so far to make a decision to drop this now instead of waiting another month

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

119998 2022/02/21 14:41:38 Anonymous END MASK MANDATES It is past time to remove this restrictive and ineffective mandate.
The efficacy of cloth and paper masks were never worth the mandate in the first place

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

119999 2022/02/21 14:41:47 Tired teacher Mask fatigue It is exhausting and adding to a depressive state of mind to have to cover half of my face every day walking into work

Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120000 2022/02/21 15:24:12 Annonamas End the Mask Mandate End the Mask Mandate for all State, Federal, and Private parties

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not have jurisdiction over federal government workplaces.

120001 2022/02/21 15:30:11 Michael Riley Mask mandate in workplace I would please like to have the mask mandate in the workplace to be removed so that mask would no longer be required

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120002 2022/02/21 15:43:55 Anonymous End all mandates! Please end all mandates in the workplace and in businesses!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120003 2022/02/21 15:49:36 Anonymous End the mandates!! Let the people choose It's long past the time when masking should have ended. No one should be forced to get a vaccine or to wear a mask!! It needs to be a personal choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain mask mandate.

120004 2022/02/21 16:35:01 Katrina Kish End Mask Mandate Please end the mask mandate for teachers. As we have allowed our parents to make decisions for our children, let adults make decisions for ourselves in our classrooms

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120005 2022/02/21 17:03:31 Mark Hine Remove the mask mandate for workers Please let us breathe! It never should have been imposed in the first place. Covid went where it wanted regardless of your silly masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120006 2022/02/21 17:07:30 anonymous Repeal Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's (DOLI) Safety and Health Codes for covid. It is my opinion that state enforced safety codes should be repealed. Not all businesses are the same, not all businesses need the same safety protocols. Each individual business should be able to utilize the knowledge of the past 2 years to implement protocols that best work for them, the community, their employees, and/or customers/clients

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120007 2022/02/21 17:07:54 Andrew Hicks End the masking of teachers, daycare workers End this ineffective measure, children need to serve the faces of teachers and daycare teachers to better learn language skills! It has been 2 years of bad policy and has caused long term harm to students

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120008 2022/02/21 17:08:35 Cathy Work End mask mandates for school staff Removing mask mandates for kids in school is a great first step but we must also remove mandates for school staff and visitors. The data has shown there is no difference in the spread of Covid in settings where mask mandates are in place versus those where there are no mandates. Also feel that mask mandates at our Universities needs to end immediately. Masks should be optional in every setting in my opinion and never mandated

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120009 2022/02/21 17:16:55 Sheryl Hicks End mask mandates End mask mandate for teachers/staff in schools/daycares

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120010 2022/02/21 17:30:41 Anonymous End Mandates End mandates for all!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120011 2022/02/21 17:37:11 Anonymous END ALL COVID PREVENTION MEASURES It's time to return to normal. It is time to end all mandates, all contact tracing, all quarantine guidelines. EVERYTHING relating to stopping the spread of COVID-19 needs to end. It should be treated like we treat a cold or flu. Stay home if you are sick, otherwise live your life

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120012 2022/02/21 17:37:42 Madison T End vaccine mandates for nurses, and everyone for that matter! Please end vaccine mandates for nurses. There is already a shortage of nursing staff and vaccine requirements have put even more strain on hospitals and nursing facilities. Allow us to have our freedom back!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120013 2022/02/21 17:46:14 CT End vaccine mandates Please end vaccine mandates, the push for the vaccine, and mask requirements. It is crazy how during this "pandemic" the NFL was still operating as normal. During those times most businesses who were not essential closed but the ABC store was working normal hours. People need to see how the media is attempting to push propaganda to the people, spreading a false narrative. During this "pandemic" people have been losing their first amendment right to speak their own opinions about Covid. Dr. Robert Malone has been shut down by the media yet he is one of the leading expert/ researcher behind MRNA vaccines. Please stop all this propaganda so people can move on with our lives and enjoy the freedoms this country was founded upon

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution only applies to government action to limit free speech.

120014 2022/02/21 17:51:16 S. WmSon No More Masks! Masks should be an individual choice regardless of vaccination status!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120015 2022/02/21 17:59:00 Beth Robertson DOLI REGULATIONS End Virginia DOLI regulations for employers related to COVID-19

Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120016 2022/02/21 17:59:25 TeacherRemove masks and all mandates Remove masked and all mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120017 2022/02/21 18:09:06 Anonymous TeacherTeacherSEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120018 2022/02/21 18:10:21 Anonymous NO MANDATES!!! Teachers shouldn't have to be forced to wear a mask!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120019 2022/02/21 18:33:05 K. Bowman Freedom of choice—this is still America End all mandates - from masking to vaccine requirements - including teachers, bus drivers, and ALL

healthcare workers. This virus is far enough along that we don't need to be babysat or told what to do—we know what the right choice is for us and our families

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120020 2022/02/21 18:39:04 Annette Pettyjohn End all mandates, including mandates for healthcare workers.

We should have a right to choose what we put in our bodies. This is especially true given the vaccine-related injuries that are coming from the Covid shots. Healthcare workers are no different. They should be able to choose whether or not they want the shots. Religious and medical exemptions should also be accepted

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120021 2022/02/21 18:43:04 Anonymous Mask
End mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120022 2022/02/21 18:44:07 Anonymous End mandate
End mask mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120023 2022/02/21 18:48:27 Claire End mask mandates
Please end all mask and vaccine mandates. They are an infringement on our constitutional rights. Masks have been proven not to work against any virus and studies are coming out that the vaccine and booster is lowering a person's immune system. This tyranny has to end!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120024 2022/02/21 18:48:47 Sandra Weigand Covid mandates
Please repeal Covid laws placed upon businesses in VA

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120025 2022/02/21 18:50:54 Jason Wells Repeal Mask Mandate
It is time to move Virginia Forward. Thus far, Va has done the right thing to give parents a voice to decide what's best for their child when it comes to mask wearing in public schools. We need to make the change for employees, adults, and school staff in the public work place. Adults need to have the autonomy to make their own decision. End ALL mask mandates for employers and employees immediately!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120026 2022/02/21 18:53:05 Greg King Stop regulations
People are fully capable of monitoring themselves. Masks are supposed to be worn in my work, most people don't. Those who do, have a right to do so if they feel that is what's best for them. Let people police themselves and their health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120027 2022/02/21 19:00:36 Susanne F Mandates
End ALL mandates. Optional masks per individual preference

Keep masks in medical settings

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120028 2022/02/21 19:05:51 Robert Pyle end mandates
It's time to move on and put an end to the Covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120029 2022/02/21 19:37:58 Melinda Misjuns, Kindergarten Teacher LCS Stop the Mask Mandate

Please lift the mask mandate. As a teacher, I have complied for two years. It's time to end the mandates and let us choose. ALL teachers have been given the opportunity to be fully vaccinated and boosted. We are all going about life unmasked outside of school. It is time to unmask our teachers and staff. ANYONE can continue wearing a mask if that is their preference, but we can't unmask until the ridiculous mandates are lifted

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120030 2022/02/21 19:42:15 Elementary Teacher End all masking mandates
All masking should be optional. There is not a single reason that school staff should still be mandated to mask when we can and do go everywhere else without a mask covering our faces. Should someone choose to mask, that is their right. It is also an individual's right to not wear a mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120031 2022/02/21 19:45:44 N Ward End all mandates
Please end all the mandates. Let people make their own decisions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120032 2022/02/21 19:53:40 Jeff Sellers Ending mandates
End all Covid related mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120033 2022/02/21 20:04:38 Erin Steenburgh End mask mandates
It is long past time to end mask mandates for all employees, especially teachers. Teachers, for any age student, rely heavily on facial expressions and tones of voice to effectively teach. With masks on teachers' faces, students cannot interpret either when their teacher is speaking, detracting from any given lesson. Permanently repeal all mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120034 2022/02/21 20:08:32 Malissa McConnell Ending Mask Mandates
I whole heartedly support ending the mask mandates! When you already have breathing problems, the mask makes it harder to breathe. With mask on, you are not breathing back in fresh air, you are breathing old air that is not good for your lungs. I honestly belief that wearing the mask is causing people to become sick who were otherwise healthy. I've been vaccinated and went 2 years before getting COVID and I honestly think that having to wear the mask more is what caused me to get COVID

END MASK WEARING MANDATES NOW!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120035 2022/02/21 20:45:16 SEK No masks
Masks are hot, binding, and useless. It has been proven that only N95 masks have significant effect. Guess what-no one is wearing them. Oh that's right-the kids aren't wearing them too. How awful that we get to see the kids breath while the teachers can't!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120036 2022/02/21 21:05:35 TeacherNo more masks

I am a language teacher. The mask mandate is preventing me from teaching effectively. Myself and the students are suffering from this

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120037 2022/02/21 21:11:39 Betty H. Stinnett end all mandates
we need no mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120038 2022/02/21 21:13:22 Anonymous End mandates for masks and vaccinations for everyone.
End vaccine AND mask mandates for everyone, including health care professionals. We have been
forced to be vaccinated to keep our jobs. Please. No more. Masks are taking such a toll on morale and
mental health. Please. No more masks. It's time. Don't let employers make the decision and force
employees to vaccinate and mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120039 2022/02/21 21:54:34 Irene Mandates End all Covid related mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120040 2022/02/21 22:28:52 KW for medical freedom End all Covid related mandates End all
Covid related mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120041 2022/02/21 22:40:49 Tracy Hundley End all mandates Now Accomplish by education that which should be done. Mandates forcing vaccine or testing or masking are unjustifiable

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120042 2022/02/21 22:49:24 Kerry McClure Mandates

The handling of the pandemic has been based on figures the number of cases, deaths that were miscalculated. After 2 years the data shows that those figures were much higher than actual causes of illness and death

The masks has harmed young children more than any other age group. The CDC and FDA rushed to conclusions with emergency use of vaccines that have not be properly tested. The truth may never been known yet the next 10 years will start to display the larger than Covid 19 health problems of mask mandates and vaccines

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

From <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2022/jan/21/instagram-posts/covid-19-death-toll-has-not-been-overcounted/>:

385,460 people died from COVID-19 in 2020 and 452,707 in 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Claims that the figures are inflated by counting those who died with, not from COVID-19 are premised on false assertions. And the post's math also depends on a false claim that 75% of COVID-19 deaths occurred in people with four or more comorbidities.

There is no scientific basis for excluding from the death count COVID-19 deaths that occurred in nursing homes. Though the residents are an already-vulnerable population, studies showed that their risk of dying increased during the pandemic.

Research shows overall deaths associated with COVID-19 have been undercounted, not overcounted, in the U.S. since the start of the pandemic.

120043 2022/02/21 23:49:31 Anonymous End All Mandates

Never should an individual or private or public spaces be subjected to any mandates when it comes to freedom to choose, work, play, pray, shop, eat, learn, entertain, visit, travel, exercise, or simply live the God given lives to the fullest that we have been gifted. These essentials are human needs that feed our ability to give sustenance to our mind, body and spirit. No more COVID or medical mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120044 2022/02/22 3:36:46 Sharon Ramsey END ALL MANDATES!!
End all MANDATES!!! GET BACK TO NORMAL!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120045 2022/02/22 5:13:04 Southwest Virginia End All Mandates
End all mandates. It should be everyone's choice on shots or mask or testing

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120046 2022/02/22 5:39:47 Concerned Virginian End all mandates in Virginia

Please end all mask mandates in Virginia. The science has been proven time and time again that masks and vaccines do not stop the spread or rapid mutation of these corona viruses. These mandates are hurting our children and our adults. It is time for these mandates to be ended in our commonwealth. If not, we will see that the Youngkin administration is held accountable and WILL NOT EVER hold a second term in VA

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Virginia Governor's cannot run for office in consecutive terms.

120047 2022/02/22 5:55:59 Cindy End all COVID mandates End all COVID mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120048 2022/02/22 7:01:41 Ben Dishman, Dishman Fabrications LLC Covid Regulations Good morning,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the subject of Covid Regulations. Understand the need in the beginning to implement measures to protect our citizens against an unknown virus from China but now we know that it is no more potent than the seasonal cold or flu for most except for those in poor physical condition or other underlying health issues. Time for the overburdensome and unconstitutional mandates and restrictions to end period. These were all instituted by those who seek simply to have power over the people and have done little if anything to prevent additional harm to anyone. The masks and disruptive schedule of the schools have wreaked havoc on our kids who are already burdened by our failing schools in this state. Our kids are the least susceptible to the Chinese Communist Party Virus and therefore should be back in schools mask free and not required to have the vaccine that we have no idea of the true ingredients or the potential long term effects. In November I believe we the people of Virginia decided that this be the case going forward in the election of the new Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and new House of Delegates members. Time to follow suit

Small businesses in this country and in this state have taken a beating thanks to these regulations and mandates. The deficit inflating spending over this overblown cold virus has put our country in worse condition as the economy is sputtering along with prices for everything skyrocketing outpacing the gains in wages for employees. Small businesses that were already just breaking even are gone especially restaurants as they have the steepest hill to climb to make money. The requirements in this arena during this pandemic have been blatantly ignorant and have done nothing but render losses to these places or close them down while big box stores, liquor stores, and other essential businesses were permitted to continue operating. Gyms, churches, and other places that actually improve people's well being were shut down plus the unwarranted paranoia of going to a hospital or doctor's office has caused and increase in preventable disease or conditions to rise. Please tell me again why the restrictions should continue

Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120049 2022/02/22 7:35:27 Rodney Chrisman End All COVID Restrictions I am writing to voice my support for the abolition of all COVID-19 workplace restrictions.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120050 2022/02/22 7:36:04 April Swaim End Covid mandates End Covid mandates in the workplace

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120051 2022/02/22 8:02:42 KATHY H. COVID MASK MANDATES SINCE THE CDC CAN'T COME CLEAN ON THE DATA..... WHAT ARE WE DOING? MASKS DON'T STOP THE VIRUS. STOP THE OPPRESSION OF MASKS

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120052 2022/02/22 8:06:57 Kathryn B End ALL COVID mandates End all COVID mandates, guidelines, and restrictions for all VA citizens. End mandates for all employees including teachers and healthcare workers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120053 2022/02/22 8:17:49 Burke Wills End mask mandates I am a teacher for Richmond Public Schools and I am 100% for ending these ridiculous mandates. Take off the masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120054 2022/02/22 8:42:56 Katie End all Covid mandates End all Covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120055 2022/02/22 8:44:16 Randy Atkins Mask mandate. It is past time to end the mask mandate and let citizens of a free nation take personal responsibility for their health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120056 2022/02/22 9:14:01 Tired teacher Fatigued End mask mandates

Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120057 2022/02/22 9:20:36 Disgruntled Virginian Useless and outdated mandates for teachers and ALL employees It is time to rescind ALL of the useless and outdated mandates/standards as soon as possible because:

70,000+ people can attend a sporting event.

performers can sing maskless at these sporting events but the back-up singer/musicians (which are children) have to be masked.

celebrities can mingle maskless with NO distancing or plexiglass partitions BUT all the staff and assistants have to be masked and practice distancing.

VDOLI enforced these overreaching mandates and standards immediately, with the implementation the very next day and yet, here we are having to BEG for a month for them to be rescinded.

the blatant hypocrisy of the rules for thee but not for me policy is quite literally blowing up in people's faces, such as the DC Mayor, New Orleans Mayor, LA Mayor, CA Governor, failed politician Stacy Abrams, birthday boy Barack Obama and EVEN OUR VERY OWN Ralph Northam who paraded around maskless in Virginia Beach when masks were required I can decide for myself if I need to wear a mask while teaching. I can make the educated choice to protect myself when the need arises, which is most definitely not now and finally but most likely the most important, it is no longer anywhere near an emergency (if it actually ever was...) and certain people are wanting to hold onto the needless fear and give up their freedoms which I will not allow for myself.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120058 2022/02/22 9:29:23 Chris Dr Victor's statement

Dr. Victor should go practice in Cuba where the government can take away someone's freedom to breathe. That little cloth mask does not stop covid and offers very little protection. Florida is doing great without masks, and has been for sometime. If what the good Doctor says is true, Florida would be 80% infected and travel would have been suspended. Georgia schools have gone maskless and have not seen higher than normal transmission rates. This issue is about having the authority to cover and block someone's airway. Their right to breathe fresh air and the right to refuse medical treatment. When you tell someone to apply a band aid or wear a mask for their health and you are a doctor or Government official, you are offering medical advice, Advice in which Americans have always had the right to refuse

Our county has fought against this type of Government overreach since it's inception, we need our teachers back and we need them to be comfortable so that they can be productive

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

As of March 8, 2022:

Georgia has experienced 337 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 15th highest in the country.

Florida has experienced 331 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 17th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 222 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 37th highest in the country. Virginia's COVID-19 related death rate is 34.1% and 32.9% lower than Georgia and Florida respectively.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109011/coronavirus-covid19-death-rates-us-by-state/>

As of March 7, 2022:

Florida has experienced 27,225 COVID-19 related cases per 100,000, 10th highest in the country.

Georgia has experienced 23,267 COVID-19 related cases per 100,000, 34th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 19,282 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 44th highest in the country. Virginia's COVID-19 related case rate is 17.1% and 29.2% lower than Georgia and Florida respectively.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

120059 2022/02/22 9:39:21 MBL Suggestion for Guidance document - Remove all training requirements If DOLI and the SHCB is going to revoke the standard for COVID-19 then it should truly

be revoked and the emphasis placed on following CDC guidance. Even the guidance document that is in draft form has more unreasonable requirements that cause undue burden on employers.

Please consider removing the training element from the Guidance document. Employers have been expected to complete COVID training since June of 2020. Employers have had several trainings and several revisions of the trainings throughout the 2 years. Why do we need another training for COVID for employees, everyone should be aware at this point on how covid spreads and what its symptoms are and how to best protect yourself. This information has been relayed in so many ways and is very well known and another training does not serve to get employees to buy in to training in general as it keeps reiterating what is already well known.

This guidance document also stipulates training in policies and procedures for contractors and others that may visit your site or work onsite. This is unreasonable as they should be providing their own training and education to their employees. This should not fall on the Employer who is hiring the contractor. I can understand providing them with your company's policies and procedures on combating Covid-19, but to expect that employers provide them with actual training is not a feasible recommendation.

As long as the Employer has an IDPRP in place and has clearly outlined and defined their policies and procedures there should be no need for further training. COVID precautions are easy to take, requiring little more than common sense or your own feeling of self-worth to protect yourself and others.

Training employees is easy if your business is small and you only have a limited number of employees, however, as the size of the companies increase, training for the masses is more and more difficult to arrange and get into compliance with. Constantly (every 6 months since June) we are asking employees to retake a training that contains a majority of the same information that they have had in previous trainings it is redundant, duplicative, not cost effective and certainly places an undue burden on Employers in the Commonwealth.

The training created (at least at our company) averaged an hour of online training to meet the requirements of the standard. With about 15k employees at an hour per employee, per revision of the standard that required us to provide at the least 75k hours of training (estimating 5 revisions of the standard). This type of large scope effort was not included in any of the feasibility studies that were provided to DOLI. That estimate was based on smaller size employers in the commonwealth.

It is for that reason that I emphasize the need to strike any training requirement from any guidance document issued by VOSH as it relates to COVID-19. The Department has posted an updated Guidance Document at: https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DOLI-Guidance-for-Employers-to-Mitigate-the-Risk-of-COVID-19-to-Workers-03.01.2022_FINAL.pdf

120060 2022/02/22 9:43:03 Patricia End all the mandates, we need our freedom back End all of the covid mandates, we need our freedom to decide for ourselves

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120061 2022/02/22 9:46:27 Anonymous End all Masking/Covid Mitigations
It's been 2 years. Our kids are mask optional our teachers need to be too. Many states are thriving around the country without Covid restrictions. We need to remove all Covid restrictions so the VA Economy, which heavily depends on Tourism, can come roaring back

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120062 2022/02/22 10:01:12 A Public School Teacher Please let us remove the masks!
I simply don't think that loosely worn masks on vaccinated kids make that much positive difference, but I deeply regret that my students cannot see me smile at them - particularly the ones with autism and emotional issues. I don't think it's worth it

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120063 2022/02/22 10:34:34 Rretta business mask mandates
Enough is enough!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120064 2022/02/22 11:22:28 Lisa Watson Remove Mask Mandates
Remove mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120065 2022/02/22 11:34:18 Tyler T. Stop Masking Teachers
As a student I believe that teachers and all other employees should be aloud to make there own decisions in regards to healthcare and health recommendations. Now that students no longer can be forced to wear a mask teachers also should have that ability

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120066 2022/02/22 12:28:38 Eric W Marx End ALL Mandates!

Follow the REAL science. Masks don't work. COVID is no worse than the flu. Most people have some level of immunity. Continue to allow those who are scared to wear a mask if they want, but don't require a mask or vaccination

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120067 2022/02/22 13:09:06 Shannon End Mask Mandates

I am for ending all mask mandates. People are tired of wearing them and most that I see wearing them are wearing them incorrectly anyway

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120068 2022/02/22 13:15:17 Anonymous Mandates

End all COVID mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120069 2022/02/22 14:48:20 Enough is enough Enough with the masks

As a teacher in this county, in particular, a sped specialist that requires that my mouth be seen….it's absolutely egregious that I'm still wearing a mask considering I'm vaccinated!!! You all need to do better this is enough already

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120070 2022/02/22 14:52:27 Anonymous Remove masks everywhere, including medical offices. Medical offices have been forced into the difficult situation of being the enforcers of a mask mandate. Individuals who are not required to wear a mask anywhere else are becoming angry and aggressive when they have to wear one in a physicians office. All of the medical office staff and all the patients of that office can gather without a mask in a store, restaurant etc, so why put employees of a medical office in this potentially dangerous situation? Eliminate the mask mandate and the vaccine mandate for everyone , including medical offices

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120072 2022/02/22 15:09:51 Peter Ramsey End all mandates
I don't want government in private business but can anything be done about private schools who are not subject to SB739?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120073 2022/02/22 15:34:58 Leah Time to END MANDATES
Government overreach is at an all time high. Do what's right, end mandates which clearly violate our bodily autonomy and therefore our individual freedoms

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120074 2022/02/22 15:45:52 Myra Flint Mask option for Educators
If the original goal was to protect the children and now they are fine to opt out of the mandate, then why can't their educators? As an SLP, I know the importance of clear well-articulated, intelligible speech to our co-workers, parents, and of course to our students. I also have worked with students with hearing impairments who need to read the lip movements of the speaker and the visually-impaired who depend on that clear articulation of spoken speech to better understand a lesson or a directive. My students with autism already have facial blindness, so now all adults in the room look the same. How can educators teach all children and especially those with disabilities with cloth obstructions on their faces?

I appreciate the initial days when we were unaware of the dangers and masking up was the push to keep 'everyone safe', but we now know the masks do not work anymore than the multiple

vaccines do and continuing with this farce serves no purpose. There will always be people who wish to mask-up then not, but for those of us who understand the importance of *real* face-to-face teaching, want the opportunity to opt out in order to work, speak, and educate as we did before

Educators are leaving our school division at a rampant speed and I firmly believe providing an option to wear a mask or not, should be extended to everyone in a school building/division. I am unaware of the rationale for not providing this option. We were told this falls within the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry. Sounds like a power grab to me; we are educators

Why can't we be provided the same option as our students? How can we be effective communicators and educators for our students wearing these useless pieces of cloth? They serve no purpose but to hinder our ability to do our jobs-to the best of our ability

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120075 2022/02/22 16:03:03 Tracy A Zeke Anderson End All Mandates , trust the people
It's time elected officials listen to and trust those who elected them. The citizens of this state are smart enough and educated enough to use precautions when necessary, we do not need the government telling us to cover our mouth when we sneeze. Stop the mandates and open the state back up fully

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120076 2022/02/22 16:07:26 Anonymous Mask Optional
Make masks optional for teachers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120077 2022/02/22 16:15:39 Sabrina Abbott End mask mandates
I support removing all emergency Covid-related regulations from the workplace, including hospitals and Doctors offices. There is little to no evidence that masks reduce the spread of Covid, and cloth masks dont work at all. It's important for people to be able to see faces again

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120078 2022/02/22 16:45:42 Anonymous Remove Masks From Teachers and Staff
Please remove all masking of teachers and staff

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120079 2022/02/22 16:55:33 Anonymous Masks are a valuable public health mitigation tool
Until all Virginia communities have reached a much higher vaccination rate and community spread is below 5% with hospitalizations declining, masks remain as a valuable public health mitigation tool to slow/prevent the spread of illness. Too many communities are not vaccinated. Too many communities have a high rate of COVID spread. Our hospitals are still stretched too thin caring for COVID positive patients

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120080 2022/02/22 17:22:50 Anonymous End all mandates
It is way past time to remove all mandates! All people have the right to choose what to do for themselves. The cloth masks everyone wear do nothing to stop the spread. If you feel safer with one on go ahead and wear one but people who choose not to should have the choice to do what they want as well. Children have suffered by not being able to see their teachers faces. It's time. Remove the masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120081 2022/02/22 18:28:42 Kath Masks should be optional for all
Masks should be optional for all

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120082 2022/02/22 18:45:18 Anonymous Why wait until 3/19/22- END MASKS FOR TEACHERS NOW

Just a quick glance at these comments proves people DO NOT want masks or mandates - PLEASE end this window and stop making our teachers wait - END MASKS NOW

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120083 2022/02/22 19:30:35 Wanda Pinion No One should

I believe it should be left up to the individual. I think most people are intelligent enough to know when to have caution

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120084 2022/02/22 19:41:21 Brenda S Neese the Mandates

Remove all mandates. I feel they were placed on us against our legal rights.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120085 2022/02/22 19:54:58 Liz O End mask mandates

As a teacher with 1100 students in school, I am firmly in agreement with those who are ready to end mask mandates. Those who feel safer with masks should be able to wear them. Those who feel safe without them should be able to leave them off. We all know our risk level. The children need to be able to see us as we speak. It is not conducive to their mental wellbeing to have all these masked adults with cloth masks that are not proven to prevent the spread of Covid. It's time to breathe and live again. Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120086 2022/02/22 20:02:35 RP Stop the mandates

The only reason things are mandate is to exert power over the people. It is ridiculous that we have been made to wear a paper covering over our noses and mouths that stop nothing. Do you think that a chain link fence in your yard keeps out bugs? It doesn't! Our children are being forced to wear masks that stop nothing but being able to see each other's smiles and cause their speech to be adversely affected. We need to take our country back and stop the silliness!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120087 2022/02/22 20:29:03 Joe Cousineau End ALL mask mandates
End All mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120088 2022/02/22 20:31:25 Cecil Waddell Mask Mandate
Put a end to all covid mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120089 2022/02/22 20:35:07 Courtney Davis Stop covid/mask mandates
Stop covid/mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120090 2022/02/22 20:39:30 Cheryl Cousineau NO MORE MASK
Stop mask mandates for all employers, employees, staff, students, EVERYONE!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120091 2022/02/22 20:53:09 KP Free will, Pro Choice

There is an abundance of information readily available for individuals to make a choice on masking or not. I believe we should allow people to make the choice for themselves. This country's foundation is freedom and it's time to return to that.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120092 2022/02/22 21:05:38 Anonymous End vaccine and mask mandate

Vaccines are no longer reducing, nor have they ever prevented the spread of infection. Stop requiring a vaccine that is not beneficial to the public both for businesses or healthcare workers. mRNA technology vaccines are too experimental and we do not know long term effects. Why require these for the staff who will care for the sick? you may be causing more sickness to harm people other than COVID killing them. No person should be forced to take a vaccine without long term research. This is cruel and inhumane. You will take the livelihood of Americans who actually pay taxes by forcing them to lose their jobs. Force the manufacturers to go back to the drawing board and make a normal old fashioned vaccine that works like the others throughout history. Not a vaccine for mere profit

Masks are doing more mental damage than good to people. Hiding the face sends messages of submission and low self esteem for people. Suicides rates have increased doing more deaths than COVID. If it is truly about saving lives, get rid of mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not have a vaccine mandate.

120093 2022/02/22 22:04:41 George T. End teacher/staff mask mandates

It's time to end these mandates and allow teachers to make their own choices. Teachers should be allowed to do their jobs in the way that they've done them successfully over the years. Allow them to teach our children correctly!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120094 2022/02/22 22:06:15 Parent No more Mask
Our kids have had enough. NO MORE MASK

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120095 2022/02/22 23:28:58 SD MASK MANDATE
PEOPLE DESERVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS.THATS FREEDOM

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120097 2022/02/23 1:39:59 Kelly Jones End all mandates
End all mandates related to covid

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120098 2022/02/23 4:40:13 Anonymous End the mandate
End the mandate! Get rid of the face diapers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120099 2022/02/23 7:09:01 Anonymous End mask mandates.
To whom it may concern,

It is well documented that mask do not work to prevent the spreading of covid-19. To continue to force people to wear mask is irresponsible and has wide spread emotional and physical harm to adults and children. As students have the right to choose so should every employee what is best for themselves.

Stay in your lane and rescind this mandate!!! There will be repercussions for the decisions made that very clearly show you are not following the science. The people will speak out on Election Day

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120101 2022/02/23 8:14:08 Anonymous Please end Masking for teachers and staff
At this time I do not understand why teachers are required to still mask when our students are not. Most of us are vaccinated and boosted. In addition as a KG teacher it is very hard for children to learn correct sounds, blend words, etc. without seeing my face. They cannot learn to read social cues from facial expressions. As a result we are seeing more social issues, especially between kids, because they don't know how to read social cues. Please consider removing the mask mandate immediately. It is outdated and no longer necessary. Any teachers or other adults that WANT to wear masks are certainly welcome to. But those of us that don't want to, should be allowed to make that choice. thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120103 2022/02/23 8:27:06 Arnold DeWald Vaccine Mandates should be lifted
Education is key. Forcing someone to become a test subject is for new substance that could cause more harm than good is unethical and unconstitutional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120104 2022/02/23 8:30:54 Anonymous End Masking for Early Childhood Educators
Good morning,
I am an administrator at a preschool in Richmond that serves 185 students. I'm thrilled with the governor's decision to make student masking a parental choice issue. Now it is time to make faculty masking a personal choice issue.
Our staff have worked throughout the entire course of this pandemic, barring the initial two week shutdown. Upon returning, there was no vaccine, no mask mandate, and not very much information about whether it was safe to return. Our educators showed up anyway, resumed their duties despite the risk, and continued loving the children they served. When the mask mandate began in all schools, I immediately observed a change in the quality of interactions staff had with the students. Children that once smiled at me in the hallway and greeted me by name seemed to no longer recognize me and had a hard time hearing me. Early childhood curriculum before this

pandemic always included teaching children to interpret facial expressions to aid in their growing understanding of others' emotions. Now we are told that children don't need to see our faces to grow and mature. This is wrong; it has been wrong since the beginning of the mask mandate. The scientific evidence has made it clear from the beginning that children are not at serious risk of harm from Covid-19. Experts across the political spectrum are now acknowledging that cloth masks are ineffective against the latest variants. It is time to stop sacrificing what is best for the children's development and emotional well-being for the peace of mind of the adults. The children deserve better

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120105 2022/02/23 8:51:51 Anonymous Mask Mandate NOW

it is a disservice to our community to end mask mandates in the workplace. I don't understand how my work email can go from the meeting found there is no risk for employees in the workplace anymore to 95% of VA is still considered high transmission. do you hear yourselves? I am not interested in getting a life-threatening illness for a job that won't give me health insurance or even allow me to work full-time

It is embarrassing to me to see so many grown adults begging to lift the mask mandate just because they're tired of wearing them. Hundreds of thousands of people are dead in this country ALONE. Hospitals are overflowing and kids are permanently stunted because of this selfish mindset. A mask is no different than wearing gloves to be sanitary. Is it more comfortable to not wear sweaty, sticky, latex gloves? yes, but it's better to be uncomfortable than to make someone else sick. If we had kept the mask mandate, transmission wouldn't be higher than it was when this all started

I have seen so many people buy into the dangerous mindset that if we stop wearing masks, the virus will pass over all of us and it will finally be over. Wrong. Most people have had it at this point and it's still evolving, not disappearing. The facts are right in front of us, I truly don't know why so many people are refusing to believe them. The politicians don't care if we all get sick, they have the best health insurance money can buy, but for many of us, getting severely sick would life-ruining. My mother is diabetic and I work with kids every day. I don't want to be responsible for them getting sick. We still don't know the full-scale effects of having COVID, but it's clearly affecting people long-term. I am not interested in getting a lifelong illness at 24 because some bored, wealthy people don't think it's a big deal. Are you all going to pay for my mom's hospital bills? For mine? No. I've even seen moms online saying they're intentionally getting their children sick with it. What kind of person does that? I beg all of you to try having a little empathy for people with less fortune than you

Mandate masks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11954

120106 2022/02/23 9:34:56 John Edwards End all mandates NO Mask Mandates
Please end all mandates as regarding masks. They are not effective. They have become a joke, and casued real division in the population, my 88 year old father in law will not go to a doctor due to mask mandates. This is unacceptable

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120107 2022/02/23 9:59:50 Anonymous End masks
END MASK REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120108 2022/02/23 10:20:18 Anonymous End masks for teachers
It is time to end the mask mandate for teachers. It is not logical for a teacher to be in a room with 25 students (none of which are wearing a mask) but the teacher does have to wear a mask. Is the one person (the teacher) out of 26 total people in the room really going to make a difference if the other 25 people are not wearing a mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120109 2022/02/23 10:26:18 L Stop trying to kill teachers
People are continually dying. There have been extreme increases in teachers getting covid, hence why the substitute teacher shortage is a huge issue. Schools are imploding as we speak. Morale is lower than it's ever been and 90% of teachers are ready to quit. Dropping the mask mandate is going to lead to more quitting and more dying. If you don't want to homeschool your children the way you had to in 2020 then keep the masks

I would sooner quit than allow you all to force me to work until I catch it and die

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11954

120110 2022/02/23 10:30:21 Bonnie Webb Please stop all mask mandates, now. This is America!!Thank you
This is still America, please stop all mask mandates now. Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120111 2022/02/23 11:04:21 Garrett Hass End all Mandates
Mandates are tyrannical, unamerican, and must end now. The power to choose whether we cover our face, or seek medical treatment is something for an individual to decide for themselves. This decision should be made without coercion from any employer, business, or governing body. The US constitution clearly defines the role of government in America, and nowhere does it mention the power to coerce or discriminate against citizens for personal medical decisions. Mandates have already cost people their jobs, lively hoods, and untold amounts of stress. Mandates have destroyed lives. One more day with any mandates in place, is one too many. Do the right thing, restore freedom

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120113 2022/02/23 11:53:44 Sam Mask
Back to normal. Let freedom of choice be the rule

no mask no mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120114 2022/02/23 12:33:14 Moira C. Free agency for teachers and faculty
Teachers and faculty are adults who are capable of choosing what mitigation strategies they would like to use to avoid sickness. There have now been numerous studies that have indicated that masking did nothing to stop the spread of Covid since it is a respiratory disease that is now endemic. I'm sure the students would love to see their teacher's faces for the first time, too. Give them the choice to make their own health decisions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120115 2022/02/23 13:10:35 Kerry Puccio LET US BREATHE

Please remove the mask requirement for the teachers and staff in Prince William County

Fauquier County and Loudoun County both have masks optional for their students and staff- why is Prince William still controlling us??

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120116 2022/02/23 13:14:30 Kathy Anderson No more masks

No more masks in schools for staff too not just students!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120117 2022/02/23 13:32:58 Anonymous This is America! End all mask and vaccine mandates. Never has there been a time in America that citizens have been forced to receive a vaccine without informed consent. According to the Nuremberg Code, it is illegal to mandate this experimental shot even when based on a 2 year Emergency Order. We, the people, have a government of the people, by the people and for the people based on the Constitution of the United States of America. ??? A few elite judges have no right to make a tyrannical decision to force the people to go against the law of the land!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

120118 2022/02/23 13:53:15 Nicole Lewis Southside Behavioral Health Southside Behavioral Health agrees to revocation of 12VAC25-220

<p dir=ltr>Southside Behavioral Health recommends the revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. The standard has taken time and money away from our normal operations and caused an undue burden to our Quality and Compliance Department. For example, we have had to maintain someone on call 24

hours a day 7 days a week to contract trace COVID-19 positive employees to determine if the agency needed to report the employees to DOLI within 24 hours. Before the standard was approved our agency was following all CDC and VDH guidelines. We feel that following those guidelines is sufficient for keeping our employees and clients safe

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard contains a provision that specifically states that contact tracing is not required.

120119 2022/02/23 14:14:26 Tired teacher End the masks
End mask mandates

Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120120 2022/02/23 14:25:21 Mike Allison End all mask and Covid vaccine mandates.
I am requesting that Virginia stop all mandates regarding the Covid virus

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120121 2022/02/23 14:50:44 Jackie Fox End all mandates
Mandatory mandates are contributing to our loss of Freedom. As a tax payer in the Commonwealth of Virginia, I demand that our freedoms remain and are protected by our government

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120122 2022/02/23 15:08:51 JACK FOSTER Follow Science for Once
Repeal all restrictions due to COVID. Read The Constitution may help!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120124 2022/02/23 15:24:59 Anonymous End the Mandates
END ALL MANDATES FOR ALL

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120125 2022/02/23 16:30:16 Anonymous No more mandates
It's time to go back to normal with no more mandates

Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120126 2022/02/23 17:22:06 Greg Ray End all mandates
End all mandates !! We the people are free forever !

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120127 2022/02/23 17:31:03 Ron Watson End mask and vaccine mandates
End mask and vaccine mandates. State law should limit the use of executive mandates in the future

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard is not an executive mandate.

120128 2022/02/23 17:55:17 Kristen Bell End the mandates!

These unconstitutional mandates have been in place for too long already. They need to be ended immediately. Take action and put an end to all mask and vaccine mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120129 2022/02/23 18:09:34 Jennifer Sneller END MASK MANDATES FOR TEACHERS!!!

I a teacher assistant in Virginia and I have been vaccinated and boosted and I would like to CHOOSE whether or not I wear a mask - if my students have the choice I should too!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120130 2022/02/23 19:16:00 TeacherEnd mask mandates!

End ALL mask mandates!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120131 2022/02/23 20:44:22 Arlington Public SchoolsEnd mask mandates for teachers!! This is insane!

The mask mandates for teachers in schools must end. We are perpetuating fear that is not warranted! These kids need to see smiles, and make connections with teachers AND peers. Look at the increase in teenage suicide. These kids are struggling, they are failing, and the teachers have had enough!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120134 2022/02/23 21:06:28 Julie End all mandates
End all mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120135 2022/02/23 21:11:39 Manassas City Public School (teacher) End mandate
Let us decide

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120136 2022/02/23 21:43:49 Carol B End mask mandate for staff allowing it optional for those who
choose based on their comfort level.
<p style=text-align: left;>End mask mandate for staff allowing it optional for those who choose based on
their comfort level

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120137 2022/02/23 21:43:50 Cristal End mandate for faculty at Virginia Beach city public schools
End the mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120138 2022/02/23 22:02:22 Middle School Nurse Remove all mandates
Please remove mandates for school staff, doctors offices, EVERYWHERE! Make them an individual choice
for all. There are many that are terrified due to media hysteria, allow them to do what makes them feel
protected. Mandates for vaccines for cruises and entering eateries in certain states should be eliminated
as well. No one should have to show a vaccine passport to eat in a restaurant in Washington DC when I
can eat in the same chain in Virginia Beach VA without a vaccine OR mask, utterly ridiculous! Also

natural immunity should be given the weight it deserves. I had Covid in July and as of January 23rd my immunity level is 1078 and anything over 80 is positive for antibodies....6 months after infection I have this level of antibodies and yet I can't get on a cruise ship because I'm not vaccinated

Makes NO SENSE

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120139 2022/02/23 22:05:41 Jesse Gilliam End the mandate/Make masks optional
Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120140 2022/02/23 22:50:12 Teresa Bell Mandates
End masks and vaccine mandates!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120141 2022/02/23 22:54:20 Teresa Bell End masks and vaccine mandates
End Masks and Vaccine mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120142 2022/02/24 3:35:18 Anonymous Please stop the mask mandates!
We have suffered long enough, and have finally made great advancement in giving our children some freedom back, now it's our turn. I saw so many smiling FACES yesterday, as children in my area went to school with NO masks on. It broke my heart to know that one little girl has a boy in her class that she's NEVER seen his face! She was so excited to go to school and be able to see the faces of all of her classmates. These masks are a hassle and a hazard to many people's health and well-being. Especially for people who suffer with allergies and asthma, the masks only make our symptoms worse. Please Virginia DOLI, let us breathe freely at work once again!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120143 2022/02/24 4:36:19 Anonymous Mask mandates

End mask/vaccine mandates for EVERY organization! Make it optional and let the individual person make their own decision. We are made to wear a mask at work EVEN when vaccinated. ?? We really trust this vaccine huh?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120144 2022/02/24 6:24:43 Anonymous End the Mandates

End the mandates and make everything a choice. People can decide what's best for themselves and their families. We need choices!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120145 2022/02/24 6:31:35 Vicky Page End all mandates

End all mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120146 2022/02/24 6:51:36 Anonymous End all Mandates

Please end the mandates. No more mask if you don't want to wear them if you do then do. It should be our choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120147 2022/02/24 7:01:30 Gi Wi; Public School Educator STOP mask mandates!

Allow me to make my own decisions regarding my health and assess my own risks. I am a healthy

adult who is fully capable of making my decisions and accepting responsibility for my own actions. I do not need or want a big brother government telling me how to live or what to do with my own body. End the mask mandates ASAP.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120148 2022/02/24 7:12:09 Lara Casteel Mask Mandate

I support the rights of individuals to make a decision about their own health and body. Wearing a mask should be a choice of an individual, not dictated by the government, employers, or businesses

I feel the mask mandate leads to potential discrimination against individuals not wearing a mask. The mandate denies the individual access to employment, product and services, and potentially education

Individuals should be able to follow their own educated decision upon whether the mask is healthy or not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120149 2022/02/24 8:06:04 Anonymous No More Masks!!!

Please end this ridiculous mandate. Masks don't work!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120150 2022/02/24 8:11:22 Jeffrey Wrobel, Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia End Needless Workplace Restrictions

It is past time to remove the draconian masking restrictions for Virginia Workplaces. Our office has operated for two years now without a case of office-related transmission, including a period of eight months before Gov. Northam's administration enacted these burdensome restrictions. They are divisive and ineffective.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120151 2022/02/24 8:29:00 Lisa Eckart Please lift all COVID restrictions

As others have stated, these restrictions are not necessary. Omicron is mild and has proven that neither masks nor the vaccine have any effect on its spread

However, the restrictions have had a negative effect on the workplace, creating operational difficulties and a less cohesive and productive work environment

Thank you for your consideration

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120152 2022/02/24 9:31:28 Samantha Please stop the masks...

At this point, the masks are just silly. Everyone that is going to be vaccinated and boosted already has been or has a plan to, therefore, masks are just unnecessary at this point. COVID is not going anywhere and it is time that we learn how to live with it and not live in fear of it

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120153 2022/02/24 9:38:38 JE Meador Time to move on

Virginia is behind the curve on this. It has been time to end mask mandates and treat this like the endemic virus that it is. We cannot force people to mask forever. If we aren't going to do this now, then when? It is sad and illogical that our children still can't see their teachers faces in the classroom

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120154 2022/02/24 9:39:26 Karoline K. Support of the Revocation

I fully support the revocation of the current standard. People should be allowed to choose for themselves whether or not they wish to wear a mask. Health-related decisions should not be dictated by the government, a government agency, or similar entity. The masks are extremely uncomfortable in any work environment. Please revoke the current standard and end the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120155 2022/02/24 9:59:51 Anonymous Why do I need to mask or vac?

I have had covid twice, I don't see why I should willingly introduce a foreign agent into my body when my body has already built up a resistance

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120156 2022/02/24 10:41:42 Lewis B Health mandates are illegal

Medical mandates are an unconstitutional breach of power and a stronger citizenry would not have let this happen in the first place. We now also have multiple peer reviewed sources that speak to the ineffectiveness of masks, lockdowns, and the vaccine. All efforts to enforce these are doing nothing but hurting more people and is increasing the likelihood of a massive class action lawsuit against the state on behalf of its citizens. The state can no longer play dumb to the psychological harm this is causing to developing children and it is time for the mandates to end

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120157 2022/02/24 10:44:03 Patricia Huntington End mask mandates for all Mask mandates were removed by our governor, Youngkin weeks ago! However, this dept. and school boards in Virginia are not following his order, but they did follow Northam's order immediately! Stop playing politics with the rights of Virginian's! And this 30 day comment forum is a complete waste of time and just another political tactic this dept. and school boards want to use to continue to control us! We didn't have a 30 day comment forum when Northam made mask mandatory! No need for a 30 day comment forum to remove it! By the looks of ALL of the comments they agree to remove the mask mandates!

This should be done immediately to follow our governor's order he signed back in Jan. 2022

I'm a speech pathologist with VBCPS schools and it's extremely difficult to provide therapy speech sessions when the therapist is wearing a mask! The children need to see my mouth to learn how to say their sounds! Private schools have removed the mask mandates for both students and staff! So public schools should immediately follow suit!

Thank you,

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120158 2022/02/24 10:48:22 Matthew Barkley End all Covid-19 mandates

The Covid Standard has put undue burden on Virginia's businesses. Its well past time to move on and let private business decide how to protect their employees

Covid is not a workplace hazard. It is a hazard that comes with everyday life. The mandates, masks, and lockdowns have done nothing to slow the spread. They have simply prolonged the agony and created a myriad of other problems

i 100% agree that all mandates on Covid-19 restrictions be lifted immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120159 2022/02/24 10:58:46 Anonymous no more mandates.

All Covid-19 mandates need to be lifted immediately. The mandated have had little to no effect on Covid-19 in Virginia. vaccines and masks should be a freedom of choice issue

It's time for the state of Virginia to move on

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120160 2022/02/24 11:06:46 Anonymous Remove VOSH Standard

I think VOSH's standard was extremely helpful and necessary when it first was introduced, however, now we have reached the point where all the people who are willing to get vaccinated have and many who refuse to get vaccinated have antibodies from recently being infected. The people who are anti-mask seem to have reached a point where they just aren't going to wear them regardless, the standard just makes it more stressful on employers to try to enforce when people are simply refusing to comply

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120161 2022/02/24 11:06:53 Anonymous remove all covid-19 mandates
we are on year 3 of having unscientific and harmful restriction placed on businesses in Virginia. it's time
to move along and get back to life

END ALL COVID-19 MANDATES IMMEDIATELY

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120163 2022/02/24 11:14:19 Anonymous repeal Northam's Covid Standard all covid-19
mandates on private businesses need to be repealed immediately.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120164 2022/02/24 11:48:28 Anonymous No More Masks End the mask mandate for Virginia
now!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120165 2022/02/24 11:48:36 Anonymous remove all covid mandates For something intended
to slow the curve we are approaching year 3. The time has long passed to end all mandates and allow
individuals to make their own choices and not be further mandated or dictated

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120166 2022/02/24 11:51:56 Anonymous Masking in Public is Still Necessary COVID
continues to be a threat to public safety, especially in workplaces where employees work in close
proximity and where they work with the public

It is irresponsible to remove mask requirements at this time, especially as newer variants are more easily transmitted than previous variants, and the vaccines are less effective against newer variants. This will result in even more variants as the virus is spread more rapidly

Masking does not hurt anyone and is the easiest, most basic way we can get back to a normal way of life as COVID still continues to mutate and spread through communities. If a person has a legitimate medical reason not to mask they can get an exemption or stay home since they are in the minority and most people can mask safely with no consequence other than minor inconvenience

I will not feel safe in public or at work if the people around me are not masked. This is especially important when most employers do not offer adequate sick time or sick pay so that people who are ill can stay home.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120167 2022/02/24 11:52:50 Josh Remove all mask/vaccine mandates. More and more studies are coming out that refute the bogus idea that masks work

Surgical masks were invented to keep BACTERIA at bay. NOT a microscopic virus. A good analogy is that wearing a mask to stop a virus is like throwing sand at a chain link fence. It does not stop anything

Vaccine mandates are just inhumane and I fully expect the rise of myocarditis and clotting cases will bring forward the Nuremburg trials 2.0. We are all part of the biggest vaccine study ever, we are the test subjects and we are finding out very quickly how bad this vaccine is

If someone is that scared of this virus (99.7% survivable), THEY can wear a mask and get a vaccine, the rest of the population should not be punished for those that scared to go outside. The fear mongering in the media and the cowardice of democratic governors (Northam), has ruined so many lives, and I hope to GOD they are all held accountable.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120168 2022/02/24 11:55:06 Jessie End Workplace Segregation Please allow this standard to expire. It is antiquated and leads to horrendous segregation in the workplace. Requiring employers to treat the non-vaccinated (unclean) any different than the vaccinated (clean) is wrong no matter which side of the aisle you are on. All workers have a right to their own personal health mitigation strategies - employers should not have the final say. End the draconian rules that were implemented in a time of fear and allow our Commonwealth to begin her healing process

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120169 2022/02/24 11:58:20 Anonymous end the mandates, allow doctors to treat covid-19
on March 25, 2020 the health director for VDH, Norman Oliver, issued a memorandum to
doctors and pharmacies not to prescribe ivermectin, azithromycin, and hydroxychloroquine

now UVA Health is looking for participants to see if these drugs worked. why are they banning
potentially life saving drugs (FDA approved to treat various other illnesses) without knowing if they can
be helpful?

let doctors prescribe medicines to their patients that they feel will eliminate or reduce their symptoms
if doctors were allowed to treat covid, maybe sever death and disease could be avoided. Norman Oliver
has blood on his hands.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department has no response to comments about VDH.

120170 2022/02/24 12:03:27 Nicole H Please lift ALL COVID-19 restrictions Please lift ALL
COVID-19 restrictions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120171 2022/02/24 12:05:21 D Montgomery Please remove restrictions It is SO difficult to teach
all day, speak plainly, so that I can breathe comfortably while training our staff. I am at a distance, but
this is so hard. Please remove the restrictions.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120172 2022/02/24 12:07:44 Kyle E REMOVE ALL COVID-19 MANDATES Evidence has proven time and time again that the majority of COVID-19 mandates were not effective at preventing COVID deaths. Those that are scared of being exposed because mandates are lifted should take some personal responsibility and avoid situations where they are uncomfortable. The days of controlling the masses just to pacify the few need to stop. America is suppose to be the Land of the Free but lately it hasn't felt that way.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120173 2022/02/24 12:09:32 Arlington Public SchoolsArlington Public Schools MASKS Please lets end the mask mandates for teachers! Give teachers a choice, just like the students, to make their own health decisions. I feel like the ones who want the mandate lifted are the silent majority as we do not want negative repercussions of speaking out since this is our place of employment. As an employee I have never been asked once what my opinion is

When will this madness end?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120174 2022/02/24 12:15:40 J Basham DOLI mask requirement Based on the fact that masking is not effective unless you are wearing a N95 mask at all times and never spending anytime around other individuals the DOLI mask requirement needs to be removed. When the term "endemic" began to be used by those leading the White House effort all mandates locally, at the state level and federally should have been rescinded immediately. Please remove this requirement IMMEDIATELY

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120175 2022/02/24 12:34:26 LH Support Ending Covid19 Restrictions in Virginia Because we have known for some time now that the impact and severity of Covid19 (all variants, but now...especially Omicron) is both age-stratified (primarily the elderly) and those with certain preexisting conditions at any age..

I am in support of removing all vaccine and mask mandates across the Commonwealth of Virginia and allowing the individual to make their own health decisions in consultation with their doctor.

The VDH should promote an age-stratified wholistic approach to caring for those who become sick with the virus. The wholistic approach should include:

Robust early/home treatment options and protocols

Clinically proven inpatient hospital protocols

Do not restrict doctors from treating their patients in any way they see fit. They are sworn to do no harm. Let's trust them to think critically, understand medical science and advise their patients accordingly.

Do not restrict pharmacies from filling physicians prescriptions. Pharmacists are not the treating physician

Give all business types and sectors across Virginia the freedom to drop mask and vaccine mandates.

Here is an example of why the mask mandates should end: My wife and I recently visited our favorite restaurant on a Friday evening. We gladly waited 45 minutes for our table because we were delighted to see how busy they were. All the tables were filled...the bar had no seats available. It was very crowded. When we were seated at our table...we observed that virtually no one was wearing masks...except for the servers. It made no sense to require the servers (who were working very hard) to wear masks that only restrict their breathing and impair their ability to clearly communicate with patrons... while everyone else sat, laughed and enjoyed both their food and company.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department has no response to comments concerning VDH.

120176 2022/02/24 12:44:56 C. Morland COVID isn't over just because you're over it! The spread is still out of control and it IS a serious threat when emergency rooms and hospitals have less resources for normal emergencies and scheduled surgeries are being postponed. People might not be dying of covid as often, especially if vaccinated, but there will be deaths as a result of removing laws to mitigate the spread!

+E818

Honestly, masks in a medical setting should be required forever and it is crazy they were not before

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120177 2022/02/24 13:03:28 Family Physician Remove mandates and restrictions Please remove all mandates and restrictions related to COVID-19. Please remove the emergency rules and regulations in both the public and private sectors, and remove all the emergency authorizations that were put in place.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120178 2022/02/24 13:15:06 C. Clark Please end mask mandates Please end the mask mandates in our public schools. I am a special education teacher in a public school and the masks are no longer needed. Everyone in my school is vaccinated and boosted. Most of the children are vaccinated yet some come into the school wearing double masks. We sometimes can't hear each other speak and it impacts the work I do with students. We are all exhausted and we need to stop this insanity SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120180 2022/02/24 13:28:32 Anonymous No more workplace mandates! At this point, they are divisive and unscientific. No more workplace mandates! At this point, they are divisive and unscientific.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120181 2022/02/24 13:29:51 Anonymous No more mandates for the workplace. It's not an administrative remedy people thought it would be No more mandates for the workplace. It's not an administrative remedy people thought it would be

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120182 2022/02/24 13:30:18 Andre Please End Discriminatory Vaccine Mandates I am a black American and I'm being discriminated against because I choose to dare make my own free personal medical choices. Please end these discriminating mandates. All I want is to go to work handle responsibilities and leave be in freedom an alienable right

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120183 2022/02/24 13:30:27 Anonymous Please no more required testing for unvaccinated employees. Doesn' Please no more required testing for unvaccinated employees. Doesn'

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120184 2022/02/24 13:36:53 DEAN DAVID END MASKING END MASKING!!!! LET'S MOVE ON NOW!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120185 2022/02/24 14:22:54 TeacherEnd masks now End mask mandates

Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120186 2022/02/24 14:26:59 Emily H. Need Protective Legislation Partnered With These Choices Good Afternoon!

Is there a plan to draft state laws that protect employees with high-risk health conditions or who are caregivers of someone with a high-risk condition (e.g. children under 5, a partner with diabetes, an elderly family member or person under their legal guardianship) from retaliation-through things like hourly work reductions, pay reductions, or firing- by employers when there is a need to work from home or to quarantine from ill coworkers? More, is there a plan to protect those workers' pay should they need time off to pursue vaccination, fall ill, or care for an ill family member/member of their household? Next, is there any companionate proposed legislation that subsidizes small, local businesses so they can provide paid leave options to employees? Workers with vulnerable medical health and/or with family members with vulnerable medical health risk becoming disabled or risk death with covid infections. It is not only cruel to put the lives/livelihoods of workers with medical conditions at risk, it is also economically unsound to put Virginia's already vulnerable workforce at risk for shrinking

The wHaT AbOuT THE fLU? crowd has a point. Can this legislative move be partnered with paid medical leave and other worker protections for covid and other illnesses?<

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Commenter's question concern legislative action outside the control of the Department.

120187 2022/02/24 14:30:30 Anonymous Remove Mask Mandates Each person should have the right to decide if they want to wear a mask or not. It is not up to the government to decide that for us.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120188 2022/02/24 14:33:56 Paul Mask Requirments Please end the mask mandate SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120189 2022/02/24 15:33:59 Darlene JacksonI'm Over It Virginia no longer needs the precautions associated with the Covid-19 virus. We have followed CDC guidelines for two full years and hopefully avoided 1,000s of deaths, but it is now time to reopen the Commonwealth of Virginia. This includes mask mandates for the workplace

Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120190 2022/02/24 16:07:34 Max Kreutzer I lean HARD liberal/leftist, but eventually, we must draw a line.

Scientific data no longer supports that masks have a significant effect on the health of those who wear and those around them. Scientific data no longer supports that masks have a significant impact on the spread of the virus. Either of these cited factual evidences are googlable- and supported by a vast majority of States' health departments. For a long time, there was a reason for these masks. They protected us- and for many, helped us feel safe. The data is no longer there. Facts over feelings. Feelings before facts. End the mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120191 2022/02/24 17:36:28 Kayla End the Covid-19 mandates

As if life isn't stressful enough, trying to remember masks (and clean ones for that matter) everywhere we go with 3 small children is no small feat. Worrying about finding time to fit in the required weekly Covid tests because I am unvaccinated is not productive. Not only is it taking up my time, but it's proven to be ineffective

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120192 2022/02/24 18:13:00 Anonymous Masks
Masks need to go for students and staff. With options to wear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120193 2022/02/24 19:14:40 Anonymous End the mask mandates
To whom it may concern,

Please end the mask mandates. I know people who had contracted COVID-19 that always wear masks and who have been vaccinated as well

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120194 2022/02/24 19:26:16 Anonymous End the mask mandate

Being a person who has had COVID three times two of which I was wearing the mask everywhere it's completely useless and makes work more of a pain all mandates of masks and vaccines need to be ended

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120195 2022/02/24 19:27:20 Anonymous Mask mandate requirement for workers VOSHA

End the mandates . In my workplace environment it does no good wearing the mask, most of the time we don't have any soap or towels in the restrooms to even wash our hands. Company doesn't sanitize work areas so the masks are of little help

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119575

120196 2022/02/24 19:38:29 Ryan Reeves End All Workplace Mask Mandates

Workplace mask mandates accomplish nothing. End All workplace and business mask requirements and Covid-19 related restrictions for ALL employees

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120197 2022/02/24 19:45:09 Gregory Pfaff Masks are PROVEN not to protect against Omicron

It's time to stop the madness and end mask mandates for all employees. There's no reason to continue this mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120198 2022/02/24 19:59:07 Anonymous Lift the mandate
It has been proven that masks do not protect anyone. There is no reason for us to wear them anymore

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120199 2022/02/24 20:03:00 Richard Ponton Lift the mandate
End the mandate for employees!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120200 2022/02/24 20:13:30 Anonymous Mask mandates
End the mask mandates for everyone

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120201 2022/02/24 20:23:19 Anonymous End all workplace mask mandates, including medical
offices and teachers. End all workplace mask mandates, including medical offices and teachers.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120202 2022/02/24 20:27:59 David CDC Guidelines

This shouldn't be a political matter. It's a medical issue. I would urge you to follow the guidelines of experts at the CDC and remove mask mandates when appropriate. You'll be doing what's best for Virginia to the best of our knowledge. Everyone gets a say, the ignorant and the knowledgeable; the whiny and the expert. Don't let people who claim they can't breathe through masks sway you. Obviously, they are still alive after all this time, so their inconvenience is more important to them than their responsibility to their fellow citizens. But, there will be a time for this to pass as well. So, weigh the options and do what's best for Virginia

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120203 2022/02/24 20:43:19 Taylor End mask In work place
END MASK MANDATE! If you want to wear one you can but don't force others to

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120204 2022/02/24 21:30:23 Jane Get Back To Normal!!!
Covid is over in and it is time to lift all Covid-19 mandates. End the mask mandates, EVERYWHERE!!! End all vaccines mandates and let people get back to work!!! Lift all Covid restrictions and mandates and let's get the Commonwealth of Virginia back to Normal!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120205 2022/02/24 22:49:28 Educator Masks Off
If the masks can come off students on March 1, they should also come off of the Educators. Why must we be smothered for another 19 days?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120206 2022/02/25 1:27:48 Anonymous END MASKS! NO MASKS!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120207 2022/02/25 2:02:21 William simpkins Remove masks Remove the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120209 2022/02/25 3:24:36 Angela Collins Masks are pointless Even the box of the masks provided at work state it will not protect you against the Rona. Masks do nothing. They are completely utterly pointless. So just get rid of the mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120210 2022/02/25 4:31:25 Donna End Mask Mandates in all work places It's stupid ro have a mask mandate I'd your not practicing social distancing and sanitizing in the work place. It's getting hotter which is making it difficult for us to breath. The masks so not work so why should we wear them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120211 2022/02/25 6:19:48 Stephen Hudson Mask mandatesMask mandates are a pointless abuse of power. End them now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120212 2022/02/25 6:27:09 Atlantic Builders Drop standards Drop standards - there is no need to protect anyone at the point from COVID19. Those who want vaccines will get them. Those who don't will not. Individuals should protect themselves as they see best

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120213 2022/02/25 6:54:32 Holly Support of Revocation I completely support the revocation of the mask requirement. I work in a school and children have the option to takeoff masks. We've even been told that visitors coming into the school have the option of not wearing a mask. It's time that we have that option as well!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120214 2022/02/25 7:14:56 Brandon Roth End mask mandates Unmask our teachers. The damage caused by them outweighs the the close to zero benefit. Our children need facial feedback from their teachers, and our teachers jobs are difficult enough without reducing their oxygen

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120215 2022/02/25 7:56:37 Eric R Harrell - Great Bridge Mechanical, LLC End mask mandates
To whom it may concern,

The current mandate concerning masks and/or face coverings in the workplace do not line up with the common sense approach currently taking place in the schools. Make it optional for everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to comment

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120216 2022/02/25 8:24:28 Anonymous End the mask mandate! End the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120217 2022/02/25 8:26:47 Anonymous Mask Mandate Please end mandates on masks. There was never proof that they work in the first place. Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120218 2022/02/25 8:43:31 James E GordonMask's I want My employer to follow the guidelines that the governor has set forth. Give everyone the option to wear a mask if they want to, and allow people to make a choice. Masks should be up to the event individual. It's our choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120219 2022/02/25 9:08:36 D Barr NO MORE MASK let us live free and make our own choices
Lift all restrictions and let each citizen of this state decide his or her own mind up weather to mask up or not. The government overreach has to stop

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120220 2022/02/25 9:10:18 Anonymous End the mask End this mask update or you will have a state strike on this matter. We the people have had enough of mask. We are tired of getting our job threatened about a mask that does not work! We are tired and getting ready to take action in our own hands. Enough is enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120221 2022/02/25 9:17:57 Curtis Vick Why? This is the most ridiculous thing I have ever seen! The people elected these offices to make these calls! That's what happened. STOP PLAYING POLITICS WITH MY KIDS AND MY FAMILY! The mask have done little to no good to stop anything Covid! If so this mess would not be running 2 years and going. End the political play in the schools. I have written the Governor and I'm requesting the names of the ones who made this decision. If they were an elected official I will ensure that my vote will not be cast for them! If appointed I will ensure that the

person that appointed them will not get my vote. STAND DOWN! My children are not your vote puppet/hostages!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120222 2022/02/25 10:20:17 Dawn Espelage Individual Freedom vs Others' Safety As someone who works and lives with a vulnerable population, I have seen first hand deaths from COVID - including those who were fully vaccinated. I don't enjoy wearing a mask - worse is the idea that I might infect someone. As the mask restrictions have decreased, my freedoms and funds (i.e., grocery delivery) have decreased as I have to reduce the risk of carrying an infection. I will continue to mask regardless of mandates; however, those that don't want their freedom infringed upon by not wearing a mask are endangering others. I always thought that's where freedom ended and the greater good began. There is another variant, considered more contagious making it's way across the world and no one knows yet what that will look like in terms of another surge. Even during this down-trend, reportedly over 100,000 people are infected daily and over 2000 die every day due to COVID. Mask wearing is not about Republican beliefs vs Democrat beliefs; it's not about individuals right vs government intervention; it's about caution and caring for one's neighbor

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120223 2022/02/25 10:38:16 Anonymous Masks for Adults in Schools It is time to remove the mask mandate for employees. If masking is optional for public school students, masking for employees of school divisions should be a personal choice as well. Adults in school settings can easily be in a room of 30+ non-social distanced, non-masked students for hours a day. Keeping only the adults in masks is not protecting us from disease transmission. Plus, having the teachers and school leaders in masks has made and continues to make verbal communication in the classroom, which is of high importance in education, yet one more challenge for public educators to figure out. Right now, there are 8-year-olds making the decision not to mask (well in theory, parents' decision but, no shocker, they don't always listen to their parents when they are out of their sight) so why are public educators, as adults, not allowed a choice?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120224 2022/02/25 10:39:36 Anonymous complete removal of Covid standard the entire Covid Standard by comrade Northam needs to be repealed. masks, reporting, etc. its time for personal choice and responsibility private business will protect their employees

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120225 2022/02/25 10:40:44 Anonymous Increase mask mandates and vaccine requirements
Thousands are dying every day and thousands more will continue to die due to people not currently respecting mask requirements and not being vaccinated. Mask mandates should be reinstated in areas that are on the uptick and vaccines should be required for employment

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120226 2022/02/25 11:16:42 Deb all health matters must be personal choice Our government has no right to make health decisions for any individual. There is much science that shows the value of any health mandates is questionable at best and more likely harmful.

To be truly free we must protect the rights of each and every person to make health choices for themselves and their families, and make it illegal to discriminate based on personal health choice. It must be illegal to require any health intervention for participation in any form of employment or public access to any business

Every person has the ability to choose to protect themselves and keep themselves healthy, no government organization can make the best decision for any individual

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120227 2022/02/25 12:15:16 Anonymous Remove all mandates for ALL At present, there is no state of emergency. People are getting on with their lives as is evidenced by the Super Bowl and other

events whereby people are not wearing masks. Accordingly, all mandates should end. Children are not able to properly learn when they can't see the mouths of their teachers, and cannot hear their teachers properly because the mask muffles their voices. Covid has become a malady that people must learn to live with. Those who wish to be vaccinated or to want an extra layer of protection may wear an appropriate mask to get that protection, but all other people should not be subjected to vaccinations or masks or other measures they choose not to follow. Freedom and choice matter. Personal responsibility matters too: those who wish to continue wearing masks may wear masks. Those who do not feel the need for the protection of a mask, should not be mandated to wear them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120228 2022/02/25 12:27:16 Garnette Owens Time to end the Amended Standard It is time to eliminate the Amended Standard for COVID-19 as soon as possible!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120229 2022/02/25 12:56:56 Anonymous Remove the mask Summer is approaching quickly those of us who work

In a factory where it is impossible to have air are miserable

In the summer wearing the mask all of us stay sick

And many have passed out end the mask mandate!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120230 2022/02/25 14:18:54 Teresa Van Ness Stop this 30 day comment period nonsense/stop all mandates Just STOP. Enough people see through all of the nonsense related to Covid. Stop ALL mandates to include mask mandates. Stop the fear-mongering. Start making decisions based on highly credentialed docs who provide peer reviewed data supporting the opposite of what gov't agencies stand for

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120231 2022/02/25 14:49:20 Anonymous END ALL MANDATES Please remove the mask mandates! Our rights have been infringed on enough!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120232 2022/02/25 14:50:04 Sarah Sprinkle End the Mask Mandates!! Please put a stop to mask mandates, allow for personal choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120233 2022/02/25 16:03:31 K Whitley VBCPS End it all Why wait for 30 days of comments when one week shows that out of 800+ responses maybe 5 ppl want them to remain??? It should be personal choice and should have ended about a yr ago. I predict that years from now there will be studies done on young adults who are having health problems due to years of breathing in the same thing that environmentalists claim are killing the world.....carbon dioxide. Who knows what this is doing to developing brains. And I hope, IF this was ever to be put upon us again, everyone puts their foot down and just say H E double hockey sticksif everyone just said no then that would be that

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120234 2022/02/25 16:08:00 State Employee and Parent of 3 Revoke the VA Standard As a citizen and employee of the Commonwealth, I can appreciate the government wanting to maintain a certain level of safety and caution in the workplace and schools when it comes to viruses such as the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that causes COVID 19. However, when it comes to any other medical decision, the safety and caution taken to maintain one's health has always been up to each individual person and if under 18, up to the parent / legal guardian of that child. This should include the use (or lack thereof) of mask wearing.

I urge the DOLI to revoke the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19. Allow individuals to decide on their safety; on whether or not masks are a good option for them and their children. Allow students in daycare facilities and public schools the ability to learn from their teachers by being able to see their faces. For the youngsters in daycare,

learning to speak, learning to read and learning to communicate in general needs the ability to view facial expressions.

Please allow the mask mandate to end for all state employees, teachers, daycare workers and students. Masks should never be a requirement by a government agency!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120235 2022/02/25 16:15:29 William Stewart COVID-19 Mandates All mandates must be lifted

Instead, the VDH and regional health districts must publicize known COVID-19 preventive measures such as Vitamins C & D, etc., as promulgated on the flccc.net website

Furthermore, all Virginia hospitals, clinics and the like must permit any medical doctor licensed in the Commonwealth with privileges in that facility to prescribe any FDA approved medications that they feel appropriate for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19, whether on or off label. Examples are Ivermectin and Hydroxychloroquine. Medical doctors who are officers and directors of institutions failing to do so shall lose their licenses to practice medicine in the Commonwealth

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120236 2022/02/25 16:19:13 TeacherTired End mask mandates

Masks may have had a positive effect at the beginning of the pandemic, but now that vaccines are out and those who wanted them received them, I see no more purpose of masking. The virus is here to stay, and it is weakened now. As a teacher, it inhibits my ability to communicate as needed with my students. I teach language, and because of the masks, my students can't see the way my lips move as I pronounce, and each word is muffled by the mask. I'm not able to fully express myself, and I find my students zoning out more due to not being able to read my lips. They can tune me out, because there is a lack of communication. It also does not make scientific sense to allow parents the choice to mask their kids or not, but force educators to. Please end these mask mandates, and let people choose whether they would like to wear one or not. Forcing us to wear them not only separates us more as a nation, but also makes us feel more isolated and hidden. We cannot live the rest of our lives wearing masks and living in fear

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120238 2022/02/25 17:22:16 School Staff Member Freedom to Choose I work in a public school. Recently, our students were given the option to mask or not in school. We as staff must still mask though. It seems silly that the children and their parents have more rights to choose what is best for them than the adults in the building. End all mask mandates now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120239 2022/02/25 17:56:10 Anonymous Keep the mandate in place Laws are in place for safety. I'd like to continue to be safe. Thanks

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120240 2022/02/25 18:17:08 Tired Teacher Enough Already I've had to learn to be a teacher, from my house. I don't know what nearly any of my colleagues actually look like, aside of their eyes. Same with most of my students. Collaboration is minimal, because everyone was actually told to stay away from each other and our school office was actually locked, to all teachers, last year

I am tired of wearing a piece of fabric over half my face, in order to visually satisfy people who are afraid. It is forced, against my will, on a daily basis. I either do this or not be able to keep a roof over the heads of my family. I know it does absolutely nothing. It's a piece of fabric that has become a political statement. There is no scientific support for its effectiveness. I have seen disabled students, who cannot move independently, forced to wear masks that end up in their mouths and they can't even tell us they're miserable

It's been 2 years. Enough, enough, enough. I don't need the fake protection. Our health should be our own responsibility. The mental health toll has been astronomical. We will be seeing the fallout for years. I am tired of having to talk myself into entering the building and spending my day feeling smothered, while dealing with kids who have severe behavior problems. My glasses fog up. I feel overheated. And, I got a cold from a student, last year, wearing this useless piece of fabric. Every staff member in our room caught the same cold. Because...these masks are useless and everyone knows it. They're security blankets. Nothing more. It's time to face the what if's and move on. We're adults. Let us make our own choices. Teachers have paid a heavy price. We, at least, deserve to be able to choose whether or not we feel the need to protect our health or breathe freely

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120241 2022/02/25 18:33:23 Jonathan Bottoms Return to Normalcy It is time for Virginian's to take responsibility accountability for themselves - and themselves, only. Thank you for your hard work through these trying times, but revoking this standard is the next logical step in the right direction. Let's all move on, together

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120242 2022/02/25 19:35:06 Nick End all mandates Please end all mandates cause it's doing way to much damage mentally than the threat of COVID ever did to me

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120243 2022/02/25 19:48:10 Sick and Tired VBCPS Teacher No More Masks...Read My Lips I'm a second grade teacher in Virginia Beach. I have my vaccines, my booster, and I have had Covid 19. Why am I still being forced to wear a mask? Enough already! My students need to see my face. They need to see my lips when I'm teaching them how to read. Please

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120244 2022/02/25 20:26:47 Dana Enough. End all the Covid mandates. It's time to end it the mandates and move on. Many of our children are now afraid if they leave the house without a mask they will die. This is what these policies have done

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120245 2022/02/25 21:42:12 Primary K-1 Teacher End Masking for Educators It is time to stop masking educators. My K1 children are missing out on crucial phonemic instruction because I'm masked. It is impossible for little ones to distinguish similar sounds when one cannot see my mouth. Virginia is going to see an increase in articulation errors and a need for SPED intervention for this reason. The greater good is NOT MASKING their teacher, it's letting children and their teachers interact normally for the first time in 2 years. They need to see the joy in my face when they've done a great job.

They need to see my expression as I read a story. The whole situation has been heartbreaking, but you can do the right thing and remove the excessive restrictions of masking employees of VA

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120246 2022/02/25 23:41:03 Lebrina Quesenberry End all covid-19 Mandates!!!! No Mask !! No vaccines!!! Free to choose!!! No mandates!!!

We're Americans FREE TO CHOOSE!!! STOP MANDATED MASK AND VACCINES !!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120247 2022/02/26 6:57:14 Anonymous CDC SAYS NO MORE MASKS For those still wanting to follow CDC guidelines (which are NOT law) - it says people should wear masks in areas where covid is straining the hospital systems. And as that is not happening (remember, hospitals need to operate at 95% full in order to turn a profit) and omicron is basically the only strain running around (and it is a cold) - it is clearly time to stop the overreaching mandates and standards.

Masks are not bringing the numbers down.

We know this because they did not stop the numbers from rising!

Wear a mask IF YOU WANT - stop projected your fear on everyone else.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120248 2022/02/26 7:50:28 Primary Teacher End Mask Mandates for Teachers

Children have held the weight of this pandemic on their shoulders for long enough. I am proud of them for stepping up to keep their community safe when it was necessary, but that moment has passed and continuing non-sensical mitigation strategies is absurd at this point. I am a first grade teacher and mother of two young children in public schools. My students and my own children have done everything asked of them. They have missed their own birthday parties, field trips, field days, missed a family wedding out of town, and received both vaccines among numerous other things. Are these things worth it to keep people safe? Absolutely. But science and simple math are proving that

these sacrifices are no longer necessary. Neither of my children have seen a normal school year yet. They have no memories of seeing a teacher smile at them. Think about that. I fear that we are far underestimating the impact of social interaction, facial cues, speech/articulation and language issues as a result of children being masked for years. I am CERTAIN that we are far underestimating the impacts of reading and language instruction as a result of masks. It is well-proven fact that an extremely important part of early phonemic awareness and phonics acquisition (the most important building blocks of reading and strongest indicators of future reading proficiency) is hearing the nuances in sound and seeing the position of the mouth when making sounds. My students need to see my face. They need to see me smile. They need to see my expression as I'm reading aloud to them. You cannot have legislation for the science of reading making its way through the house and senate (finally!) and ignore the science behind these facts. DOLI regulations are completely out of line with current research and recommendations from the rest of the country. Teachers are exhausted. We have stepped up to do an already difficult job in a nearly impossible way and we deserve to take our masks off. Do not let a small group of teachers who are "scared" be louder than those who want to put our children first. If anyone thinks germs are new to primary teachers, they are sadly mistaken. There are several childhood diseases that can be dangerous if given to pregnant women (fifths disease, etc).. I assumed those risks when I worked with 20+ children every day throughout both of my pregnancies. I did not refrain from hugging and teaching my students to the best of my ability because of that risk to my personal safety. I challenge anyone to explain how this is different. It's time to move on. I've done my part - if people want to continue to wear KN95s to protect themselves, they can do theirs. This is urgent for our schools and should not be put off a moment longer

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120249 2022/02/26 7:50:30 Anonymous Protection for Hairstylist As this workplace standard is reviewed, please consider all types of workplace situations. Hairstylist and personal care staff are in as close contact with clients as medical staff are to patients. There should be guidance in place for the protection of hairstylist and personal care providers and their clients

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

A draft Guidance document is available at: https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DOLI-Guidance-for-Employers-to-Mitigate-the-Risk-of-COVID-19-to-Workers-03.01.2022_FINAL.pdf

120250 2022/02/26 9:01:15 Richard W. - Police Officer End it Masks were never necessary. The 6-foot rule was as made up as the food pyramid. Millions of people were marketed a lie that those supposed mitigation measures would save lives. They bought the lie in good faith, ingrained it, and became fearful of death from a virus that had pretty specific overall targeting of its victims. The people were not informed how to reduce their risk of health issues via proper wellness techniques and

behaviors. I could go on, but this has been over for more than a year and the only thing that changed is people's propensity to vote against the corrupt politicians who brought us to this point

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120251 2022/02/26 9:02:27 Matt Mask mandate Get rid of the standard and drop the mask mandate! Let's get back to some normalcy here!! This standard has been a largely expensive and cumbersome undertaking for businesses. Enough is enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120252 2022/02/26 9:10:36 TeacherNo more masks for educators The vast majority of teachers are vaccinated. It's time for children to see our faces. This is unfair to children and teachers. Time to move on

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120253 2022/02/26 9:21:29 Elementary Teacher Enough. The rest of the world has moved on. Children and teachers are being held hostage by political nonsense. End mask mandates in schools/for teachers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120254 2022/02/26 9:39:05 Anonymous Masks OFF for teachers Unless you have been inside an elementary classroom day in and day out for the last two years (spoiler alert - I have) you have no idea how much masks are impacting student education, especially in literacy. If children cannot see teachers mouths and understand them clearly to achieve a strong foundation in reading and language, we will have a much bigger issue on our hands than the small risk of Covid. Get your vaccine and take your masks off. Let teachers take our masks off so we can do our jobs effectively. This is no longer an

emergency. Keep up and do something about it; NOW not in 30 days. We, and our students, have been waiting two years. Where is the urgency to follow CDC recommendations immediately now?!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120255 2022/02/26 10:06:42 Anonymous Teachers Choice! If masks are optional for everyone else, teachers should also have the right to choose! It is difficult to teach all day in a mask and causes headaches! In the elementary level, teacher e facial expressions are so important also!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120256 2022/02/26 10:17:15 Wanda Bailey End mask mandates Cloth and disposable masks are not effective in curbing virus spread. Masks inhibit communication and effective workplace practices. Please eliminate this burdensome and ineffective mandate. Employees who are vulnerable can protect themselves with KN95 masks as one way masking has been shown to work with proper fit and diligent proper wear. Our teachers, staff, and children have suffered long enough!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120257 2022/02/26 10:26:49 Tracy Bugg End workplace mask mandate Children deserve to see the faces of the teachers who teach them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120258 2022/02/26 10:40:41 Jacklyn Clinedinst It's time for us to choose Masks are not allowing teachers to properly teach their students. Students cannot see our lips and mouth formation for words and phonics building. If parents have the choice to choose for their child to wear a mask, then why can't I choose whether I am masked or not. Let it be my choice. Let me go back to teaching like normal. Let me work on closing those gaps that these masks and COVID have created

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120259 2022/02/26 10:41:30 Teresa Van Ness What is the point of this 30 day comment period? More game-playing? Enough! Stop the game-playing. Stop all illegal mandates. ALL means ALL

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120260 2022/02/26 11:20:16 Anonymous Masks off of elementary teachers These masks need to come off immediately so we can get to work of closing all of the gaps created from 2 YEARS of not being able to teach reading/spelling/phonics/vocabulary effectively with muffled voices and no view of our faces. Not in 30 days ;now! I thought we listened to the CDC for guidance?!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120261 2022/02/26 11:46:14 Greg Quesenberry NO MASK !!!! NO MASK !!! PERIOD!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120262 2022/02/26 12:14:27 Vcu health employee Exhausted medical workers say stop It's been so long now that I couldn't tell you how long it's been but us medical workers have been pushed and shoved and mandated for so long that large majority of us are counting down to March when we will be granted mental health days because we all need it. We all may have different reasons but they are all related to working in a profession beat down by COVID. Not all of us could stand it, as we have lost a monumental portion of our staffing and many others are still considering leaving it behind. As for

myself I'd like to tough it out, at least for a little bit longer but these regulations looming over our heads, keeping us in a state of fear and uncertainty have to go. Every week for over a year I had to test 3 times to keep my job and if I ever forgot or if a test got lost I'd be reprimanded. A couple of months ago, one of my test that I have to pick up and drop off myself got lost in fed ex and my job was threatened and I was warned another missing weekly test then I will no longer have a paycheck to keep my daughter under a roof. This week I find out, because my employer changed insurance providers, that my insurance is being charged for these, unnecessary and personally unwanted tests but still they are falling on my tab. I am tired governor. And I'm sick of being punished for have concerns over my body pertaining to newly made concoctions. And as we all sit back and learn of changing recommendations, side effects and deaths pertaing to these mandates I and and many of my coworkers stay riddled with fear that these testing mandates and vaccine mandates are going to put us in the streets. Please governor end the testing and vaccine mandates, I am tired and I want to try and open a nice fresh chapter in my loved and chosen career and try to enjoy some normalcy again at my workplace. Thank you,

Your dedicated but exhausted and mentally taxed medical providers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The testing and vaccine mandates referenced by the Commenter are not part of the Virginia Standard.

120263 2022/02/26 12:22:57 Blaine D'Amico Keep the rules The rules are mostly about genwral sanitation requirements that control the spread of many communicable diseases. Regarding the masks although there is no enforcement from the state at least a customer has the law on their side when asking an employee to put their mask on. The anti mask mandate crowd is also the anti mask mandate crowd and they are shouting down the true majority who actually agree with these rules being kept

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120264 2022/02/26 12:34:41 Amanda Marshall Ending all mandates It is against the law to mandate an expiremental shot that cannot even be called a vaccine! A virus with a 99.8% survival rate didn't warrant a need for a vaccine. There are proven medications for this virus. Masks restricts oxygen and does nothing for the spread of the virus. Our economy has suffered enough from this disaster that should have never happened to start with!! End all these unconstitutional mandates Do what's right for the ppl of this country . Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

120266 2022/02/26 13:53:18 Donna Rogerson stop mandates, including discrimination against those without the shots It is time to live with this virus as being endemic - something we will all have to live with from now on, and responsibly as individuals to get treatment early. It is time to stop all the mandates and live our lives normally without constraint. While it is their right to run their business as they will, employers should be highly encouraged to not discriminate against those who have chosen not to get the shots due to medical or various reasons, and they need to be deprogrammed and educated that those without the shots are not more infectious or likely to spread disease, as we now know this is not the case

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Most people who currently get infected with the virus are unvaccinated people and are therefore more likely to spread the virus to others than fully vaccinated people.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/effectiveness/why-measure-effectiveness/breakthrough-cases.html>

120267 2022/02/26 14:31:59 Steve Mask No Mask at all

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120268 2022/02/26 14:39:37 Anonymous End The Mandates! I am pro-vaccine, anti-vaccine mandate. Masks should be OPTIONAL. Period. No one is stopping anyone from masking if that is what they choose to do. No one should be forced to wear a mask either. Freedom...what a concept

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120269 2022/02/26 14:45:22 Allison Remove all mandates! People of this state and all others should be free to make their own choices. We should not have mandates that effectively reduce our freedoms. Our biggest one is supposed to be the freedom of choice, choosing to mask or not and vaccinate or not are personal choices we should each be free to make on our own. And people are being

criminalized because of these mandates, it has caused families to separate and friends to become strangers. The government put people in a position to either stand by what they believe in and loose these friends/family or follow the blind science. Stop making it seem as though we have no free will, that as Americans has always been our best freedom and should have never been stripped away

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120270 2022/02/26 14:45:47 Robin Wilson MASKS KEEP RULES

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120271 2022/02/26 14:51:57 Dan Fogazzi Remove all mask where we work at!!! We need to have all masks off and remove where we work atemployers need to know we have our rights to wear them or not... remove all mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120272 2022/02/26 15:01:24 Natasha No more masks!!! Remove all masks in business, public transportation, everywhere. Masks don't work!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120273 2022/02/26 15:30:50 Teresa End it End ALL mandates!!!!!! No masks. No social distancing. No vaccine mandates or recommendations!!! We want our GOD given rights back NOW! You had NO right to do what you've done. I work for the school system and these stupid useless masks are doing nothing but harm!!!!!! The vaccines are useless!!! We've been lied to! Deceived! "I can't breathe";. Can't hear my children when they talk. They can't understand me half the time!!!! End it!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120274 2022/02/26 16:00:43 Anonymous Masks are obsolete Masks don't work for COVID (scientifically proven- actual real science). Vaccinated can spread, unvaccinated can spread and honestly our covid symptoms were the same as the flu we had in 2019, 2018 and 2016. He positive covid we had was exactly the same. Scientifically proven that the tests don't work, so what are we trying to prove? If ya wanna wear the masks, vax and continue to test, be my guest but it should not be mandatory as that data is PRIVATE and these decisions were DISCRIMINATORY in nature.. it was MEDICAL APARTHEID and all involved should be held accountable.. Especially made mandatory by those who don't have the authority to do so. It was irresponsible of Virginia to make knee-jerk decisions based on fraudulent and inaccurate data and wreck our lives. The numbers were falsely inflated

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120275 2022/02/26 16:12:13 Bonnie Cartwright/ VBCPS Teacher Unmask me please! I am a high school ESL teacher. Masks have been extremely detrimental in my students' language acquisition process. Teaching in a mask has been a horrible nightmare. Now, my students are able to make the decision for themselves, yet I am not. In addition, adult visitors to the building can unmask, but I still cannot. It is demeaning and insulting. Please remove this requirement immediately!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120276 2022/02/26 16:35:23 Anonymous Time to move on It is time for these mandates to end. They are not supported by science or common sense. There is overwhelming public support to end them

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120277 2022/02/26 17:15:03 Anonymous Shameful and Reckless It seems to me that some businesses are more concerned about their pockets than doing what's right for the sake of humanity. More than 800,000 lives have been lost in this pandemic and now we, the citizens, argue about masks, vaccinations, etc. It seems that some would rather blow caution to the wind and don't care about who gets sick and die. In my opinion it is shameful!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120278 2022/02/26 17:22:21 Ginny No new normal- We want the old normal Allow people to live freely again! Remove all vaccine, mask and distancing requirements! This has gone on long enough!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120279 2022/02/26 17:35:37 Anonymous End the restrictions End the mask and Covid restrictions now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120280 2022/02/26 17:46:59 Anonymous Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard of the SARS CoV2 that causes Covid 19 End all mandates for employees and businesses. Too many freedoms have been taken away and need to be restored to Virginians immediately. Medical decisions should be made by individuals not government

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120281 2022/02/26 18:26:03 Anonymous Drop Mask Mandates Considering that the CDC is saying masks aren't necessary, it's really time to drop the mandates. Furthermore, it's ridiculous that in

school, students don't have wear masks but teachers do. How is this based on science? It should be done now and not in mid-March

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120282 2022/02/26 18:29:44 Working member of society Freedom of choice If children can choose to wear masks in school, adults can choose if they want to wear one in the workplace

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120283 2022/02/26 18:38:14 Anonymous End mandates End mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120284 2022/02/26 18:38:45 Zoe Byer End all mandates, restrictions and mitigation efforts
It. Is. Time. Move on. There is no need for mask mandates, quarantine time lines, testing, obsessive cleaning, or vaccine mandates or questions. Put public health back into the hands of the public. Put individual health, religious freedom and the right to prosperity back into the individual.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120285 2022/02/26 18:39:34 Anonymous End all mask mandates Please remove all mask mandates for everyone immediately. Thank You

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120286 2022/02/26 18:42:27 Anonymous End all mandates now! If someone wants to wear a mask or two or take a vax or a dozen vaxes, go for it and help yourself! Don't force masks or vaxes on anyone else! Freedom of medical choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120287 2022/02/26 18:46:16 Anonymous Unmask the teachers Unmask the teachers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120288 2022/02/26 19:01:58 Lorie Jones Remove Mask Please remove mask!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120289 2022/02/26 19:19:01 Anonymous Teacher Choice Please give our educators the child to wear a mask!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120290 2022/02/26 19:32:07 Anonymous Remove COVID shutdown In the world we are in it is time to let people get back to normal activities and let them handle their own lives as far as protecting from sicknesses of other people. Open the businesses, government and schools so that we can be social and do our jobs

NO MORE GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION. FREEDOM FOR ALL!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120291 2022/02/26 19:32:08 Anonymous Remove COVID shutdown In the world we are in it is time to let people get back to normal activities and let them handle their own lives as far as protecting from sicknesses of other people. Open the businesses, government and schools so that we can be social and do our jobs

NO MORE GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION. FREEDOM FOR ALL!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120292 2022/02/26 19:47:05 Anonymous Masks? If masks work, then why do we still have to wear them ? If you believe they work then why do you care if the person standing next to you isn't wearing one. If you think they work then wear one, two or six. But don't tell me I have to wear one !

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120293 2022/02/26 19:50:22 Anonymous Make Masks Optional for All Masks need to be optional for all immediately. -A teacher in Virginia Beach

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120294 2022/02/26 19:59:35 Anonymous Mask nonsense The pores on the masks are 3x the size of the virus particles . We have been wearing them for 2 years now. Isn't it obvious they don't work? I didn't get vaccinated to wear a mask the rest of my life !!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120295 2022/02/26 20:12:45 Anonymous To mask or not mask that is the question. If you like wearing masks, then you should wear 10 !!! If you scared then stay home and hide under your bed wearing them. My body my choice. None for me thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120296 2022/02/26 20:14:27 Anonymous A Mask for me As a sub, I will continue to wear a mask (yes I am vaccinated and boosted) but elementary schools are full of unvaccinated kids!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120297 2022/02/26 20:24:19 Anonymous Masks Still ? Is it not ridiculous that masks are optional for students but not for staff ?? We don't count ?? What are we, just the hired help ??? Don't we have rights ??? Everyone call the attorney generals office and make your voices heard!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120298 2022/02/26 20:26:24 C G NO MORE MANDATES OR REQUIREMENTS, or INVASION OF MEDICAL PRIVACY END ALL COVID related restrictions and mandates NOW!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120299 2022/02/26 20:31:27 Anonymous Masks Still ? Since when does the Department of labor and Industry over ride the guidelines of the CDC ?? Wear all the masks you want to. I choose not to

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

CDC Guidelines do not have the force and effect of law. The Virginia Standard has the force and effect of law.

120300 2022/02/26 20:35:53 Anonymous End all Covid restrictions Please lift all Covid restrictions, including mask wearing.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120301 2022/02/26 20:42:48 Anonymous Attorney General's office number Call the Attorney General's office to end this mask stupidly!!! 804 786 2071

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard can only be revoked by action of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board or the General Assembly.

120302 2022/02/26 20:57:21 Anonymous Enough is enough This idiotic idea of having to wear face diapers and test when you feel great is ridiculous. One seriously has to go for weekly testing to find out if they are sick or not. OMG, what did society do before the geniuses put this idea in motion. Yes, it may have killed people but so does Cancer every single day. The fear mongering is enough. I've had it and you know what,? I've been sicker with menstrual cramps!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not require weekly testing.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120303 2022/02/26 21:00:57 Anonymous Enough With the Masks! Enough is Enough!!! Data has been clear, rather crystal clear that masks do not work. Now I hear that it is ok for students not to wear masks, well then, What about us teachers?? I personally have been diagnosed in the past with not one, but two upper respiratory Medical conditions. Recently, I battled a cold and it was scary how difficult it was to breathe thru a mask. End this nonsense, VA!!! We citizens are aware that it is all about control, not our health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120304 2022/02/26 21:05:20 Anonymous Visible Enunciation is Key When Teaching Language!

I am a language teacher, and the progress on my high school students has been so depleted due to me wearing a mask! It is pivotal for students to see mouth movements and enunciation when learning a foreign language. Hence, End The Mask Mandate for Teachers. They DO NOT Work!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120305 2022/02/26 21:11:23 Anonymous End Mask Mandates Now! The world has existed for thousands of years with viruses of all kinds coming and going. I don't ever remember reading about a time in which so many lies were used in order to subdue people's rights. It is sad, rather scary to see how many people have been brainwashed and continue to believe that masks work. Masks should NEVER be the new normal, Ever!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120306 2022/02/26 21:47:48 Tammy Vass Mask mandates End all Covid and mask mandates now! Enough is enough!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120307 2022/02/26 22:14:58 Anonymous End mask mandates for everyone End the mask mandates. Science from day 1 has proven masks do not work. It's now proven even the so called vaccines do not work. It's time to end the unlawful mandates. Let each individual go back to making his or her own medical decisions. Parents FINALLY have their rights back to their own children and the medical decisions regarding them. Let teachers and staff have their rights back regarding their own medical decisions

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120308 2022/02/26 22:25:17 Anonymous No proof masks work and no more restrictions. Enough is enough and the science does not support any of this

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120309 2022/02/27 1:30:48 Chris Morris Stop the mandates for masking, testing and required vaccines Stop all of the masking requirements for everyone! Stop mandated testing and mandated vaccines. People should be free to make choices for their own health. Masks do not work and currently some school divisions all visitors and students in with no masks but require them if employees. Stop it. We are sick of the ridiculous mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

120310 2022/02/27 7:08:58 Anonymous CDC just took the wind out of your sails It is time to get rid of ALL Covid standards and mandates

Not sure why we are having to wait out this process since the mandates and standards are all based on CDC guidelines and those have fully changed. End the mandates and standards now. People can wear one IF THEY WANT but it must be their choice

Although I'm not sure what all these mask-loving people did before Covid when germs were going around. Somehow they survived back then…

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120311 2022/02/27 7:12:49 Anonymous Unmask teachers
Unmask us teachers before we all walk off the job during SOLs! Continue to hold us hostage and we'll hold you hostage!! High stakes testing will not happen without us!! As the kids say E941BET!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120312 2022/02/27 7:22:39 Becky End all govt/ work place interference with our body autonomy.
This is a personal choice period.

No government agency, political entity or work place employer should have any day in our health. No matter what into our bodies or not. Our medical decisions are our own. End all mandates for everyone including our children. Teachers should have the right to decide what they wear on their faces.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120313 2022/02/27 7:33:44 Anonymous Unmask school Staff
Why continue to mask the school staff when students are optional. It makes no sense! Make masks optional not mandatory

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120314 2022/02/27 7:40:35 Teacher of Kindergarteners Mask choice
Parents can now choose for their children to wear or not wear a mask, so trust adults to make choices for their own bodies, as well. Children are not able to learn to read without learning sounds which is done by seeing mouth shape and enunciation. Masks in teachers and students have created a 2 year lag in phonemic awareness

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120315 2022/02/27 7:56:17 Winifred Midkiff, RN, BSN, CCM No More Healthcare Mandates!! No more ANY mandates!!

Over the past two years healthcare workers have put there hearts and souls into saving lives during this so-called pandemic. Yet thousands of healthcare workers have been fired for not taking a forced experimental, non-FDA approved injection. We have been forced to tests against our will multiple times weekly. We have been forced to wear a mask that has been proven scientifically to not prevent the spread of COVID. We have watched loved ones die alone because families were not permitted into hospitals to be with them in their last moments on this earth. We have seen the government dictate treatments that don't work in healthcare systems, big pharma medications that cost billions. However, doctors are not allowed to prescribe life saving, scientifically proven, inexpensive medications that will stop COVID and save lives with early treatment. Remdesivir shuts down your kidneys, liver, and eventually will cause multisystem-organ failure. We have GOD given rights, Constitutional Rights, civil rights, and Virginia Constitutional Rights, and the government is committing crimes against innocent citizens but not allowing us the freedom to choose what we will and will not allow into our bodies. Forcing shots, forcing masks that don't work, forcing expensive treatments that don't work and preventing treatments that do work is genocide!is illegal!!! This must stop immediately!! Those who continue to force these mandates will pay for there crimes! VAERS.org is only 1 percent of actual injuries caused by the shots. Thousands are disabled for life, thousands have died, thousands have had blood disorders such as hemorrhages, blood clots, pulmonary embolisms, GI bleeds, cancers, HIV syndrome, strokes, heart attacks, myocarditis, infertility, stillborns, and miscarriages. Enough! Everything being done goes against the Nuremberg Code. We The People will not allow this to continue. Remember who elected you! Remember who you work for, the citizens!!! Now go do what is right and end this tyranny against Virginians! Lastly, I will not apologize for my passion and my beliefs, that's my right too

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The vaccination and testing mandates referenced by the Commenter are not part of the Virginia Standard.

120316 2022/02/27 7:57:40 Becky Mask choice for teachers/staff in schools

We expect so much from our teachers and the pandemic has been an especially demanding and stressful time for them. Now, when others have the choice to mask or not in schools, our teachers and staff are not afforded the same choice. Masking has made it harder for teachers to communicate with their students. They have to speak louder and enunciate more, especially for younger students. Facial expressions are critical in communication and teachers do not have that tool to use when they are masked

Our of respect and consideration for our teachers/staff who work hard to educate our students, please give them the choice to mask or not while in school. We have made them into lesserstakeholders by not allowing them the personal autonomy that our students and school visitors have

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120317 2022/02/27 8:12:06 Teresa Mandates
End the mandates, freedom of choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120318 2022/02/27 8:17:09 Anonymous End masks
Masking should be the rights of individuals to decide not for you to decide. Please end your standard now! Covid numbers are in the decline too

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120319 2022/02/27 8:32:34 Anonymous End masks for school staff!!
Kids and visitors do not have to wear masks in schools, but staff are still required to. What kind of logic is this. This makes absolutely no sense. Kids need to see their teacher's entire face

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120320 2022/02/27 8:33:43 Anonymous Our choice Not Yours
How is it everyone that enters the school has a choice to not wear a mask but not the employees. This is wrong!!!! Please change this NOW!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120321 2022/02/27 8:59:51 Anonymous Masking is a choice
I work in the public school system and have been vaccinated. I believe that as staff we should have the choice to wear a mask or not. I find it ridiculous that those who followed the recommendations and received the vaccine are the last ones to be able to remove their masks while in the work place. It should be a choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120322 2022/02/27 9:44:35 Doug Stop the madness

The masks are useless in most cases. They may stop a sneeze from traveling across the room but they're not going to stop a virus which is microscopic and passes through almost all masks. A fitted and filtered full face mask is not 100% guaranteed to stop viruses. Stop forcing these regulations on people. If someone chooses to wear a mask and get injected with a "vaccine" that doesn't work it should be a choice not forced by government at any level

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120323 2022/02/27 9:58:10 Anonymous Call the Attorney General's office tomorrow !!!!

They have no right to go against the Governors ruling or the recommendations of the CDC !!!! Everyone call the Attorney general's office tomorrow 804 786 2071

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Virginia Standard can only be revoked by action of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board or the General Assembly.

120324 2022/02/27 10:12:35 Anonymous Masks

I am forced to wear a mask at my job when the customers aren't forced, they are simply asked. Why does someone have to wear them but not all people? I'm fully vaccinated and boosted, always get my shots when I was social distancing before it was even a thing. I just don't like being around alot of people. That being said, while at work I'm forced to wear a mask to protect myself? Makes no sense at all since all the people I interact with don't wear one. It's taking the fun away from being there. It's putting stress on me when I definitely don't need any extra

I've worked the whole pandemic.

Im tired of wearing my mask.

Make it optional.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not have jurisdiction over non-employees.

120325 2022/02/27 10:19:22 Anonymous Do it now. Can we follow other states and end the masking mandates? Not let;s review this for 3 months. Not we are considering the next steps. Do it now. Me being forced to wear a mask as a part of my job is unconstitutional. If I see 1k worth of people pass through my small store every day and I;m the only one wearing a mask what is the point? END THE MANDATE

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120326 2022/02/27 10:21:30 Anonymous No More Masks I am for the lifting of requirements for teachers and staff to wear masks. Requirements for students have already been lifted, so why should the teachers and staff be required to wear masks? The teachers and staff are far fewer than the number of students. It makes no sense to continue requiring teachers and staff to wear masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120327 2022/02/27 10:24:57 Natalie Goulet End mandates for buses as well as teachers I throw away 20+ masks a day that kids leave on my bus. They don;t want to wear them, I dont want to wear them. Let there be CHOICE!

The waste, the trash I see everyday is unbelievable. Discarded masks littering my bus, the schoolgrounds, the roads... End the mandate please. We are over it.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120328 2022/02/27 10:28:36 Anonymous No Masks Teachers should no longer be required to wear masks in the classroom. The CDC has changed their guidelines and masks should be removed immediately. There is no need for a 30 day window for public comments. There was no 30 day window for public comments when this rule was placed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120329 2022/02/27 10:35:10 Anonymous Masks optional for teachers too! Please and thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120330 2022/02/27 11:09:09 Declan Daly, Citizen VA Rescind all COVID rules/mandates As the COVID 19 virus is in both the general population and workplace

As the most recent variant, Omicron, was able to infect those vaccinated or previous infected.

As the medical community, has three or more modalities of treatment, anti-viral perscriptions, anti-viral infusion, and robust in hospital medical protocols.

Therefore, all government mandates, statutes, and executive orders relate to COVID health emergency should be rescinded. Return the citizens to the pre COVID regulation/legal environment in all aspects of life. (Individual Vaccination Decisions, Home, Community, Employment, Travel

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120331 2022/02/27 11:14:44 Anonymous No more masks I feel that masks should be optional for teachers and staff effective immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120332 2022/02/27 11:22:36 Ryan , High school teacher in CCPS End mask mandates NOW!

My name is Ryan and I am a high school teacher in CCPS. Today, I would like to share my comments of my public support for ending all mask mandates in our school system.;We, as teachers, need to lead by example and show our students we are no longer in fear of this virus. Many children are

only wearing masks because all of their teachers are wearing them; the fear has to stop. The last two years have been crippling for the mental, verbal and emotional development of our students. With the recent CDC recommendations of most adults no longer needing to wear masks and the recent study out from John Hopkins on mask wearing, shutdowns and their overall effect on the health of our children and adults, you will understand how important it is to end all mask mandates right now.

We need to build relationships with our students again and when teachers wear a mask, we send signals of anonymity and disconnect.;Communication with our students is usually misconstrued, confusing and often repeated behind a masked and muffled mouth and face. Some teachers find it very difficult to make genuine human connections with their students; it is easier just to put assignments online and tell them to watch videos and answer the questions online.

End the mask mandates for all people in the Commonwealth NOW! Let us be free again to make decisions on our own health, for every Virginian. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thought on this important matter. May God bless the Commonwealth of Virginia and God bless the United States of America!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120333 2022/02/27 11:35:24 Anonymous Keep protections in place to save lives People matter more than freedom when it comes to life-threatening contagious diseases.Do NOT end Covid-19 protections while the disease is still active and killing a substantial number of Americans

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120334 2022/02/27 11:49:30 Anonymous End masks End masks for school staff!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120335 2022/02/27 12:25:04 Anonymous Parent Remove mask requirements and make optional everywhere including teachers/ staff at schools Please remove mask requirements and make optional everywhere including teachers / staff at schools. Anyone can now get vaccinated and can wear masks if they choose. It is time to allow everyone including teachers and staff to have the choice to wear a mask or not.; Masks did not prevent my kids from getting covid at school and spreading it to me. Schools

should never close again due to covid.; There were so many negative ramifications as a result. Personally we are dealing with mental health issues with one of our children now including thoughts of taking her own life. It is time to end this madness, free our kids, and allow them to learn in a mask free (optional) environment. The covid school shut down is the worst thing that happened for our family. We witnessed directly how far behind our kids have fallen as well as the mental health problems as a result.; PLEASE make masks optional and never shut down a school completely again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120336 2022/02/27 12:25:30 Anonymous Keep the mask!! Save Life's!!!! Keep the mask!! Save Life SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120337 2022/02/27 12:26:19 Anonymous Keep the mask! Save Life SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120338 2022/02/27 12:28:26 Anonymous Wear if you want Wear if you like but not mandatory

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120339 2022/02/27 12:47:59 Patricia Zurawski Optional masking People say follow the science... Yes PLEASE. Survival rate is 98%+. The CDC said 75% of patients that died had other issues that made them at a higher risk.; REMOVE THE MASK... Give the CHOICE to wear or not to wear back to the PEOPLE.; LET FREEDOM RING!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120340 2022/02/27 13:33:13 Public School Employee, VBCPS Optional Masking for All To whom it may concern,

I respectfully am writing to provide my input for your consideration.

At this time, and at all times, it should be each individual's right to determine what protective strategies he/she uses throughout the day. For over two years, teachers have complied with the protocol set into place regardless of their personal choice or belief. It is now imperative that you revoke mandatory masking and allow individuals to regain their personal rights.; While others may say this endangers others, it does not prevent others from continuing to mask themselves or add in additional mitigations if they personally feel they are needed. It does however, allow each individual the choice to decide what is best for their own needs.

Thank you for your time. I appreciate your consideration to end mandatory masking for all!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120341 2022/02/27 13:52:13 Anonymous No mask rules for all Teachers and Staff need to choose. ;Just stop this madness that makes no sense and is not even close to evidence based. You look ridiculous.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120342 2022/02/27 14:11:27 Anonymous End all Covid mandates, no more masks Please end all Covid mandates. Masks should be illegal in Virginia. The crime rates are up because people can hide behind a mask. Most of the masks people are wearing aren;t protecting them anyway. They need to build up their immunity which will also help stop this virus from being so harmful. Masks are harmful to children and their development. The CDC has made them optional for students, but the school employees and bus drivers have to continue to wear them? That;s just crazy! The masks and other Covid restrictions are just causing harm to our society. This madness needs to end!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120343 2022/02/27 14:53:27 Anonymous So everyone can remove masks, but teachers???

It is absolutely unfair that teachers have to wear masks still and not anyone else! Masks are doing nothing and teachers should have been some of the first to have them removed. Take them off for ALL!!! No wonder you are having such a teacher shortage!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120344 2022/02/27 14:59:43 Anonymous No More Useless and Controlling Mandates I am NOT a slave of the government. The mask mandates are worthless as viruses can pass through the masks, and the huge amount of mask waste I see in parking lots is an ecological nightmare. End the experimental Vaxx mandates, as they dont keep you from catching or transmitting Covid. I lost my job due to the over-reaching mandate and zealot for a boss. I have natural immunity and no one recognizes that. End the medical tyranny!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia standard does not contain a vaccine mandate.

120345 2022/02/27 16:21:10 Felicia H, Department of Defense No more senseless mandates

The COVID mandates are unfounded and provide no value. They are a form of segregation and government overstep of their authorities

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120346 2022/02/27 16:35:55 Anonymous Masks if you choose Masks should remain for those who need to wear them or when area get to a higher transmission rate. We should not say we are never mandating them again as we cannot predict the future. Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120347 2022/02/27 16:41:43 Anonymous No more mask mandates masks if you feel the need to wear one!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120348 2022/02/27 16:43:24 Anonymous No more mask mandates It is unfair that staff still have to wear masks while students and visitors do not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120349 2022/02/27 17:52:29 Lori C End the standard The standard should be ended.;There is no basis for keeping such a health and safety standard for all businesses in the Commonwealth. This standard was flawed as it assumed all businesses were the same If you have workstations that are 6 ft or more apart, and staff are immunized, the standard said masks are required.The only carve out was if you were in a room alone.;There is no science to support that the immunized who are sitting 6 ft apart indoors must have a mask on unless they are in a room alone

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120350 2022/02/27 18:12:27 Anonymous End mask mandates EVERYWHERE Workers consumers ;everywhere should be free to choose whether it be in a school, drs office, grocery store, or restaurant.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120351 2022/02/27 18:17:51 Anonymous End all Covid mandates End the illegal mask mandates everywhere! They don't work...never did

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120352 2022/02/27 18:44:59 Anonymous End all mandates Let people make their own decisions. Enough with the masks already. Do not make my child wear one on the bus or anywhere else.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not apply to non-employee children.

120353 2022/02/27 19:13:18 Anonymous Why are we still waiting? CDC has changed their guidelines! As a sign language interpreter in a school system, these masks for staff have to go! So much communications happens on the face, whether its expressions or the movement of our lips, which means our deaf kiddos have been missing out on SO MUCH! Even the face shields we're sometimes allowed to wear instead are still creating a barrier. We can;t sign properly, the kids can;t see our faces properly, and they are falling further and further behind. Since the CDC has now changed their own guidance, can you please skip this additional 30 day period and end this now?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120354 2022/02/27 19:16:46 Ellen Covid End all restrictions for covid weve had enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120355 2022/02/27 19:17:33 Enemies Covid And all restrictions for covid we;ve had enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120356 2022/02/27 19:34:54 Anonymous Option for teachers to wear mask Please, Allow teachers to have the option to choose to wear a Mask or unmask. It would be wonderful for students to see the smile of a teachers face that they haven't seen for 2 years. There is no reason to force them to mask if they don't want to after new guidelines from CDC saying no need to mask indoors in regions with low rates. Give teachers a choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120357 2022/02/27 19:49:27 Penney End mask mandates End mask mandates immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120358 2022/02/27 20:00:11 Anonymous End all mandates End all mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120359 2022/02/27 20:12:10 Anonymous End all mandates Mandates are unconstitutional and should have never been enforced for a political plandemic.. At no point was there any proof of the effectiveness of these Mandates to protect ourselves or others.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120360 2022/02/27 20:16:40 Anonymous ENOUGH!!! Take the masks off of our kids AND teachers!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120361 2022/02/27 20:20:21 Teacher Unmask the teachers Unmask the teachers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120362 2022/02/27 20:29:30 Random Stop the mandate I;ve been wearing a mask at work for years on end and it does no good. Time to stand up and fight for what is right! FREEDOM!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120363 2022/02/27 20:30:01 Anonymous Please end the mandates and let us free of emergency decreesIt is never good for a people to live under an emergency forever. There comes a time where either the we learn to live with it or its no longer a problem. In either case the emergency portion must end. This shouldn;t take 30 days to do. It took no time to implement. Now it should take the same short period of time to remove. The emergency is over. Please end the restrictions and allow the intelligent people of Virginia to once again make their own decisions.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120364 2022/02/27 20:50:55 Anonymous Flatten the curve ?? Two weeks to flatten the curve , remember? It's now two years later ! End this nonsense. If they worked then why are people still getting it???

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120365 2022/02/27 21:04:06 Anonymous Mask nonsense If you really think they work ,then why do care if the people around you aren't wearing them? Maybe you should wear ten and hide in your closet!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120366 2022/02/27 21:31:27 Anonymous Unfounded Mandates There is not a shred of scientific evidence that supports this mask mandates. Hence, they must be terminated immediately. What is the reason to continue with this absurd mask mandate? It;s obviously political and VA should be better than this! We elected our new governor precisely to END the nonsense. We are intelligent individuals and cannot be fooled by your nefarious motives!! End this at once!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120367 2022/02/27 21:35:48 Anonymous Covid forever They want to keep this going so they can have another cheat by mail election!!!
The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120368 2022/02/27 21:59:23 Anonymous No more masks! I am required to mask at work. I;m a teacher and talk all day. It;s exhausting and miserable to teach through a mask. Some days I can barely make it through the day. If someone wants to wear a mask then go right ahead. Im not in favor of being forced to wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120369 2022/02/27 22:22:36 Anonymous This is no longer an emergency, please revoke all emergency authorizations. This is no longer an emergency, please revoke all emergency authorizations.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The current Virginia Standard was not adopted under an emergency authorization.

120370 2022/02/27 22:54:06 Anonymous Stop the masking and government overreach Hello, I am appalled by the Virginia Health department telling everyone how to live during the past two years. We do not live in a single medical care state. The Virginia Health department is not elected officials and do not make laws. This is blatant overreach of power. I also feel that this department was poor in its approach to voicing positive Healthcare actions for families. Why did we hear things such as go outside with your kids and play for 2-3 hours, eat vegetables, fruits and multivitamins. This is how you handle these types of situations. Not by telling everyone how to live in fear of a virus that has a 99.98 survival rate. I hope your department is held responsible and accountable for your actions including suicides and mental health for the lower generation. No Masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department has no comment on issues raised concerning the Virginia Department of Health.

120371 2022/02/27 22:59:47 Aware of Reality The Consequences If you read the comments, when FCPS finally announced they were complying, you will see the consequences of forcing this for 2 years.

There are people who truly believe that they are due a guarantee of protection from illness. A guarantee. These people truly believe that a piece of fabric is protection and they are relying on it. They also believe that all others, including children, should indefinitely (permanently) wear these pieces of fabric on their face, to make them feel protected. They feel that it is okay to place the burden of their health on the backs of children, indefinitely.

The mask debate has nothing to do with science. People who voted for Biden believe that all people wearing masks and arguing for masks are members of their political party. They believe that anyone who voted for Youngkin is anti-mask and, therefore, their political enemy. It's truly that simple. This never should have been allowed to drag on and trap people. You put school staff in the middle of a political battle and violated our 1st Amendment rights, by forcing us to wear a political symbol to work, every day.

This has gone on too long and people are divided on lines having nothing to do with health and everything to do with signaling their virtue by complying. Innocent students have been caught in the

middle, along with helpless school staff who have to drag themselves into a building, surrounded by irrational fears.; It;s time to stop it and never, ever do this again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120372 2022/02/27 23:13:33 Moving Forward Time to Let it Go The mandates need to come to an end. They have done more harm than good. They are also a joke.

I;ve been forced to do weekly testing since November. My workplace moved from the unreliable rapid tests to the ones that are sent in and take a few days for results. Since that has occurred, I have received one result. I strongly suspect those tests are not even processed. When the last one was performed, the woman told me I would receive the results in 2-5 days. I told her I doubted it. She clarified, hadn;t I been receiving emails or texts. I told her no, not since the first one. Reality clicked in. She looked at me and said she was sorry. Every week, I;ve been forced to sit in a parking lot, like a pariah, and have an invasive procedure performed in order to punish me for making a necessary decision for my own health. I;ve been treated like I am contaminated. But, the last few weeks, those same people have started to see what a wrong thing they are participating in. Theyve started to apologize to me, after asking me if I have any symptoms. I;ve never been sick, any of the times these last 2 years. I took care of myself. I took supplements. I eat right. I wash my hands before eating and after interacting with students.; Ive never been sick and there;s never been a reason to force me to prove that.; This is an abuse of power. Stop the mandates. End the 2 year emergency. Never again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The weekly testing mandate referenced by the Commenter is not part of the Virginia Standard.

120373 2022/02/28 7:59:21 Jen Why wait? The science has changed. Why do We The People have to beg during this 30 day public forum?

All of the VDOLI standards and mandates which were strong-armed onto Virginia citizens were based on CDC recommendations and guidelines and yet all of those recommendations and guidelines have completely changed

Listen to We The People and the sainted CDC - get rid of the standards and mandates now.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120374 2022/02/28 8:00:46 Anonymous Public Safety In the interest of public safety the additional measures should stay in place. As a citizen I can personally say that the removal of these measures will reduce my patronage of businesses.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120375 2022/02/28 8:03:36 Anonymous END THE MANDATES!!! End all mandates.....over it!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120376 2022/02/28 8:26:36 Anonymous Unmask the Teachers Unmask the Teachers SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120377 2022/02/28 8:39:04 Anonymous Calling all patriots !!! Its time to stand up for our rights to end this . Call the attorney Generals office today and make our voices HEARD !!!!! 804 786 2071 If you want to wear a mask the rest of your life go ahead. Maybe you should wear a space suit and never leave your cave. Not me !!!!! Stand up Patriots !!!!! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard can only be revoked by action of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board or the General Assembly.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120378 2022/02/28 8:40:25 Anonymous Stop all Mandates The CDC came out with new 'guidelines' to end mandates and that masking is no required regardless of vaccination status. So, what are we doing here?

This is why so many people have distrust in government entities. One, they cannot get on the same page at the same time. It always seems like you are playing catch up with one another. If the CDC says we are done, we are done. And, I say that with little to no faith in the CDC to begin with. I have not been following their guidelines anyway, they are just that guides. Mandates are NOT LAW.

We are also testing people in certain areas who are unvaccinated but if we are truly following the science then we should be testing everyone or no one.

It is time to move on with our lives. COVID is not going away and why wait 30 days? What difference will that really make? This is all a political move and it is sad to see how each department and county is playing the people like pawns on a chess board. We are not your pawns. Stop treating us as such.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

A legal mandate adopted either as a statute or regulation does have the force and effect of law.

120379 2022/02/28 8:48:52 Anonymous Attorney General's office number 804 786 2071 Flood the AG office today with calls today to end this !!!!! 804 786 2071

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard can only be revoked by action of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board or the General Assembly.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120380 2022/02/28 8:51:01 Anonymous Freedom of choice Let the people choose

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120381 2022/02/28 8:53:12 tax payer End the unscientific political mask mandates Why are employers still being forced to make everyone mask when even the CDC has admitted it is a scam and masks don;t do anything, the latest guidance says not to wear masks indoors but I guess you only follow that guidance if it aligns with your political dogma?? End the mask mandates you disgusting tyrants

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120382 2022/02/28 8:58:58 Anonymous Revoke 16VAC25-220 I;m a safety manager in the manufacturing sector. It is becoming very clear that the type of masks required by 16VAC25-220 are not effective in preventing the spread of SARS-CoV-2. This is an endemic disease and is becoming increasingly difficult for companies to comply with the standard. Also, the requirements set forth in the standard have not controlled the spread of SARS-CoV-2. I recommend the revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120383 2022/02/28 9:11:21 Don R, Hanover Schools End Covid Restrictions! Please put an end to these ineffective, unnecessary covid restrictions. Omicron proved that our mitigation strategies dont work, and everyone has had the chance to get vaccinated at this point. It is incredibly uncomfortable to wear a mask while working, and nobody should be forced to breathe their own hot air all day, regardless of any perceived benefit.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120384 2022/02/28 9:16:47 Anonymous Enough is enough People should be free to makes choices for their own health especially when it comes to masks and injections into their bodies. End all mandates. Wearing a mask or getting shot MUST be personal choice and no one else's business.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120385 2022/02/28 9:23:24 TP STOP POLITICS IN POLICY! This board did not offer a 30day comment period when putting this politically motivated standard in place. Now they need one to DRAG IT OUT more? Even the CDC has unmasked us. This board is full of a bunch of political appointees who put in a standard that is not right sized or marked by business segment. Lets force everyone, even the vaccinated to wear a mask. FIRE THE BOARD!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120386 2022/02/28 9:25:53 Anonymous End ALL Covid restriction policies All emergency powers, emergencies declarations, mandates - everything to do with imposing rules about Covid - need to be revoked. And never returned.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120389 2022/02/28 9:45:10 Anonymous Remove mask mandates for all school employees!

Its absurd that this mandate is still in place! Most of us have already gotten sick with Covid, given the shot or not. Most of us are immune. We can;t stay masked forever. Children don't have to wear them, why do employees? Please remove the mandates and allow us our freedoms to decide for ourselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120390 2022/02/28 10:12:50 Anonymous follow the new guidance If we're not going to listen to the governor, at least follow the new CDC guidance. Even the CDC has recently said that areas

of high risk are the only ones who need to wear masks at school. I am in a low risk county. Why are teachers STILL the only ones who have to wear them? It's unnecessary and miserable to teach in.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120391 2022/02/28 10:34:48 Anonymous STOP THE MADNESS! Please, please stop mask-wearing for all; my staff have all either been fully vaccinated or have gotten the virus

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120392 2022/02/28 10:37:40 Martha School Employee Make masks optional for staff

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120393 2022/02/28 10:50:17 Abbie Platt Stop all mandates! allow choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120394 2022/02/28 11:00:46 Karen Choice In our general area and in our industry, it seems the masks have helped very little as people still pull them down to talk even when required to wear them while in the building at work. I spend wasted time reminding people to pull up your mask please, wear the mask properly, stay out of others bubbles, etc. when most employees are either vaccinated or had COVID. Those that are unvaccinated by now are adamant that they will not take the vaccine and 92% of those employees had COVID over the past 6 months and contracted it outside of work. I feel the mask mandate was partially effective when this first started and we had stronger strains as it helped to keep the spread at a lower number at work. Now I feel that the mask mandate is ineffective as people are getting out and being exposed more in public than in the workplace. Help us keep moral up in these trying economic times by lifting the mandate and allowing everyone to see the smiles (or frowns that can be made in to smiles if we can see they are there) one again. A positive attitude goes along way to help people heal both physically and mentally.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120395 2022/02/28 11:03:08 Rhonda Ogden Masks are ineffective and in many ways they harm

My findings raise significant concerns, both medically and legally, of the current mask policy in place. Masks are ineffective for the purpose claimed by the mandate, potentially harmful, and only authorized for use by an EUA. Masks are ineffective and in many ways they harm It's a myth that masks prevent viruses from spreading. The overall evidence is clear: Standard cloth and surgical masks offer next to no protection against virus-sized particles or small aerosols.

<div>Wearing a mask to prevent catching SARS-CoV-2, or similarly sized influenza, is like throwing sand at a chain-link fence: it doesn't work. There has been one large randomized controlled trial that specifically examined whether masks protect their wearers from the coronavirus. This study found mask wearing "did not reduce, at conventional levels of statistical significance, the incidence of Sars-Cov-2-infection. All parties mandating the use of facemasks are not only willfully ignoring established science but are engaging in what amounts to a whole school clinical experimental trial. This conclusion is reached by the fact that facemask use and COVID-19 incidence are being reported in scientific opinion pieces promoted by the CDC and others.

The fact is after reviewing ALL of the studies worldwide, the CDC found "no reduction in viral transmission with the use of face masks.

The right to avoid the imposition of human experimentation is fundamental, rooted in the Nuremberg Code of 1947, has been ratified by the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki, and further codified in the United States Code of Federal Regulations. In addition to the United States regarding itself as bound by these provisions, these principles were adopted by the FDA in its regulations requiring the informed consent of human subjects for medical research.

The law is very clear; It is unlawful to conduct medical research (even in the case of emergency), unless steps taken to … secure informed consent of all participants which was not done!

PLEASE LIFT THESE MANDATES!

THANK YOU! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120396 2022/02/28 11:11:38 Anonymous Stop mask mandates for state employees. When Covid started, state agencies were quick to implement mask mandates. In fact after Governor Northam signed his executive order (EO) mandating masks in state offices and workplaces, state agencies were tripping over themselves to mandate it. Yes, at the time this was the right thing to do.

Now that Governor Youngkin has signed an EO removing mandated masks and encouraging vaccines, the state and its agencies are dragging their feet to remove masks. Government is always great at implementing policy to disallow something, but never quit to re-allow it.

If the state can implement something so quick and on the fly, we should just as easily be able to remove it. Don't pick and choose which governor and which EO you want to agree with and which one you don't; They are both valid.

Now we have schools not wearing masks, the rest of the public not mandating masks, yet state employees still have mask mandates. It's time to move on..

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120397 2022/02/28 11:12:17 Jennifer Dennison - VBCPS unmask teachers/staff INSANE that students and visitors can walk into school buildings with the choice to wear a mask or not but teachers and staff can't make that same choice. Nothing like sending your 5 kids to school without a mask but here I sit in the SAME building as one of my kids FORCED to wear one! This is nothing but CONTROL at this point! You want a 30 day comment period on removing masks...I don't recall having a 30 day comment period when we began wearing them! Not that I care or believe anything that the CDC or media says but the CDC said wear them you enforced it now CDC says we don't need them so why are we still forced to wear them?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120398 2022/02/28 11:17:07 Amy Simpson - VBCPS unmask teachers/staff Enough is enough!!! Visitors in our schools buildings are not required to mask, students are not required to mask, and extra curricular activities are not masking children and spectators.....to me this feels like communism at its finest!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120399 2022/02/28 11:17:28 A School Nurse Time to take the off ramp There was a time when the mask regulations on employees served a great purpose to help reduce the spread of COVID thus reducing the strain on the various public and private systems. As the CDC has adjusted their guidance, it seems fitting that the VA DOLI should also adjust the metrics and measures used to determine risk. We are in a different situation from when the regulations were first written. It;s time to relax the rules and give more freedom and choice to employers and employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120400 2022/02/28 11:26:21 Anonymous STOP THE MANDATES Please stop the mandates for County employees....let us make the choice if we want to wear it or not. Regardless of vaccination status it should be our choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120401 2022/02/28 12:16:13 Anonymous Stop the mandates Its time to move on and stop the mandates. They are doing nothing for us at this point

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120402 2022/02/28 12:45:33 Realist! Stop All Mandates!!! Stop the mask mandates. Masks dont work.Absolutely NO ONE should be wearing these bacteria and disease filled face diapers! Is anyone

aware of the risks of wearing a mask all day, every day? Do you really think they are protecting you???
Stop the mask mandates ASAP!We should not have to wait 30 days!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120403 2022/02/28 12:57:25 Anonymous Call call call AG office 804 786 2071 Call AG office today and speak up to end this 804 786 2071 !!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board and can only be revoked by action of the Board or the General Assembly.

120404 2022/02/28 12:57:30 Anonymous Business Owner Point of View As a multi-business owner and an employee of a major corporation, we have witnessed/experienced that many businesses have followed the mandates and Virginia COVID-19 standard requirements the best that they could, but the employees and the public during their personal time (vacation, family gatherings, holidays, travel) would not always follow the requirements outside of work/company. Businesses had to endure the results of this. Employee turnover, continuous training updates, providing masks/gloves to employees and customers, backfilling employees, keeping open or having regular hours, tracking/reporting of covid cases, and continual cleaning/sanitizing. All with costs. We have also witnessed several of our business friends to go out of business due to not being able to meet all the requirements and being able to make money too. In addition, we are seeing the emotional trauma that it is causing people of continually living in fear, not knowing what is really accurate or what is false information, anger and depression, not being able to feel comfortable around others, and not seeing people's faces and their true emotions. Many children are being affected by all of this. Children see and hear what their parents/adults are going through, what is on news/social media, and not being able to be a normal child with normal childhood experiences. Majority of people that have chosen vaccinations have already done so. Those that are set in their decision/viewpoint or have religious or health reasons to not get the vaccine will not budge or be persuaded. In the end, mandates have made both vaccinated and unvaccinated suffer for way too long. It's been stressful on everyone and everything. It is time to end it all. Thank you for your time and consideration

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120405 2022/02/28 13:04:15 Anonymous Cristin Bernhardt 804 7862392 Call call and call Cristian Bernhardt 804 786 2392 and tell them to end this !!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120406 2022/02/28 13:12:00 Anonymous End masks for school staff Should be optional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120407 2022/02/28 13:25:21 anonymous Teachers Can take off thier masks Teachers should have the choice to wear a mask or not. This should be a personal choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120408 2022/02/28 14:11:30 Business Owner Revoke the VA Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19 COVID-19 is not a unique workplace issue but a public health issue. COVID-19 should addressed as such. The Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 should be revoked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120409 2022/02/28 14:39:33 Nathan Guaderrama Stop the mask mandates Stop the mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120410 2022/02/28 14:44:35 Tara Guaderrama Stop complying and we end the mandates!

These mandates are illegal and should never have been used to begin with. If the mandates are not withdrawn people will stop complying on their own after waking up to the endless carrot on the stick. Might as well take the credit for something that will happen anyway!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120411 2022/02/28 15:41:53 Anonymous Mob rule What happened to follow the science ? CDC which is based on science says no masks. So why has it now come down to mob rule ???

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120412 2022/02/28 15:44:50 Anonymous CALL CALL CALL Make your voices heard Call the AG office at 804 786 2071 and Cristin Bernhardt office at 804 786 2392 Speak out !!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board and can only be revoked by action of the Board or the General Assembly.

120413 2022/02/28 15:45:33 Brendan No More Mandates!! Masks do not work. Many studies show this. The only science involved is political science. They are nothing more than a political symbol that you are forcing people to wear. End the mandates now!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120414 2022/02/28 16:06:03 Anonymous Stop the Mask Mandates Wearing that piece of paper/cloth has done nothing to help us, yet people have been to such a state of fear and isolation that some cant even sit in their cars without wearing it. Not to mention forcing children to wear it even though they dont want to and it fails to protect us from something that;s barely worse than the common cold. So stop enforcing the mandates and let us be rid of what weve been forced to wear for 2 years too many.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120415 2022/02/28 16:29:07 Grandmother/Mother/Gov't worker STOP ALL MANDATES-We are taking our lives back! Two short weeks to flatten the curve of a virus and its impact on society has morphed into two LONG Years of political coercion to threaten our jobs and our own or our childrens ability to attend school or college if we dont comply with a medical procedure (vaccine) we absolutely object to because of personal or religious reasons. Two LONG years I have been forced to wear a mask in my workplace and children were forced to wear them all day at school (Thank you Gov. Youngkin for stopping THAT madness)! YEARS of our lives stripped from us even though the novel virus died out LONG ago, only to be replaced by a variant that has symptoms so MILD it would make a Flu laugh!! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!! THIS MUST END!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

Over 400,000 Americans have died directly due to or died prematurely because of COVID-19 since March 7, 2021.

<https://covidtracking.com/data/national/deaths>

https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days

120416 2022/02/28 16:36:38 Heather We're taking our lives back! Medical freedom. God bless! Let us continue to strive towards our God given freedoms. No more mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120417 2022/02/28 17:03:11 Bret L NO MASK MARCH What should have been stopped a year ago, can finally happen. Welcome to reality folks...Vax doesnt work, boostah doesn't work, and these stupid face diapers dont work.The curve is done, so get out of your basement and be productive for your society!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120418 2022/02/28 18:27:56 Charged with Trespassing for not wearing a mask at the Restore in JCC
I was arrested by James City County Police for not wearing a mask in the Restore The manager of the Restore in Williamsburg Va trespassed me for not wearing a mask with a religious exemption in hand, which I had previously shopped with weeks before. He then lied about it and said he never seen me shop there using my religious exemption but he;s the one who allowed me to check out. The cop was on a power trip (Officer Sawyer) and he had me arrested at my house 5 days later after the incident. While leaving the Restore he assaulted me and I filed a written complaint against him the day it happened!They are out of control in James City County and Williamsburg with the mask mandates and the cops are used as thugs to do businesses dirty work.There;s just not enough crime for all these cops so they go after Christians who refuse to wear a mask. Another great reason to end the mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not apply to non-employees.

120419 2022/02/28 19:17:08 Anonymous keep it coming !!!! Keep it coming folks. Get all your friends, colleagues and relatives to post to end this !!! No response.

120420 2022/02/28 20:05:39 Anonymous End the mandates Stop forcing masks on kids and teachers in public schools.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120421 2022/02/28 20:14:36 Anonymous End mask mandate End the masking everywhere.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120422 2022/02/28 20:35:30 Middle School teacher End mask mandate No more mask on teachers please!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120423 2022/02/28 21:18:57 City Employee Go away mask mandate! As a city employee that deals with the public on a daily basis, we need to stop the mask mandate. It has done nothing but impede my ability to do my job in order to help the citizens that seek our services on a daily basis. At the end of the day, this has all proved to be based on science which is constantly changing and has proven that masks have done absolutely nothing positive for our community, our businesses, and our children. It about time to start paying attention to logic.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120424 2022/02/28 21:20:22 Rachel Scott No more COVID mandates It is time to give Virginians back their freedoms. And the Commonwealth should go further and make it unlawful to restrict freedoms especially in a health pandemic or emergency. If our freedoms can be taken in an emergency, then we are really never free as the government could decide there is a new emergency that requires restrictions again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120425 2022/02/28 21:47:54 Alexandra Walge No more COVID Mandates No more COVID mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120426 2022/02/28 22:41:49 Anonymous Never again dumbasses. End all mandates. It is very clear that masks never worked and vaccines were only proven to be 21% effective. Blanket mandates have the complete opposite effect on Americans. Ive completely sworn off all vaccines after seeing what the medical community finds acceptable. I;ve decided that my immune system that God gave me is what will keep me protected.

Good job dummies. Youve created a whole society of anti-vaxxers by lying to us. I;d love to see the flu shot numbers after two years of jeeeking us around for your political purposes. Get bent doctor.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120427 2022/02/28 23:07:55 Public school teacher Long overdue It is long past time to end the mask mandates! It always should have been personal choice. Masks have been proven ineffective anyway. Let people be able to breathe.in more ways than one!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120430 2022/03/01 1:50:08 Marlin Brandysd EUA's require informed consent, mandates are illegal! EUA's require informed consent, mandates are illegal!

Masks are ineffective and, in many ways, they harm.

It's a myth that masks prevent viruses from spreading. The overall evidence is clear: Standard cloth and surgical masks offer next to no protection against virus-sized particles or small aerosols.¹ The size of a virus particle is much too small to be stopped by a surgical mask, cloth or bandana. A single virion of SARS-CoV-2 is about 60-140 nanometers or 0.1 microns.² The pore size in a surgical mask is 200-1000x that size. Consider that the CDC website states, surgical masks do not catch all harmful particles in smoke. And that the size of smoke particles in a wildfire are ~0.5 microns which is 5x the size of the SARS-CoV-2 virus! Wearing a mask to prevent catching SARS-CoV-2, or similarly sized influenza, is like throwing sand at a chain-link fence: it doesn't work. There has been one large randomized controlled trial that specifically examined whether masks protect their wearers from the coronavirus. This study found mask wearing did not reduce, at conventional levels of statistical significance, the incidence of Sars-Cov-2-infection.³

Consider also, that the existence of more particles does not mean more virus. Research shows less virus does not mean less illness. Dr. Kevin Fennelly, a pulmonologist at the National Heart, Lung and Blood institute debunked the view that larger droplets are responsible for viral transmission. Fennelly wrote:

current infection control policies are based on the premise that most respiratory infections are transmitted by large respiratory droplets- i.e., larger than 5 [microns] – produced by coughing and sneezing, ...Unfortunately, that premise is wrong.⁴

Fennelly referenced a 1953 paper on anthrax that showed a single bacterial spore of about one micron was significantly more lethal than larger clumps of spores.⁵ Exposure to one virus particle is theoretically enough to cause infection and subsequent disease. This is not an alarming thought - it simply means what it has always meant, that our immune system protects us continually all our life.⁶

There have been hundreds of mask studies related to influenza transmission done over several decades. It is a well-established fact that masks do not stop viruses. Part of that evidence shows that cloth facemasks actually increase influenza-linked illness.⁷ Bacteria are 50x larger than virus particles.⁸ As such, virus particles can enter through the mask pores, yet bacteria remain trapped inside of the mask, resulting in the mask-wearer continually exposed to the bacteria.

Related to the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic, there was almost universal agreement among experts, that deaths were virtually never caused by the influenza virus itself but resulted directly from severe secondary pneumonia caused by well-known bacterial pneumopathogens that colonized the upper respiratory tract.⁹ Dr. Fauci and his National Institute of Health studied pandemics and epidemics and concluded, the vast majority of influenza deaths resulted from secondary bacterial pneumonia.¹⁰

All parties mandating the use of facemasks are not only willfully ignoring established science but are engaging in what amounts to a clinical experimental trial. This conclusion is reached by the fact that facemask use and Covid-19 incidence are being reported in scientific opinion pieces promoted by the CDC and others.¹¹

The fact is after reviewing ALL of the studies worldwide, the CDC found no reduction in viral transmission with the use of face masks.¹²

Any intervention, especially one that is prophylactic, must cause fewer harms to the recipient than the infection. The cost-benefit of mandating an investigational face-covering with emerging safety issues is especially difficult to justify. Anthony Fauci was very clear that asymptomatic transmission was not a threat. He stated, in all the history of respiratory-borne viruses of any type, asymptomatic transmission has never been the driver of outbreaks. The driver of outbreaks is always a symptomatic person.¹³

Wearing respirators come(s) with a host of physiological and psychological burdens. These can interfere with task performances and reduce work efficiency. These burdens can even be severe enough to cause life-threatening conditions if not ameliorated.¹⁴ Fifteen years ago, National Taiwan University Hospital concluded that the use of N-95 masks in healthcare workers caused them to experience hypoxemia, a low level of oxygen in the blood, and hypercapnia, an elevation in the blood's carbon dioxide levels.¹⁵ Studies of simple surgical masks found significant reductions in blood oxygen as well. In one particular study, researchers measured blood oxygenation before and after surgeries in 53 surgeons. Researchers found the mask reduced the blood oxygen levels significantly, and the longer the duration of wearing the mask, the greater the drop-in blood oxygen levels.¹⁶

Moreover, people with cancer will be at a further risk from hypoxia, as cancer cells grow best in a bodily environment that is low in oxygen. Low oxygen also promotes systemic inflammation which, in turn,

promotes the growth, invasion and spread of cancers.¹⁷ Repeated episodes of low oxygen, known as intermittent hypoxia, also causes atherosclerosis and hence increases all cardiovascular events such as heart attacks, as well as adverse cerebral events like stroke.¹⁸

Informed consent is required for investigational medical therapies.

Regardless of the lack of safety and efficacy behind the decision to require employees to wear a mask, it is illegal to mandate EUA approved investigational medical therapies without informed consent. Mask use for viral transmission prevention is authorized for Emergency Use only.¹⁹ Emergency Use Authorization by the FDA, means the products are investigational and experimental only.²⁰ The statute granting the FDA the power to authorize a medical product of emergency use requires that the person being administered the unapproved product be advised of his or her right to refuse administration of the product.

This statute further recognizes the well-settled doctrine that medical experiments, or clinical research, may not be performed on human subjects without the express, informed consent of the individual receiving treatment.²²

The right to avoid the imposition of human experimentation is fundamental, rooted in the Nuremberg Code of 1947, has been ratified by the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki, and further codified in the United States Code of Federal Regulations. In addition to the United States regarding itself as bound by these provisions, these principles were adopted by the FDA in its regulations requiring the informed consent of human subjects for medical research.²³ The law is very clear; It is unlawful to conduct medical research (even in the case of emergency), unless steps taken to ... secure informed consent of all participants.²⁴

Furthermore, by requiring employees to wear a mask, you are promoting the idea that the mask can prevent or treat a disease, which is an illegal deceptive practice. It is unlawful to advertise that a product or service can prevent...disease unless you possess competent and reliable scientific evidence... substantiating that the claims are true.²⁵

The FDA EUA for surgical and/or cloth masks explicitly states, the labeling must not state or imply... that the [mask] is intended for antimicrobial or antiviral protection or related, or for use such as infection prevention or reduction.²⁶

Illegally mandating an investigational medical therapy generates liability.

There are proven microbial challenges as well as breathing difficulties that are created and exacerbated by extended mask-wearing.

Requiring employees to wear a mask sets the stage for contracting any infection, including COVID-19, and making the consequences of that infection much graver. In essence, a mask may very well put us at an increased risk of infection, and if so, having a far worse outcome.²⁷

The fact that mask wearing presents a severe risk of harm to the wearer should – standing alone – not be required for employees, particularly given that we are not ill and have done nothing wrong that would warrant an infringement of our constitutional rights and bodily autonomy. Promoting use of a non-FDA approved, Emergency Use Authorized mask, is unwarranted and illegal. This mandate is in direct conflict with 21 U.S. Code Section 360bbb-3 (e)(1)(A)(ii) (I-III), which requires the wearer to be informed of the option to refuse the wearing of such device. Misrepresenting the use of a mask as being intended for antimicrobial or antiviral protection, and/or misrepresenting masks for use as infection prevention or reduction is a deceptive practice under the FTC. It is clear, there is no waiver of liability

under deceptive practices, even under a state of emergency. As such, forcing employees to wear masks, or similarly forcing use any other non-FDA approved medical product without the wearer's consent, is illegal and immoral.

This letter serves as official notice that I do not consent to being forced to wear a mask. I will not fail to take the maximum action permissible under the law against your organization, and against you personally. Accordingly, I urge you to comply with Federal and State law, and advise employees they have a right to refuse or wear a mask as a measure to prevent or reduce infection from Covid-19. Any other course of action is contrary to the law. I am willing to testify as to the veracity of the contents in this document. Please confirm no further pressure will be exerted upon me to follow this illegal mask mandate, and that I will not face any retaliatory disciplinary action.

SEE COMMENT FORUM LINK FOR FOOTNOTES:

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/viewcomments.cfm?commentid=120430>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120431 2022/03/01 3:39:42 VA tax payer No more mandates End the mandates! No more mandates for masks, no more mandates for getting the vaccine. Let WE THE PEOPLE make our own choices for our medical care. My body, my choice!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120432 2022/03/01 5:59:11 Anonymous 30 day comment period? Outrageous! END IT NOW!
I dont recall you heroes asking for our comments before you adopted this masking baloney. Now we have to sweat out another 3 weeks before it can finally end.

I wish I could bring every one of you responsible for this along with me for a shift doing real, physical work to show you what an unnecessary misery you inflicted on us.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120433 2022/03/01 6:55:41 Anonymous Give people a break It is absolutely ridiculous that mask mandates continue in schools for staff, while students have the option to breathe freely. At this point, masks are causing more negative mental health effects than they are protecting from illness. If you want people to willingly wear them if community transmission spikes, you have to get rid of them when levels are low.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120434 2022/03/01 8:21:01 Anonymous Guidelines have changed THEREFORE the standard is void CDC guidelines have changed making the Virginia Standard on Covid-19 put fourth by Virginia Department of Labor and Industry completely outdated, making it null and void. Business is no longer have to comply with this standard in most of Virginia.The standard clearly spells out when we no longer have to mask up. We are in that time now.>Masks should be fully optional

No one is telling anyone they may not ever wear a mask.

If you believe masks work, by all means wear one.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120435 2022/03/01 8:26:18 Anonymous Stop the Mandates The lockdowns, mask and vaccine mandates should never have been implemented. ;Let the citizens of Virginia breathe freely, and respect their individual medical decision. One size does not fit all. We should not be judging our neighbors ill until proven healthy.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120436 2022/03/01 8:57:43 Anonymous NO MASKS!!! Even the CDC has gotten its act together. Whats up w/ VA trying to overreach!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120437 2022/03/01 8:58:25 Anonymous remove mask mandates no longer needed as per CDC

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120438 2022/03/01 8:58:46 State Employee Masks Please end the mandate for indoor masking for employees. Much of the USA is already doing so along with Richmond and chesterfield. Please. One for all, all for one. Equal rights.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120439 2022/03/01 8:59:03 Anonymous rescind mask mandates NOW they dont do any good

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120440 2022/03/01 8:59:59 Anonymous why are we still using masks must stop now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120441 2022/03/01 9:00:39 Anonymous masks to not work CDC even acknowledges this
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120442 2022/03/01 9:01:09 Anonymous masks - cancel the mandates they don;t work
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120443 2022/03/01 9:02:01 Anonymous really? why have mask mandates not been stopped in
VA they do nothing to prevent COVID
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120444 2022/03/01 9:02:18 Anonymous hurting our kids stop the masks
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120445 2022/03/01 9:03:06 Anonymous MASKS SHOULD BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY enough
already
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120446 2022/03/01 9:03:45 Anonymous MASKS ARE NO GOOD stop pretending they work.
remove the mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120447 2022/03/01 9:18:15 Anonymous your overreach is staggering this mask madness has
to stop

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120448 2022/03/01 9:18:32 Teresa Van Ness NO Mask or Vaccine Mandates - EVER AGAIN!
Follow the science provided by highly credentialed physicians scientists practicing in the field
verus; following political science

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120449 2022/03/01 9:32:16 US Citizen Masks & Vaccines Do NOT work Masks and vaccines do
not work, it has been proven by science; both give a false sense of security. Hence, breakthrough cases.
And, vaccines do not reduce the severity of the disease; take a look at influenza medical articles.
Government entities love control, once it has been consumed they want more.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

120450 2022/03/01 9:33:35 Norfolk Sheriff's Office Employees Update the Policy We should be following all of the new CDC requirements. Masks for staff in jails should also be eliminated. Most of us are vaccinated and have complied with all of the demands. Allow us to follow the guidelines that all other employers allow.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120452 2022/03/01 10:06:03 VBCPS teacher Make masks optional for educators Why are teachers in masks when students and visitors are not? Why is it ok to end the mandate in Chesapeake yesterday, but not in VBCPS?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120453 2022/03/01 10:16:50 richard Ingram teacher masks Teachers should have the option to wear a mask or not wear a mask. Wearing a mask is not conducive to teaching

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120454 2022/03/01 10:19:09 Anonymous End masks for physicians offices. It;s time to end mask mandates for physicians offices. Medical office staff are being put in a dangerous situation of being enforcers. When the same staff and patient group can gather in a restaurant, grocery store or most any other location without a mask, what purpose does it serve to force these same people to wear a mask in one certain building. For those individuals who choose to mask, allow them to continue.The employer, owner, physicians and government should not mandate masks any longer. Please remove all mask mandates, including medical offices.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120456 2022/03/01 11:13:45 Anonymous teacher masks We were asked to follow the science guidelines so teachers wore masks. CDC and other credible scientific sources are saying masks are no longer necessary but keep them close. Please give teachers the option to wear masks.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120457 2022/03/01 12:12:32 Dr. James Shea (retired) Drop employee mask mandates. Mask wearing is a personal decision based on personal risk. For many decades we in the health professions have had multiple studies showing that masks have next to no value with airborne organisms like viruses in non-splatter situations. This is why we in the US in modern times have not worn masks in flu season. If we can breath through the mask, the virus - which is smaller than the breathing openings - can go right through the mask. Masks are useful to protect against wet splatter as in the dental professions where work on patients involves frequent splatter back toward the dentist and the dental hygienist. This is why the dental staff wears masks year round, but take off the masks when they stop the patients treatment.

The key protection with viruses, that should be emphasized, is improving one;s immune system or, if already at a high level, maintaining that high level. People should make a serious effort to reduce obesity, eat a nutritious diet, get proper amounts of sleep, and get regular exercise.

Promoting masks helps to raise fear among the less medically education public raising the level of stress hormones which, in fact, decrease the immune system. So the unintended result is increasing the risk of lowering ones immunity against the viruses while the mask can't stop breathing the virus through the small openings required for breathing through the mask.

People with severely compromised immune systems can wear a mask if it may make them feel safer even though it is not likely to provide any practical level of protection, to compensate for the potential decrease of their own immune system from the likely rise of the stress hormones that cause the decrease in the immune systems capabilities. But for the general public of any age group, wearing a mask should be based on personal choice, after assessment of ones own level of risk.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120458 2022/03/01 12:18:44 Anonymous End the Teacher Mask Mandate Many of my coworkers have noticed the same problem I have noticed-- I cant get rid of this sinus infection. I have been various stages of sick from a sinus infection since mid-December, and every time I kick it thanks to antibiotics, it comes back after a week or so of constantly wearing a mask. PLEASE make it personal choice to wear

masks for teachers and END THE MASK MANDATE. The CDC has said they don't actually do what we want them to do anyway, and at this point it is causing more harm than good, at least in my sphere. Thank you for your time and attention to this.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120459 2022/03/01 12:39:47 Anonymous End staff mask mandates Masks should be optional for all staff!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120461 2022/03/01 13:33:11 Anonymous End Employee Mask Mandate I work in a preschool in Richmond and the students need to see our faces!! This should be personal decision not one that is mandated.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120462 2022/03/01 13:35:12 Anonymous End Mask Mandates End the mandates. Let individuals make their own decisions.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120463 2022/03/01 13:44:43 Kripa Patwardhan Normalize telework, vaccine mandates, and masking We have found out how much work CAN be accomplished just as well, if not better, when remote rather than in-person. The vast majority of white collar jobs would have done well to be remote even pre-COVID. Pre-COVID, days of productivity were constantly lost due to colds, flu, etc., things that masking prevents. Vaccines also prevent terrible things, and flu shot mandates should have been a thing even before COVID, but at least now, we need mandates for ALL requisite immunizations, including for COVID and seasonal flu.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120464 2022/03/01 14:02:11 Leslie End mask mandates!! Even CDC acknowledges its not necessary!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120465 2022/03/01 14:55:28 J Hall End mask mandate Please end mask mandates for everyone!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120466 2022/03/01 15:08:24 Anonymous End the Mask Mandate and Possible Public Shaming...
line 560

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120467 2022/03/01 15:31:18 Tyler parker END MASK MANDATE IMPEACH JOE

By ended mask mandates lifting rediculus (ALL) restrictions the public agenda would switch its attention to more important tasks THE IMPEACHMENT OF SLEEPY JOE !!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120468 2022/03/01 16:39:11 Winchester Mask Mandate End the Mandate as it is a safety issue with the masks and not proven to halt the spread of the virus.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120469 2022/03/01 16:49:52 Anonymous Allow individuals to choose Please allow individuals to choose for themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120470 2022/03/01 16:54:01 David, Construction End all Covid-Specific Workplace Rules The time has come to abandon any mask mandates of any kind. They have been proven ineffective. It is time to allow the workers of Virginia to move on with our lives.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120471 2022/03/01 17:40:03 Brent Esenberg NO MORE MASKS Please stop suggesting infringing on the civil liberties of the people of the commonwealth of Virginia! The research evidence that cloth masks dont work is plainly evident for all to see on; The actions taken by this department have severely damaged the citizens of Virginia and their trust in government. It is past time to end this evil debacle being perpetrated by the Department of Labor and Industry against the people of Virginia. END ALL MASK MANDATES IMMEDIATELY!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120472 2022/03/01 17:49:09 Anonymous No masks, No mandates! A majority of the world is tired of the mask/ vaccine mandates. It should be an individuals choice if they want to wear a mask or not... anywhere! Please allow individuals to make their own choices of masks and vaccines. Please allow the citizens of the United States to be free to make choices again! Follow the lead of Britain and Israel and end Covid mandates. There aren;t any news stories about Covid ramping up or hospitals being overloaded since those countries have ended mandates. They are living life like many of us wish we could. Let;s get on with it already!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120473 2022/03/01 18:02:56 JoAnn Sydnor Please end mask mandates NO MORE MASK
im so over the extreme OCD ; Contolling people

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120474 2022/03/01 18:13:27 Julie End mask & vaccine mandates for all educators and health professionals End mask mandates and vaccine mandates for all educators and health professionals, and for all patel kenya entering healthcare facilities immediately and put a law on the books so it doesn;t happen again.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120475 2022/03/01 19:23:31 Anonymous what about vbcps ??? Chesapeake just ended yesterday mask mandate. What VBCPS ?????

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120476 2022/03/01 20:31:33 Faith End Mask Mandates for Businesses My job is still requiring its employees wear masks. If its now optional for our children in school, regardless of vaccination status, why can;t it be optional for us at work?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120477 2022/03/01 20:32:45 Sara F. End vaccine and mask mandates! Repeal all vaccine and mask mandates for ALL Virginians!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120478 2022/03/01 20:42:02 Anonymous TeacherThis mandate is null and void. End the mandate now if you want to keep teachers.;You allow students to, parents and visitors to make that decision and not the teacher????? Outrageous.?????????

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120479 2022/03/01 20:56:37 Anonymous Masks for teachers Please end masks for teachers. Why do they have to wear them when students and volunteers/visitors do not? Its not fair!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120480 2022/03/02 0:05:13 Jason Johnson Endemic Not Pandemic. Time for Mandates to End
With around 75% vaccinated and untold numbers post infection, we have likely reached sufficient herd immunity. The curve has been flattened and its time to move to endemic management.Covid prevention measures such as universal masking, vaccine mandates, and constant testing served their purpose, but came with a cost that can;t be simply counted in lives saved. There are very real social, mental, and economic costs that we will be bearing for decades that are the unintended casualties of these measures.; We are past the point of diminishing returns and it;s time to get back to normal for the sake of our sanity, children, and economy. End mask mandates, end non vaccinated discrimination, and time to recognize prior infection as equally protected

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120481 2022/03/02 7:14:04 R Lindsay We have the data about risk, its time to end this.
We have the data, and the risk profile is so different today than at the beginning of the pandemic, especially with vaccines and now Omi. Please end the Covid Permanent Mandate.

Note for the next pandemic - Can we not rush out to declare a ;Permanent; standard so fast? Perhaps starting with a ;Temporary or Emergency; standard for an ever changing virus coupled with ever changing treatments and vaccines?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

Virginia did adopt an emergency standard which was in place for 6 months, followed up by adoption of the current Virginia Standard.

120482 2022/03/02 7:26:08 Todd Cooper Freedom for both sides of the matter I feel it;s not the governments place to tell it;s constituents how to run their businesses. If a business owner feels safe to allow customers into their business with or without a mask, they should be free to do so. Likewise, if one feels the need to require masks for their customers, they should be free to do so as well. Its their private business, and I will respect it as if it were their home that theyve invited me into. To me, there's no need to even go into the science or data about cases. This principle alone, that is freedom, should have priority. Thank you for your time.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120483 2022/03/02 7:34:41 Jeannie Sylvia End all mandates. Freedom of choice We are not free when we are fired for not taking a vaccine that is not fda approved. We are not free if we are mandated to wear a mask over our face prohibiting fresh air in our lungs. Everything should be optional. Stop being tyrants. But Im sure you will, just in time for the midterms;. People are smart. We recognize the democrats locked us down, closed our businesses and mandates masks. We wont forget at the polls

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120484 2022/03/02 8:24:04 Anonymous End the mandates! There is no justification to continue these overreaching mandates. Let people manage their own health!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120485 2022/03/02 8:47:21 Anonymous / VB Teacher Choice for teachers Give teachers the choice to mask or unmask!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120486 2022/03/02 8:52:26 Gainesville Mom Freedom and Liberty - End all mandates!
People must have the personal freedom to make choices regarding their health care. Wearing a mask or getting an injection is a personal decision. Get the government out of our health care decisions.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard does not have a vaccine mandate.

120488 2022/03/02 9:37:26 Anonymous Mask ??? Optional for students and visitors but not staff ??? RIDICULOUS !!!! Call AG Office @ 804 786 2071 Cristian Bernhardt @ 804 786 2392

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board and can only be revoked by action of the Board or the General Assembly.

120489 2022/03/02 9:41:11 Anonymous Are they wearing masks ??? Are all the staff members of the dept of labor and industry wearing masks ??? Department personnel are complying with the Virginia Standard.

120490 2022/03/02 9:42:13 Anonymous Keep posting Keep posting and crash this site !!!!!

No response.

120491 2022/03/02 9:50:28 Scott Kalis Importance of Remaining Prepared with Valuable References/Resources to Guide Good day - I am writing to you as a practicing Environmental, Health and Safety Professional regarding 16VAC25-220-70 Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan which is a component of the Final Permanent Standard (FPS) 16VAC25-220;

Please consider requiring affected employers to maintain an Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan so when new and emerging threats to the health of the workforce arise - the employer has a solid Plan from which to refer, and operate. Many organizations had Plans for H1N1 (swine flu), MERS, SARS, H5N1 (avian flu), etc and some of those historical Plans were dusted off and revised to form the necessary Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan COVID19 required from us.

This type of a working Plan should be maintained by responsible employers as a resource that addresses the organic or standard measures employers and employees should remain aware of. It will help to identify, address, and respond to health threats in their individual workplaces and should remain a living document that adapts or scales either up or down as needed to manage each unique situation.

I request that you consider text-decoration: underline; continuing this requirement for employers to have a written Plan (not unlike those for Respiratory Protection or Hearing Conservation) and maintain it as needed for their industry and assessed risk of exposure. Due to COVID19, this Plan should already be incorporated into most large workplaces currently. It would simply (now) require a review to make it more applicable across the various health threats (some noted above) as well as help to mitigate the more common or seasonal viral impacts (e.g., Cold, Influenza, Gastroenteritis, Strep Throat, etc).

The standard practices for mitigation and response are very similar across many pathogens.

Thank you for all you've done to help protect the workforce (and their families indirectly) during the past two years of this Novel and rapidly changing situation. Nobody could have known the full impact of this Virus, and nobody had a clear playbook with all the answers.

We have learned a lot from this Virus, and I hope we can keep the focus on prevention and mitigation now, by capturing good practices as lessons-learned while documenting them for a value-added tool or resource from which to refer when this happens again

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120492 2022/03/02 10:11:38 Anonymous NO THANK YOU We would like to opt out of COVID protocols.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120493 2022/03/02 10:29:22 Anonymous no masks!!! stop them now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120494 2022/03/02 10:36:53 Anonymous How much longer? Comment period ends 19 March, then's there;s a hearing, then a vote..

Dragging this out that long is ludicrous. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The public hearing is schedule for March 14, 2022.

120495 2022/03/02 10:37:01 Alex End all mandates I have had friends, family, and employees that swore the mask and vaccine was the end all be all. Just about everyone of them have had COVID. We are robing our immune system to do what it is designed to do. Those that have been unfortunately hospitalized, many were due to other health conditions. For those that have died, it was their time to go and God called them home. None of us are leaving this world alive and non of us will leave until it is our time to go. No matter if it;s from COVID or a heart attack.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120496 2022/03/02 10:43:35 DR. C.Moore Butz NO MASK End it now. The local county employees dont have to wear mask but I do at My job still.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120498 2022/03/02 12:16:50 Anonymous No masks

Please remove all mask mandates, effective immediately. This is madness. Although some people are more apt to get the virus than others, it should be each individual's personal decision about whether or not to wear one

I have seen people wearing face shields, masks, plastic gloves, long sleeves, and long pants. A man at the airport about one year ago had duct taped dry cleaning bags to himself, from head to toe. (He did not make it through the TSA checkpoint and was mad when they made him take off his plastic wrap.)

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120499 2022/03/02 12:45:09 Anonymous Mask recommendations - NO mandates - provide proof of effectiveness as incentive If these masks were medically sealed they still would not work as COVID 19 is transmitted airborne and is easily 70x smaller than the mask. That's like trying to stop a mouse with an open garage door. Get serious - it might help for bacterial, but has little effect on viral.

CDC is a more authoritative body on these subjects, and they only provide guidelines, as they should, considering the reality of the matter.

It makes sense to make recommendations for people to use them IF you support the argument with tangible, verifiable evidence, but that's it. Anything beyond that, in the face of the increasing, self-immunized population (herd immunity) status and inversely proportional risk of outbreak, is something other than truth. Anyone who wishes to wear them is free to. Why do you wish to take freedom away from people with unnecessary mandates; without even quantifying the necessity clearly? Take a hint from all these voices. Even better, study this issue in depth (the physical & biological science) and be honest; I'm certain you will find, as a body, you have greatly overreached your mastery and authority on this issue - possibly with good intentions...

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120500 2022/03/02 12:45:10 Anonymous Mask recommendations - NO mandates - provide proof of effectiveness as incentive If these masks were medically sealed they still would not work as COVID

19 is transmitted airborne and is easily 70x smaller than the mask. Thats like trying to stop a mouse with an open garage door. Get serious - it might help for bacterial, but has little effect on viral

CDC is a more authoritative body on these subjects, and they only provide guidelines, as they should, considering the reality of the matter

It makes sense to make recommendations for people to use them IF you support the argument with tangible, verifiable evidence, but thats it. Anything beyond that, in the face of the increasing, self-immunized population (herd immunity) status and inversely proportional risk of ;outbreak, is something other than truth. Anyone who wishes to wear them is free to. Why do you wish to take freedom away from people with unnecessary ;mandates; without even quantifying the necessity clearly? Take a hint from all these voices. Even better, study this issue in depth (the physical biological science) and be honest; Im certain you will find, as a body, you have greatly overreached your mastery and authority on this issue - possibly with good intentions...

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120501 2022/03/02 12:53:29 Anonymous Stay consistent - do you follow CDC guidelines or not?

The regulations were quick to follow CDC guidelines as they locked down everything. Now that the CDC has (appropriately!) removed many of the mandates, the regulatory agencies have been dragging their feet to follow. Either follow them or don;t. If it was sufficient to follow the guidelines in one direction but not in the other then neither has credibility. Why does the Virginia Dept. of Labor have to check and recheck the lifting masking and vaccination recommendations when they had no problem accepting it as full truth when they were implemented

I am generally against any mandate for masking and vaccination, but the level of inconsistency and general bias toward lockdowns by Virginia regulators contrary to CDC guidelines is appalling.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120502 2022/03/02 13:00:29 VB Teacher Last in the nation? Mask mandates are ending everywhere will we really be stuck wearing these in schools through March?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120504 2022/03/02 13:58:51 Jessica Ruff Support decision It is my understanding that the Va DOLI is going to make some updates regarding Covid in the workplace and there is a 30 day public comment period. I thank you for this opportunity. ;Schools and businesses are removing mask mandates which I feel is warranted. I am a healthcare provider in a primary care office. I have been wearing my surgical mask and using appropriate PPE for 2 years. As we see higher vaccinated rates, higher history of Covid infection and low active infection rates, I strongly feel that healthcare systems should simply return to our pre-Covid infectious disease protocols and implement standard precautions, contact precautions and airborne precautions only when needed. I am having patients cancel appointments because they are fed up with being told at our doors that they must have a mask to enter. We have found that N95 and KN95 masks help protect the individual and don't significantly slow the spread. People are mature enough to make their own decisions on mask wearing and you can't make someone NOT wear a mask. Mandates are only sparking controversy and retaliation. Not only that, people are confused as to how our U.S. Covid rates spiked as high as 800K cases a day when schools and businesses still implemented the mask mandates. Workforce shortages in healthcare and education still occurred despite mitigating measures of screening, testing, PPE, social distancing, hand washing and isolation. You could argue that if those measures weren't taken, rates could have been even higher but then ask yourself what else could you have done? The answer is nothing. This virus does not care what you do. People are not fearful of death from Covid anymore. They are optimistic of therapeutic treatments and recognize majority of symptoms are mild at best. I want my patient and provider relationships to return to normal, not the new-normal. I want to see their faces if they choose to show me theirs. Coming to my office to see me without my mask on is not a Covid infection waiting to happen. Its time to rely on our infectious disease protocols that existed before Covid, ones that recognized from the start that airborne diseases required N95 masks and respirators to mitigate exposure and infection-not cloth or surgical masks.hank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120505 2022/03/02 14:18:09 Anonymous Stop the nonsense! Why is there a 30-day public comment period to lift the standard, but there was no opportunity to comment when our rights were being systematically stripped away two years ago? Read that again: TWO YEARS ago. The level of abuse and government overreach we have witnessed is stunning. Covid restrictions, mandates, and lockdowns have been nonsensical and politically biased since day 1. Covid never posed a grave danger and the continued restrictions are insane. End this immediately!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120506 2022/03/02 14:50:14 Anonymous NO MORE MASKS My employer is still requiring a mask be worn due to your government overreach, while the State of the Union can be held with hardly anyone wear a mask!?! Stop with the politics and let people work live in peace!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120507 2022/03/02 15:00:43 Anonymous We are so done! PLEASE end the mask mandate. Its beyond ridiculous at this point. Thank you.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120509 2022/03/02 15:11:16 Hollie Cave No More Mandates Mandates are an unconstitutional and unconscionable violation of our freedoms as Americans. ;We will not comply with this tyranny any longer!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

120510 2022/03/02 15:13:30 Melinda L. Tennis, LLC End the mandates Be realistic, thoughtful and intelligent. End the mask mandate

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120512 2022/03/02 15:56:41 Anonymous End the mandate. Let it be a choice to wear one or not. We've been wearing masks at work since fall last year due to the mandate for businesses. Please rescind the mandate.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120513 2022/03/02 16:05:10 Anonymous Masks I think mask mandate should end. We need to build our immunity to Covid. This could be something like the flu. We have different flu strands each year and a vaccine based on years before. Any vaccine doesn't stop you from getting a virus, it just helps symptoms not be as bad. I think throw away masks build immunity and keep getting vaccine as new strains arise or yearly like flu vaccine. We now have businesses with customers that refuse masks. Let people who follow rules go maskless also

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120514 2022/03/02 16:18:18 Sharon Ream UNMASK I work at a 100+employee business. We are still required to wear masks because of high transmission in Lynchburg. Students who wear no masks all day have to mask up as a student worker because they work at a 110+employee business. Can COVID discern if they are wearing a mask or not? Look at the stats for Lynchburg. We are not overrun with COVID cases and the local universities have small numbers (under 10) per week as well. I suspect someone is not updating the records and is causing the rest of us breathing problems because we are still wearing a mask all day. There are multiple studies showing cloth masks do not prevent COVID, vaccines don't prevent Omicron or Omicron hospitalizations, natural immunity protects better than the vaccines, and therapeutics when given as early intervention work as good or better than vaccines. When do we start using common sense and stop blindly following protocol? END THE MASK MANDATE!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120515 2022/03/02 16:31:00 Anonymous VBCPS Wasn;t this standard built around the fact that the CDC labeled all of Virginia as high transmission risk?

If so, please explain why VBCPS is still forcing all staff members to stay masked? Virginia Beach is no longer high transmission risks and yet here we are, forced and wearing these \$2.50 pieces of cotton on our faces! ; You are either in compliance or not in compliance with the Virginia Standard - Virginia Beach Schools is NOT in compliance!!!

Email them at Superintendent askthesuperintendent@vbschools.com

Chief of Staff Donald.Robertson@vbschools.com

School Board VBCPS SchoolBoard@googlegroups.com

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120517 2022/03/02 16:51:05 Anonymous Great posts !!! Make some NOISE !!!! No response.

120519 2022/03/02 17:22:07 Anonymous End Mask Mandate Virginia Beach students and visitors now have the option to choose whether or not to wear a mask. Give the same freedom of choice to staff members!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120520 2022/03/02 17:52:55 Anonymous End all vaccine and mask requirements The people that were willing to get the vaccine or were able to be coerced into getting it, have already.

Its obvious the masks are theater. Just do it. End the mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120521 2022/03/02 18:28:23 Teach at the Beach We want a choice! Students/families have a choice. Visitors have a choice. But teachers don;t. I want my freedom of choice whether I wear a mask or not! End this regulation and give us our liberty back!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120523 2022/03/02 20:05:37 Anonymous Teacger End mask and vaccine mandates Please stop the mandate madness.; Our children are going to be social and intellectual illiterates. You cannot teach children to read when the teacher is masked. They cannot see your facial expressions and they cannot hear what you are saying.; I have many students that are trying to read but are way below grade level. When you are in 3rd grade you should not be reading on a Kindergarten level. In addition, if you cannot see someones face you cannot read social cues. The children are suffering at the hand of adults who are afraid. Emotion is the enemy of good judgement. Stop this lunacy.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120525 2022/03/02 23:55:02 Christopher T Brown End the mask I believe with the widespread availibly of vaccanes that mask should be removed form all work places such as the Amazon Fullifullment center in center and thru out the state

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120526 2022/03/03 7:00:48 Anonymous Stop ALL mask and vaccine madates Mask do not keep you from getting or spreading ANY virus, which included COVID-19. Even the manufacturers who make the mask has it on their boxes.

The so call COVID-19 vaccines are not TRUE vaccines, its a SHOT, like the Flu shot. It does not prevent you from getting the virus.>STOP ALL MANDATES ON MASK AND THE JAB!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120527 2022/03/03 8:02:41 David Ream CCP Virus Mandates According to Yale epidemiologist Dr. Harvey Risch, the covid-19 pandemic has been one of fear, manufactured by individuals who were in nominal positions of authority as the virus began to spread across the globe last year. I say the fabricated medical emergency is over. End medical tyranny. Drop the mandates and hurry up about it. Thank You

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120528 2022/03/03 8:03:05 Anonymous It's about control now It is ridiculous that VBCPS is still requiring masks when NO ONE else is

It is now just about controlling us. Get rid of this stupid mask mandate

That hasn;t helped at all.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120529 2022/03/03 8:14:14 Anonymous Mask and quarantine for non-vaccinated/boosted
We work with very young students, all under 5 years old. None of them are vaccinated. For the protection of all, we would like to recommend masks to be continued if people are not vaccinated or not boosted. Masks might not be the silver bullet, but it certainly helps!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120530 2022/03/03 8:48:11 Stephanie O. Please stop the mandates; promote healthy living instead!!! Mandates bring division in and outside of the workplace. Period.

Science has now proven that the masks are not the be all and end all of staying/being healthy.; Instead of mandating things that folks are pretending help, why not encourage (NOT mandate) things that actually help, such as exercise and cutting out the excess sugar and prepackaged / processed foods

made with all kinds of unhealthy ingredients and, instead, eating real foods (veggies, fruit, non-processed meats, eggs, nuts/seeds, etc.).Support the publics desire to get healthy so they don;t have all these co-morbidities and also so their immune system can be supported. People cant afford to buy organic or grass fed or to buy a juicer, etc. Put some money where it will actually help your citizens - help people to eat healthy, exercise, quit smoking, etc.!!!!!Instead, we encourage places like Krispy Kreme to give out free donuts to people who get the vaccine... WAIT!; WHAT?; How does that make any sense?????

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120531 2022/03/03 9:20:29 Anonymous Masks no longer makes sense My childcare is the only place my staff wear masks, and the only people that wear masks. This is silly. 12 people out of 70 wearing masks is not going to stop anything.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120532 2022/03/03 9:35:19 Anonymous END MASK MANDATE/ TIME TO GET ON WITH OUR LIVES!/ FREE COUNTRY FREE CHOICE! We need to end this mask mandate! This is a free country and we should have the freedom to choose! We have already been bullied into getting vaccinated to keep our jobs when we LEGALLY didnt have to! Our LAST Govenor put this into place its time for our NEW GOVENOR to take it AWAY! The ONLY way we are going to end this is to TAKE THE MASKS OFF!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Standard was adopted by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board, not the Governor. The Virginia Standard can only be revoked by action of the Board or the General Assembly.

120533 2022/03/03 9:52:58 Anonymous Private Schools Private schools are not obligated to adhere to the law passed in the recent mask policy. I want to see all school staff have the option to unmask. My son with speech delays does not get the facial interaction with his teacher he needs to make the progress he otherwise could have had if his teachers weren't masked up

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120534 2022/03/03 10:19:32 Janet END ALL MANDATE NOW

The inconsistency among organizations just within our great state of Virginia is ridiculous. K-12 now can choose whether or not to wear a mask, but at a local college where I work in Lynchburg, students are not required to wear them, but faculty and staff are, along with students as soon as they punch in as an employee. Once they punch out, they can ditch the mask. Who is this helping?

If the vaccine works, then those who fear covid are safe, or can continue to wear the oxygen-inhibiting masks. But do not continue to force those of us who do not believe this is scientific, or who are immune from having suffered for 3 months with the Delta variant. Our immune systems are working fine, thank you.

It is about time for Americans to go back to living truly FREE, able to make our own informed decisions about our bodies. Good grief - folks want 13 year olds to be able to mutilate a preborn baby without parental consent but we are all forced to do this, which has already been proved ineffective - is shameful.

Thank you!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120535 2022/03/03 10:33:24 Melody Morton REVOKE 16VAC25-220 End mask mandates for all employees in Virginia and revoke 16VAC25-220

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120536 2022/03/03 10:41:29 OVER ITOVER ITI dont remember there being a 30 day waiting/comment period before these ridiculous mandates went into place. Enough already with these over reaching, draconian policies. If a kindergartner has the freedom to choose, so should everyone else. ENOUGH!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The current Virginia Standard was the subject of 60 day and 30 day comment periods and 2 public hearings.

120537 2022/03/03 10:50:24 Portsmouth Teacher Make Masking Optional I have done my part working with all of the guidelines, social distancing, and got vaccinated as soon as possible. Now that students are unmasked and there has been no data yet showing any kind of surge in positive cases, it is time for teachers to do what they feel is best. I plan to unmask as soon as possible so my students can clearly hear my instructions and feedback

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120538 2022/03/03 10:51:55 Elizabeth Bale End DOLI COVID standards including mask mandates I operate a childcare center which has been operating throughout the pandemic. We have had cases over the past two years and have seen no difference in transmission between the classrooms with masks on children and without. The DOLI standards made caring for the children very difficult. Masking teachers is harmful to child development, especially speech. Children need to see faces for social, emotional and language development.;Please revoke 16VAC25-220, Proposed Permanent Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382

120539 2022/03/03 10:55:21 Anonymous I need to see my doctors! I would really like to go to my gynecologist for cancer screening and my GP to check my cholesterol to evaluate my risk for heart disease. it;s been two years and I am unable to wear a mask-help;How can this be in the best interest of my health, if I die from something other than Covid because I cannot go to my appointments unmasked?

The Virginia Standard does not apply to non-employees.

120540 2022/03/03 11:07:19 Denise Nunez Stop the mandates for everyone masked and unmasked!!!!!! It is clear masks nor vaccines work! If you continue to abuse citizens with masking and vaccinating you will have a destruction of Americans and American business!!! Stop the narcissistic relationship with the people at the work place, schools and any place indoors and outdoors!!! Enough is enough

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120541 2022/03/03 11:13:59 Dave End The Mandates Now It is more than time to end all Covid related mandates. They are not longer needed, they never really worked in the first place and everyone knows that - no one had the guts enough to say it. Masks are not for show, they have been a huge detriment to children and they really didnt do much at all to protect anyone from Covid. ;I wholeheartedly support the end to all mandates immediately. ;Yes, Covid is here to stay but it;s not a pandemic anymore and it is not a huge threat anymore

Like Gov. Desantis said yesterday - end the Covid theater...end it in Virginia and end it across the country. It 100% ineffective and unnecessary.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

As of March 8, 2022:

Florida has experienced 331 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 17th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 222 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 37th highest in the country. Virginia's COVID-19 related death rate is 32.9% lower than Florida.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109011/coronavirus-covid19-death-rates-us-by-state/>

As of March 7, 2022:

Florida has experienced 27,225 COVID-19 related cases per 100,000, 10th highest in the country.

Virginia has experienced 19,282 COVID-19 related deaths per 100,000, 44th highest in the country. Virginia's COVID-19 related case rate is 29.2% lower than Florida.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109004/coronavirus-covid19-cases-rate-us-americans-by-state/>

120542 2022/03/03 11:16:50 Chelsea Abolish masks mandates everywhere It;s been 2 years. Weve had enough. Please allow people to make their own decisions regarding masks, especially in the workplace. My body, my choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120544 2022/03/03 11:56:26 Anonymous revoke 16VAC25-220 immediately
revoke 16VAC25-220 immediately

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120545 2022/03/03 12:06:04 Mother Wife Daughter of tortured family members End the mandates. Businesses are too scared to remove them without the DOL blessing
Get rid of these ridiculous mandates. It's all theater at this point and is a joke when you see someone wearing a mask. It's just abuse to human beings to block your airways, distance yourself from others and drown your skin in 100 proof alcohol numerous times a day

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120546 2022/03/03 14:08:23 vbcps Mask BS
If you really really really really really think the that masks work and your wearing your six , then why are worried if the person next to you isn't wearing one ???? Explain that to us !!!! If your that scared wear your masks and hide under your bed and never come out!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120547 2022/03/03 14:12:54 Anonymous Germs
There's germs everywhere . In the air we breathe, the food we eat , the water we drink and everything we touch. Its up to God as to what will kill us !!! So wear your muzzle and leave the the rest of us alone

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120548 2022/03/03 14:45:47 LisaS Stop the Tyranny: End ALL mandates
It is Tyranny, abusive and misuse of power to keep these mandates in place

There is absolutely NO justification, atleast not any supported by REAL Science

The Gene therapy injections don't work to stop the Covid spread, infection, and neither is it safe(VAERS database and based on adverse vaccine event data from UK, Israel). Yet, we are FORCED to test for Covid or get fired if we don't vaccinate. The tests are faulty, yet it is being forced on us. ENOUGH!

I don't see any information on Natural Immunity, when it is much more robust than the brief immunity provided by the covid injections

Time to follow real Science! Why do you need 30 days to end mandates?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120549 2022/03/03 15:52:40 Martha B Conti NO MORE MANDATES

Plain and simple- NO more mandates. We live in a FREE country, or what is left of one. We can make educated choices for ourselves. We do not need your input, or regulations. We were born into this world, FREE by almighty God. You are not responsible for us. Maybe your agency will be dismantled, and you can join our FREE society. Go and find yourselves a new career, where you actually have purpose in life, and are productive to our society

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120550 2022/03/03 15:58:57 Seeing Clearly Now The damage is done!

The mandates and policies have broken the back and often the bank of many a business, small large. The fear spread by lack of knowledge has made China rich selling masks and medicine. The goverment handouts further hurt business and have destroyed work ethic. Inflation rages not only because of poor leadership from Washington but also because of the many shutdowns, restrictions and masking

requirements. As an above average wage earner and therefore tax payer of 62 years age I can say the last 2 years has been the biggest news political fraud as well as waste of Virginia and US tax dollars, aside from random war efforts in my lifetime. No one is forced to have a flu vaccination and in our country mask use has been rare before this. COVID deaths are unbelievable as a person can have multiple issues at the time of death and COVID was probably the least severe of the concerns. The information from 90% of media is untrustworthy and unreliable, the same from the CDC and because of that Virginians have the same thought of the messages of our former Virginia Government leaders. Masks stop spit not the unseen micro organisms in the air. It makes no sense to allow people to eat unmasked but not work together. When You eat your mouth has to be open and you intentionally put things in and out. Why has it been safe to eat without a mask but not walk in the park, ride a bus or go to work. People that want to wear masks can continue as others do around the world long before COVID

End the Mask Mandate and stop wasting tax payer time and money. It is time to go to work America and Virginia. No more excuses, no more tax waste and handouts. Virginia is late to recend due to being attached to D.C. and the out of control National Government. Vote them all out of office!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120552 2022/03/03 17:06:16 P.s Drop the mandates and stop discrimination

At work now, mask mandates dropped for vaxxed employees only. On what basis are such discriminations allowed. Is there civil law in this state?

What science are you using- fringe science?

Because the vaxxed STILL spread covid, get infected. What is the difference between vaxxed and unvaxxed and WHY the discrimination??

People with natural immunity have better protection than that provided by the speedily waning protection of the covid injection

Shame on you for pushing discrimination

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Commenter is incorrect about mask mandates tied to vaccination status if their employer chooses to follow updated CDC guidance: SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120553 2022/03/03 19:22:43 Anonymous optional for everyone else except staff ???
How asinine !!!! Masks optional for everyone except staff !!! This is why you can never trust government to take care of you. Remember hurricane Katrina ? Look what's going on in Ukraine !! They had 8 years to strengthen their military and their alliances. Now the people are getting slaughtered because they thought their government would take care of them and protect them!!! Wake up people, SPEAKE UP !!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120554 2022/03/03 19:44:41 Anonymous No more masks in medical offices
Masks should be optional in medical offices for staff and patients. Front line hospital is a different situation. Physicians office staff should have the option to wear or not wear a mask, and the practice administration should not be able to force masks to be worn either

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120555 2022/03/03 19:47:10 Anonymous Remove masks in medical offices.
Medical office staff have been wearing masks for two years. Every day, for 2 years. We're weary, tired, and morale is at an all time low. We're vaccinated....to keep our jobs. It's time to get us, and everyone else out of these masks. Please, please help us

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120556 2022/03/03 19:55:04 Anonymous Masks not effective.
Unless EVERYONE is wearing a properly fitted N95 mask, they are worthless. Neither masks or vaccines are 100% effective despite what we were less to believe. It's simply theater at this point. It's time for everyone to have the option to wear a mask or not weat a mask...EVERYONE.....teachers, medical office employees, restaurant staff, retail...ALL of us. And, it should not be an option for an owner or manager to dictate otherwise

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120557 2022/03/03 20:00:56 Anonymous End mandates for masks, and screening, in medical offices

End mask mandate, temperature screening and covid related measures in all medical offices for both staff and patients

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120558 2022/03/03 20:02:25 Anonymous thank you

Thank you all for making our voices heard !!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120559 2022/03/03 20:04:52 Anonymous Please don't wait, end mask mandates now.

Recent guidance should be enough to move forward with removing mask mandates for everyone now! Is our state really going to lag behind the rest of the nation on this? Get rid of all mandates for everyone!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120560 2022/03/03 20:24:13 Anonymous End Mask Mandates

Please end ALL MASK MANDATES

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120561 2022/03/03 20:52:34 Anonymous End mask mandate

It is time to end mask mandates for everyone, even those in healthcare. If someone wants to wear a mask they should be allowed to do so but no one should be forced to wear one. Employers should not be allowed to force vaccines or mask on their employees. End the mandate now!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120562 2022/03/03 21:11:20 Resident Drop all mandates and for employees
Please drop all COVID Permanent Mandates in public facilities including Fairfax County Buildings and Schools. These have been in place for almost two years and it is absolutely ridiculous. We should have a choice to be vaccinated or not we should have a choice to wear a mask. These mandates has been a real nuisance seeing my coworkers afraid of dealing with the public and conducting normal business. So working with local Fairfax County and public buildings; these include restrictions from: plexiglass around our public desks and private desks inside buildings, the unnecessary cleaning of office and desks, the fear of dropping masks because of COVID, the fear of just shaking hands with a coworker and or customer! This has ruined our society and the fear mongers that drive it. Please enforce normal daily activities and support the benefits of being normal again! Thank you so much!!! Very glad we have a Republican in the office again!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120563 2022/03/03 21:14:40 Anonymous End the mandates
I work in a physicians office. For 2 years we have been forced to wear a mask every day. At this point, we all wear a mask at work but the first thing we do at the end of the day is remove the mask and go about our lives outside of the office without a mask. We go out to eat, we go shopping, we visit with friends, we go to church, parties and we do whatever we want "maskless" until we have to go back to the office. Why should we still have to wear a mask at work? It's time to stop forcing people to wear a mask, including healthcare. Give people the option and allow us to make our own choices about our health

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120564 2022/03/03 21:45:02 Anonymous End the Mandate
I live in Loudoun County, which recently removed the mandate for county workers, with the exception of the unvaccinated and medical workers. As I am unvaccinated, I must continue to wear a mask and submit to weekly testing while the patrons for our libraries are free to come in without a mask, whether vaccinated or not. Where is the equality in that? Please revoke the mandate for ALL Virginia county employees, regardless of their vaccination status

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The weekly testing mandate referenced by the Commenter is not in the Virginia Standard.

120565 2022/03/03 22:07:16 Resident Why do we have to wait until 3/21??
Why do we have to wait until 3/21 to drop all mandates in the workplace? So that means our CEX of Fairfax County and all the directors of each department will have to talk and take their time ripping down all the plexiglass and over abundance cleaning, social distancing, daily employee health check ins, proof of vaccinations, meeting room limits, those lucky employees that can telework while we have been in the public for two years. Also having in the back of our minds to keep mask signage for just in case??? No more just incase!! It's done over with!! Smile with your mouth not your eyes. Why can't the meeting be held sooner? Why wait 30 days? Why? These directors, managers are going to take their sweet time with this , while is employees suffer until when April? This should have never been in place ever

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120566 2022/03/03 22:12:21 VA RESIDENT No more mandates ever!
Let's end all mandates forever! This has ruined our society, economy, children and the control of big Government and egos. Why wait???? Please reconsider and close this commentary ASAP!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120567 2022/03/03 22:12:21 Anonymous No more mandates
No more mandates!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120568 2022/03/03 22:15:29 Let's make VA great again!!! Let's make VA great again by stopping forever mandates!

Mandates have ruined society and gave us fear of death, the unknown and just even living life.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120569 2022/03/03 22:22:13 Angry resident Angry at this state

I am so angry right now because of the tyranny behind this mandate in the workplace for almost two years. Local government/Schools/Transportation/Health care facilities/businesses will take their sweet time removing mandates in the workplace and you must tell them effective immediately that all mandates have been revoked and will never be in place again. So throw out those signs, plexiglass glass etc and be fully back to normal ASAP and give 48 hours to do so for the sake of employees! We suffer the most. Thank you

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120570 2022/03/03 22:30:05 Anonymous Mask mandate has been lifted but why wait for employee/employer mandates to be lifted

Why do we have to wait until 3/21? The mask mandate has been lifted on 3/1 in workplace, but why wasn't the whole DOLI Mandate Article revoked?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120571 2022/03/03 22:45:50 Anonymous Have 3/21 the meeting earlier please!!!!
Let's end these mandates now!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120572 2022/03/03 22:47:56 Anonymous This should be an emergency revocation now!
So why was this an emergency to have mandates immediately and now we have to wait until 3/21/2022
to discuss mandate revocation?? Why not stop this and say no we are no longer doing mandates ASAP!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
VIRGINIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (VOSH) PROGRAM**

16 VAC 25-220, Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-COV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19

Combined Townhall, Public Hearing, Direct to DOLI Public Comments 2.17.22 to 3.19.2022 (the second 15 days of the 30 day comment period from 3.4.2022 to 3.19.2022), With Department Response

LINK TO TOWN HALL PUBLIC COMMENT FORUM:

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/Comments.cfm?generalnoticeid=2373>

The Department developed the following standard responses to issues raised multiple times by Commenters (highlighted in yellow):

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356	[REVOICATION]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357	[REVOICATION AND CDC UPDATE]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359	[REVOICATION AND MASK EFFECTIVENESS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366	[REVOICATION AND EMPLOYER RIGHT TO REQUIRE MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370	[PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371	[VIRGINIA STANDARD LEGALLY ADOPTED]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374	[LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382	[FDA APPROVED CLEAR MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519	[30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537	[VIRGINIA RANKINGS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541	[GRAVE DANGER]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550	[ABILITY TO STAY CURRENT WITH CDC CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557	[EFFECTIVENESS OF VACCINES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573	[VIRGINIA STANDARD DOES NOT MANDATE VACCINES/SHUTDOWNS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119575	[EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO FILE COMPLAINT]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119703	[VACCINES ARE NOT DANGEROUS]

Virginia Regulatory Townhall Comments

120573 2022/03/04 7:28:33 Contractor Rescind the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 / 16VAC25-220,
Please rescind the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 / 16VAC25-220. As a company we have remained open and spent money beyond our budget to keep employees safe. This has included implementing temperature checks, enforcing social distancing, abiding the stay-at-home and return-to-work orders, posting signage, adding sanitary stations, rewriting daily safety procedures, and more. We have also tried to complied with all government mandates throughout the pandemic. Now with all the conflicting directions from you, the CDC, Federal and State officials and the fact the Covid cases are less severe and have greatly diminished it is time to rescind the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 / 16VAC25-220

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120575 2022/03/04 9:01:50 VA RESIDENT STOP THE INSANITY!!

This should be a choice that everyone makes for themselves. Even when the mandate was lifted by Northam my employer still made us wear them or risk losing our jobs. Let us have a voice and a choice

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120576 2022/03/04 10:18:46 Brian Perian Revoke the mask mandate for employers in VA
Return dignity to Virginia's employees and allow them to make decisions regarding masks in the work place. This policy is hurting work place morale, causing staffing shortages and should be removed based off of the fact that mask mandates have been removed for school children and in virtually all indoor public places

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120578 2022/03/04 11:43:10 Anonymous End the mandate

As the CDC is recommending the easing of masks in most locations, the VA DOL should do the same. Masks at this point are nothing but theatre, causing a separation in class structure. Why do government officers no longer require employees to wear masks, but grocery store etc do? End this mandate now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120579 2022/03/04 11:57:22 anonymous Abolish COVID Standard

I fully support the abolishment of the COVID Standard adopted during the pandemic. The Standard is costly for employers to implement and has not effectively mitigated the spread of COVID. We are no longer in a pandemic and it unnecessary to continue with the Standard. The workplace should go back to pre-pandemic practices

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120582 2022/03/04 14:32:25 Dan More Mandates Please

I just love listening to people who have never experienced actual hardship, discrimination or subjugation whine and cry about their freedoms, therefore please enforce permanent mask mandates for all of Virginia

Make the crime of not wearing a mask in all settings (include personal homes) punishable by jail time and fines in excess of \$1000

Then make each offender take history and english lessons so they can accurately define words like communism, socialism, fascism, Nazi, etc. because obviously they have no idea

There is no greater oppression than that imagined by Christian White Conservatives

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120584 2022/03/04 17:09:12 Anonymous Covid-19 mask mandate

Hello Politicians,

With all due respect. Please end the mask mandates. Make it optional for those that want to wear them. Just a note, most folks didn't comply during the majority of the lockdowns anyway. Please remember this is the freest country in the world. Thank you for your time

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120585 2022/03/04 18:42:02 Anonymous Is this Russia or America. Give us back our freedom. You are supposed to work for us

Tyrants are at the helm of our government. That's okay we will vote against this shit and you will be fired

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120586 2022/03/04 20:12:15 Allison Woodward Revoke all Covid19 measures/mandates
It is clear by now that the 'pandemic' has been terribly mismanaged - while hindsight is everything - it should have been clear months ago that lockdowns, masks, mandates to force people to take experimental gene editing 'vaccines' or else risk losing their jobs, ability to go to school etc. are truly antithetical to not just our Constitutional Rights and Freedoms - but a direct violation of the Nuremberg Code which established decades ago that NO ONE should be forced to take anything without their consent - and there was NEVER true medical consent because Pfizer, Moderna, JJ have all withheld critical vaccine injury/side effects that are now just coming to light - and they don't work very well if at all as data is showing the more injections the more infections...the lies are coming to light, mRNA DOES enter your DNA whoops! And to try to force this on young children who have literally 0% chance of serious illness or death (as with the vast majority of the population - and/or having their schools closed/remote for almost 2 years!!! All the way to the CDC's erroneous recommendations...but perhaps the worst has been their vilification of any doctor recommending off label FDA approved drugs - like Ivermectin, HCQ etc. as well as EARLY treatment which would have saved 100s of thousands of lives - all in order to allow Big Pharma to get their EUAs for these experimental drugs that evaded ALL trial norms, were rushed and we have no idea just how bad the damage will be...NO MORE MASKS - especially for children, ALL SCHOOLS OPEN, NO VAX Passes/prohibitions for those who are not vaccinated - these fascist tactics need to stop ASAP and a FULL investigation into Big Pharma, Fauci, CDC, and ALL politicians/governors who just went in lock step with all these nonsensical recommendations/mandates. NEVER AGAIN!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119703

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120587 2022/03/04 21:10:05 Anonymous Make Virginia Florida
Florida's surgeon general Dr Joseph ladapo explaining face masks do nothing it's all theatre
<https://t.co/ZY2B6a4JW0>>Florida's surgeon general Dr Joseph ladapo explaining face masks do nothing
it's all theatre <https://t.co/ZY2B6a4JW0>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120588 2022/03/04 21:26:31 Melanie End masks for all employees not just the vaccinated
Please end the masks mandates for all employees. My job is making the unvaccinated where masks but the vaccinated can be unmasked. Seems like discrimination to me

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120589 2022/03/05 10:20:43 Anonymous Revoke this! We are free people. Revoke this!
We are free people. Mandates don't belong in VA, American or anywhere.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120590 2022/03/05 10:30:26 Dandridge Davis Repeal COVID 19 Regulations I urge you to
get Virginia one step closer to normal by repealing any permanent Covid 19 regulations in the
workplace. They do not work. This has all been in the guise of giving up our liberties and we must stop
government overreach. Thank you for your service!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120591 2022/03/05 10:49:29 Anonymous Masks worn by the public do NOT work Everyone
knows masks worn by the general public do not work. They are just a symbol of Satan and all thing evil.
Forcing the general public to wear them is horrible and anyone that supports forced masked wearing is
truly evil.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120592 2022/03/05 14:32:12 Anonymous Get rid of them now What are we waiting for? The
CDC to announce that they are not needed for most people;oh wait that happened already, yet we're
still required to wear them in Virginia.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120593 2022/03/05 20:05:11 Anonymous Masks Get rid of mask mandate!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120594 2022/03/05 21:19:27 Anonymous Business need help! From a business point of view. We need to end the Covid-19 regulations, so we can rebuild our work force. No one wants to work under these work conditions. We are still unable to find workers, please get rid of the Covid-19 restrictions to give us a chance to rebuild. No mandated masks and Covid-19 vaccines in the work place.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573

120595 2022/03/06 9:23:13 Anonymous STOP ALL COVID-19 MANDATES NOW Stop all mandates for wearing masks, getting vaccines, the vaccine passports, restricting treatments, closing businesses. - Stop all Covid-19 mandates now! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573

120596 2022/03/06 12:05:35 Anonymous Previous comment from Dr James Shea is on target!! The previous comment from Dr James Shea is very much on target. We have been lied to and misled, and we've suffered terribly for it. From our children to our businesses to our health care facilities, so much harm has been done. I pray that we can all recover from this. It's time to remove mask and vaccine mandates everywhere, including health care facilities. Make masks optional everywhere upon individual choice, not at the discretion of government, localities, business owners or managers

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120600 2022/03/07 8:13:40 Anonymous Virginia Workplace Standard COVID COVID-19 is a public health issue not a work place safety issue. Medical therapeutics are now widely available. These were not when the Standard was adopted. Follow the science. Repeal the Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120601 2022/03/07 10:28:28 Patrick Moehrle Masking has proven ineffective and should be optional in all situations throughout Virginia Masking has not been effective in reducing transmission, severity, or illness any where in the world. COVID-19 is an aerosol and cloth and loose-fitting masking is not source control. This was all well known and was the standing guidance of the CDC and the WHO prior to March 2020. Virginia needs to stop with the pantomiming and remove all requirements to mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120603 2022/03/07 10:46:31 Kenny Bratton ohsa OSHA is Occupational Safety & Health, was never meant to be and should never be allowed to worry about infectious disease. The health part of their name is for health as working around chemicals that cause a health risk (ex. asbestos, creosote....).

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The OSH Act of 1970 has previously been used to address Bloodborne Pathogens. The OSHA Respiratory Protection and Personal Protective Equipment Standards are designed in part to protect against infectious diseases

120604 2022/03/07 11:08:14 Joshua F Masking has proven ineffective and should be optional in all situations throughout Virginia CDCs own studies have proven masks are ineffective, however the VDH still points companies to follow the CDC guidelines which say mask indoors. The VDH needs to take a clear look at the efficacy of masking and remove themselves from the blind guidance of the CDC.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120605 2022/03/07 13:44:52 Anonymous Revoke Covid 19 restrictions throughout the Commonwealth It's past time to revoke Covid 19 restrictions throughout the Commonwealth including in the workplace and in schools, especially vaccine and mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573

120606 2022/03/07 13:52:22 Anonymous No More Masks, No More Mandates STOP.NOW

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120608 2022/03/07 14:34:35 Anonymous Mask mandate Say goodbye to the slave mask

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120609 2022/03/07 14:40:33 Scott Killian Thank you for doing the right thing Given the large number of comments that are almost universally in favor of dumping this ridiculous regulation, I won't take much more of your time. If you want to see my previous comments on the first draft of the proposed permanent reg and then when they did the 7 day comment period for a few slight amendments, you can look them up and I still stand by all of them. But mostly I want to say thank you for moving to repeal this ridiculous and over-reaching regulation and letting businesses (and employees) be free again

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120610 2022/03/07 14:48:28 Anonymous Mask Mandate No Mask Mandates !!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120611 2022/03/07 14:50:02 Anonymous No Mask Mandates Discontinue all Mask Mandates, its a personal choice !!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120613 2022/03/07 15:41:41 Anonymous Business Owner Time to end the regulations The past two years, DOLI/VOSH has been enforcing near impossible regulations related to COVID as part of the TPS/FPS. These items have not made a significant impact to the health/safety as far as our efforts show for employees, and considering the prevalent nature of the Virus in society, it is impossible to determinate point of origin.

It is my hope that the Safety and Health Codes Board makes it official on March 19, to end these overbearing regulations. They are not protecting employees, anymore than they are protecting the general public, and the costs have been astronomical. This includes hard costs (supplies, cleaning, staffing shortages) and soft costs (employee morale, customer impact, etc.)

It's time for us to move on past COVID. If an individual wants to wear a mask, so let them. But it should not be a requirement for businesses to enforce on employees or customers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120614 2022/03/07 15:59:44 Anonymous Mask - For Now Mask Mandates should remain until the under 5yr olds are able to get vaccinated against COVID-19 too. Masks should probably be optional a couple of months AFTER their approval which should give that age group time to be potentially protected as well

We're all ready to return to normal, but we need to do it smartly. Potentially infringing upon others life/safety because you just don't want to do something, or any other reason, is NOT the answer. Folks talk about my rights - my rights, what about your neighbor's or co-worker's rights as well as the family they have at home?

Care for our fellow men, women, and children should be a priority to all.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120615 2022/03/07 16:49:27 Anonymous Please end the Covid theatre End the scam plz

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120616 2022/03/07 17:13:20 Sarah M End the mask mandate End the mask mandate for everyone

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120617 2022/03/07 21:30:42 Anonymous Please stop ALL masking for EVERYONE! Please stop all masking for every man, woman and child!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120618 2022/03/07 21:31:21 Anonymous Stop the masking at work Stop the masking requirements at workplaces now.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120619 2022/03/07 21:31:42 Anonymous Preserve mask and sanitization requirements for food preparation and service At a minimum, I would like to keep masking and sanitization requirements in place for food preparation and sanitization

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120620 2022/03/07 21:37:02 Anonymous Masks DON'T WORK Masking is a complete waste of many things. It has been proven time and again that they DON'T work.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120622 2022/03/07 22:31:51 Anonymous End the mask mandate for good!!! End the mask mandate for good! If people want to wear masks, that's up to them, but it should NEVER be a requirement!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120623 2022/03/08 6:28:25 Anonymous End the Mask Mandate The company I work, which follows national COVID guidelines to the tee, lifted mask requirements in all 60 of our offices in the USA EXCEPT for Virginia, because of the current mandate. Please rescind the mandate!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120624 2022/03/08 8:05:37 Stephanie R Amoroso Mask mandates in the workplace All but properly worn N95 masks fail to filter COVID through ordinary breathing. It was known in the scientific literature in mid-2020 that cloth or paper masks never protected anyone, just as lobotomies were not the magical cure for mental illness in the 1940s and 1950s but were brutal, dehumanizing procedures that destroyed lives. Yet, the pioneer of lobotomies won a Nobel Prize by peers of experts. Sound familiar? You should not wait 25 years to stop a practice that never halted the spread of COVID but yielded masses of adult hypochondriacs who lack any ability to assess risk. Urging people to lead healthier lives by eating less would have been far more effective than masks at keeping people out of the hospital. Remove the mask and all other mandates that infringe on civil liberties. It's time to accept that people are responsible for their own health, or lack thereof.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120625 2022/03/08 8:54:25 Jim VanDerzee Revoke the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention The threat of severe illness from COVID 19 is no longer present, and it is time to revoke the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. It poses a significant burden on my company's business.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120626 2022/03/08 8:58:14 Kathleen Washburn COVID-19 Workplace Standard Dear Safety and Health Codes Board members,I am a business owner/representative in Virginia's Blue Ridge region, and I write today to respectfully request that the Board votes to end the permanent COVID-19 workplace standard. Throughout the pandemic as well as in pre-pandemic times;our top priority has always been the safety of our employees and the customers that we serve.Although the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic initially called for measures to stop the spread, we are now entering a new phase in our economic recovery in which many of these measures are counterproductive and unduly burdensome.Our business remains committed to the health and safety of our employees and customers, and revocation of the permanent standard will not change that focus.Thank you for your consideration. Kathleen Washburn Owner, NVUS, LLC

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120627 2022/03/08 9:12:20 MaDena DuChemin Time to Repeal this Standard It is time to repeal this standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120628 2022/03/08 9:45:02 LB The COVID-19 Regulations Should be repealed I believe that all COVID-19 restrictions should be repealed at this point in time. We have to return to normalcy, COVID-19 has taken a toll on us in many way shapes and forms, and one of them being the mental and emotional stress.

If we don't take action to restore some normalcy now, we will have a very hard time getting back to it. Society depends on structure and familiarity, we need to be able to go on with our lives the way did before this horrific virus broke out.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120629 2022/03/08 10:17:15 David M Flint The use of masks is against scientific evidence. The use of masks is against scientific evidence.

1.) The use of masks for the prevention of the spread of viruses is against scientific evidence and should be immediately discontinued.

2.) The use of homemade masks is dangerous to public health and should be immediately prohibited.

There are numerous randomized clinical trials performed prior to 2020 that state the use of surgical masks does not prevent or contain the spread of influenza-like illnesses or other viruses. This study <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4420971/> states that cloth masks are far worse and may contribute to the spread of disease. If the source control only contains 03% of the viral shedding one must wonder what the motivation for the policy was and why we are continuing.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120630 2022/03/08 10:50:06 Douglas Agner, Graham White, Wabtec Request To End Permanent COVID-10 Workplace Standard I am a business manager in Virginia's Blue Ridge region, and I write today to respectfully request that the Board votes to end the permanent COVID-19 workplace standard.

Throughout the pandemic—as well as in pre-pandemic times—our top priority has always been the safety of our employees and the customers that we serve. Although the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic initially called for measures to stop the spread, we are now entering a new phase in our economic recovery in which many of these measures are counterproductive and unduly burdensome. Our business remains committed to the health and safety of our employees and customers, and revocation of the permanent standard will not change that focus.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120631 2022/03/08 13:59:12 Jim Smith Revoke Employee Gym Wearing mask mandates Please revoke the Mask wearing of employees as required by OSHA. The employees should have a choice to wear masks or not. Example the Local Gyms still requires their employees to wear masks while the Members have a choice. This is blamed on OSHA. Please revoke today.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120632 2022/03/08 14:02:49 Kevin Twisdale It's all about control, END IT NOW! The wearing of a mask does does nothing unless it's a full hazmat suit. To actually suggest that a mask can stop a virus is completely ludicrous. Isn't it ironic that masking mandates ended a day before the state of the union and yet the reported deaths were actually higher than the same time last year? Another thing, asking someone to wear a mask when entering a restaurant but miraculously it can be removed once seated is laughable. Enough of all this. As a matter of fact, it shouldn't even come down to these comments to determine whether or not to mask up. Also please explain to me why someone's opinion outside of Virginia should even be considered! END IT NOW!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120633 2022/03/08 16:49:45 Anonymous Mask Optional I believe everyone should have a choice as to whether or not they wear a mask. Whether that is out and about shopping, in a school setting or work place. I own a small business and while 99% of our staff and clientele choose to not wear a mask, we respect the small number of people who still prefer to wear one. I do not believe this should be mandated but it should be an option

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120634 2022/03/08 18:20:35 Anonymous Masking I've been a nurse for over 15 hrs and have worked in public/community health in some capacity for 23 years. In my years as a healthcare provider I've worked primarily with the medically underserved, and other at-risk populations including children, the elderly, and the disabled. These are the ones I'm most concerned about, and doing away with masking will put these vulnerable people at risk. Some of these individuals (the very young, or those unable to receive the vaccine for medical reasons) have no other manner of being protected aside from isolation, if masking goes away. Most of these people have family members or housemates who work outside the home and could be exposed and being an infection home.

Further, there is emerging evidence that even mild COVID 19 cases cause changes to to brain (reduction of gray matter and impacts to the area responsible for smell and memory). we are still learning about the long term effects of infection, and the possibility of more variants emerging is very real.

it would be wise to continue to require masking indoors, at the very least, for a while longer. this should obviously be reassessed keeping in mind infection rates in neighbouring states, and keeping an eye on what is happening in other countries to adjust further as needed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120635 2022/03/08 18:22:44 Anonymous DUPLICATE - see above Masking

DUPLICATE: I've been a nurse for over 15 years and have worked in public/community health in some capacity for 23 years. In my years as a healthcare provider I've worked primarily with the medically underserved, and other at-risk populations including children, the elderly, and the disabled. These are the ones I'm most concerned about, and doing away with masking will put these vulnerable people at risk. Some of these individuals (the very young, or those unable to receive the vaccine for medical reasons) have no other manner of being protected aside from isolation, if masking goes away. Most of these people have family members or housemates who work outside the home and could be exposed and being an infection home.

Further, there is emerging evidence that even mild COVID 19 infection can cause changes to the brain (reduction of gray matter and impacts to the area responsible for smell and memory).we are still learning about the long term effects of infection, and the possibility of more variants emerging is very real.

it would be wise to continue to require masking indoors, at the very least, for a while longer. this should obviously be reassessed keeping in mind infection rates in neighbouring states, and keeping an eye on what is happening in other countries to adjust further as needed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120636 2022/03/08 18:53:10 Anonymous COVID restrictions I believe that all COVID restrictions should be repealed immediately. The CDC has already come out and said that masks don't work and so should be optional for those that choose to still wear one. Also, any and all vaccine mandates for businesses and companies should be expelled immediately, especially for nurses and first responders. There should always be a choice when it comes to a person's health.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120637 2022/03/08 21:33:54 Anonymous Repeal the Virginia Standard completely It's time to repeal the Virginia Standard entirely. For everyone. Restaurant, gyms, car rental agencies, wineries, churches, medical offices...and make sure that it is clear that individual owners and managers cannot enforce it on their own. Only N95 masks have any chance of protection, and no one wears those, so it has been pointless thus far anyway.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120638 2022/03/08 21:37:40 Anonymous End mask mandates. Those who are at risk can wear a mask if they prefer. End all mandates. Those who are at risk can continue to mask if they choose. They've been proven ineffective, but if it gives them peace of mind, so be it. As for everyone else, we're done. Masks don't work. It's time for all of us to be able to stop wearing them.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120639 2022/03/08 21:43:05 Anonymous Masking is causing a mental health crisis We in medical offices have been masked for 2 years. It has taken a tremendous toll on mental health. Morale is at an all time low. Good people are leaving the profession for jobs that are open; and without these restrictions. Please, for the sake of the future of health care, please remove mask mandates from physicians offices.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120640 2022/03/09 5:40:02 Anonymous End COVID restrictions on workers Time to end COVID restrictions on employees mandates. Enough is enough.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120642 2022/03/09 8:39:07 Nathan Arries preserve covid health mandates please preserve the current rules regarding covid safety

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120643 2022/03/09 8:52:16 Erin Hamilton Too soon to repeal the VOSH Covid-19 Workplace Standard I understand that regulating workplace health and safety is a burden on businesses, especially now. Unfortunately, many, if not most, businesses do not have a great track record historically for taking responsible safety measures on their own. Added to that, the state may contribute to prolonging the pandemic if the Covid-19 Workplace Standard is repealed too soon. What happens to businesses if a new, more lethal variant emerges because we let it? What happens to Virginia workers and their families as folks return to work? How does it help Virginia's economy if we can't find workers to perform essential work?

It may be that Covid-19 becomes part of our respiratory illness universe. We're not there yet. Please don't repeal the Covid-19 standard yet.

Thank you, Erin Hamilton

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120644 2022/03/09 8:59:59 Karole Lynn Passmore Follow the science My concern is that if the levels of cases are far above what they were when we all went virtual on our jobs and eventually were told to wear masks, how has that changed now?

In a workplace with an open floor concept the front office workers are most at risk while being exposed to multiple contacts with the public. While those who have offices can be more protected. In restaurants the serving staff are most vulnerable to multiple exposures.

The first to remove their masks will most probably be those who DON'T believe in vaccinating either. So how to protect everyone else?

This should be about public health and safety- not about a political side or conspiracy theory propaganda. In a public health crisis we need to continue to follow the science. And we need to protect the vulnerable in our communities. We hopefully are not at a point in the quest for individual freedom to say that some lives are not as important as others? The elderly and those who are immunocompromised should not have to sacrifice their lives for the sake of individual freedoms. There are times when we need to rise above that for the sake of all people.

Masking has worked for enclosed spaces. Social distancing has worked It is not time to stop all masking in every situation.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120645 2022/03/09 9:19:42 Anonymous Mask Mandates Remove all mask mandates for businesses and schools, let the people have a right to choose again!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120646 2022/03/09 9:21:58 Kathie Stuckey Mask mandates Please resend all mask mandates for the work place including for teachers, staff, bus drivers, parents and volunteers in our schools. We ALL are adults and deserve to have a choice for our own well-being.

It's great parents of children now have a voice; however, our children do need to see faces see words being said to totally understand. our younger children have paid a developmental and emotional price for this. Please go back to normal with freedom of choice.

It's important we do!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120647 2022/03/09 9:36:02 Anonymous End the mandates It's time to end the mandates. Healthcare workers have been forced to be vaccinated and now we are being forced to continue wearing a mask while everyone else has a choice. It's time to end all the mandates for everyone and allow all people to make their own decisions, even healthcare workers. Covid is here to stay, just like the flu. All people should be able to make their own choices about vaccines and masking.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120648 2022/03/09 9:40:59 Anonymous This review process is ridiculous -- end the mandate now! This review process is ridiculous -- end the mandate now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120649 2022/03/09 11:39:35 N/A End mask mandates It is time to end mandates for masks in the workplace. I work with unmasked students each day. As I write this, we have no Covid cases in our school. Please end this mandate and see that all agencies, especially local Departments of Health adhere to the ruling.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120650 2022/03/09 12:34:33 Anonymous END SCHOOL FACULTY/STAFF MASK MANDATE NOW Making the school teachers and staff wear a mask when students don't have to wear one and neither do parents or any other visitor in the school building is RIDICULOUS. PLEASE END the mask mandate SOONER rather than later. This is unjust and unfair and honestly, doesn't follow the current science recommendations. PLEASE end masks NOW. It is downright silly at this point. And useless. It is time to MOVE ON. Thank you. A very frustrated Virginia teacher who is STILL wearing a mask on my face everyday even though the rest of the USA has moved on at this point.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120651 2022/03/09 13:01:43 Anonymous End the mandates Two years is far too long for healthcare workers to still be required to wear a mask, especially in private practice. We have been forced to be vaccinated and now we continue to be forced to wear a mask. As adults, we deserve to be able to make our own decision concerning our health. We should not be forced to continue wearing a mask every day. It should be a choice for all. End the dictatorship and let us make mask decisions for ourselves. End the mandates now!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120653 2022/03/09 14:36:01 Anonymous Rescind the VA COVID Permanent Standard It is my opinion that the VA DOLI Permanent Standard did help in getting the science information to more people, along with a clearer understanding of what everyone can do to protect themselves and others. I believe the Standard has saved lives.

Rescinding the Permanent Standard is now necessary because the newer variants are less severe and VA's vaccination rate is far above average. Most importantly, businesses were able to do their part in educating the workforce and their families with appropriate precautions and guidance to keep them safe, which may have never occurred if the Standard was not in place.

Please rescind this Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120654 2022/03/09 14:47:06 anonymous END THE MASK MANDATE! Masks have been proven to to not work correctly. We are now living in an endemic, not a pandemic. How long will we be forcing working people to wear masks? When will it end?? I am surrounded by people who come and go through out my workspace with NO mask. Wearing a mask should be personal choice. If you don't feel safe, have a compromised immune system, or live with someone who does, then wear one. Do not force the rest of our state to suffer. Many citizens now have been vaccinated, if it works why do we need a mask?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120655 2022/03/09 14:56:47 Gary Jones Rescind the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention:SARS-CoV-2 at 6VAC25-220 Rescind the Permanent Safety Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention:SARS-CoV-2 at 6VAC25-220

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Commonwealth's proposal to rescind the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. On behalf of PRINTING United Alliance, we submit the following comments and suggestions.??

PRINTING United Alliance represents the interests of facilities engaged in the production of products through screen, digital, flexographic, and lithographic printing processes.? This includes facilities engaged in garment decoration, production of membrane switches, decals, all types of signage, as well as paper products, such as books, pamphlets, and other marketing materials.? Our industry is comprised primarily of small businesses, with about 80 percent of establishments employing 20 or fewer people.??

We understand the concerns of the Commonwealth regarding the safety of the workforce during this time of pandemic. However, we believe those concerns must be tempered with common sense and recognition of costs that businesses incur to comply with COVID-19 regulations.?

Collectively, the printing industry supports the proposal to rescind the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. This support should not be interpreted as opposition of the printing industry to protect the workforce against this or any other infectious disease.? PRINTING United Alliance has a long history of providing safety compliance information to our industry with the goal of reducing workplace injuries and illnesses.? During this, we have and continue to provide up to date information to the industry on state emergency orders, safe work practices based on guidance by both the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and federal agencies., as well as critical employment information.? Our goal continues to be one of providing information to members of the printing community on safe operation while adhering to guidelines established by federal, state, and local agencies on how to protect its employees from COVID-19 infection.?

When this rule was first proposed, we submitted comments in opposing adoption as we did not see the need for a formal rulemaking implementing specific safety and health practices for this pandemic.? We found that as more information about the virus became known, the CDC, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, and state/local agencies continuously revised their guidance on how to best protect the public and workers. This changing guidance, issued by the CDC, quickly made certain provisions in initial and subsequent VOSH rule obsolete until the rule was amended to allow businesses to follow CDC guidelines and remain in compliance if those guidelines conflicted with the requirements of the rule.

We continue to believe that since VOSH has adopted all the relevant federal standards, the agency already has the authority and regulatory oversight to address safety and health issues associated with this pandemic situation and would use that authority to take enforcement action if a company were not following the rule or latest CDC guidance.? Any additional regulation is unnecessary and would impose significant costs on businesses at a time when many cannot afford it due to the circumstances surrounding the pandemic and its effect on workforce and supply chain issues.

The PRINTING United Alliance remains committed to providing the graphic communications and printing industry with resources to address safety and health issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.? However, we do not believe that a formal safety and health regulation is either appropriate or warranted as current general industry standards are comprehensive and sufficient.? ??

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on this important regulatory initiative.?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120657 2022/03/09 16:52:14 Kim Mills Masks in our schools Because the mask mandate has been lifted at our school, as well as on the busses, I believe it's only fair that the staff & teachers be allowed to go without masks if they should choose to.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120659 2022/03/09 18:11:23 Anonymous End Mask Mandates I have worn a mask at my office every day since May 2020. I got both shots of Pfizer, but still got COVID during the past holiday season (Dec 2021) like everyone else did in the DMV. I believe it's still respectful to keep a reasonable distance in public places and keep physical contact to a minimum outside close friends and family. But masks in a closed office just aren't effective. We should focus our resources on making sure people feel confident in vaccines while still respecting each person's individual right to choose. Provide impartial and reliable information so people can make their own decision. But ultimately, wearing masks indoors and outdoors just isn't making a difference anymore

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120660 2022/03/09 20:11:51 Anonymous Repeal the Virginia Standard Continuing to require masks, especially for those who have been in masks for two years...medical offices, for example...is causing mental health problems as well as forcing well qualified staff to leave their careers. It's time for all mandates to be removed for everyone.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120661 2022/03/09 21:07:32 Jeremy Holmes COVID-19 Workplace Standard Dear Safety and Health Codes Board members,

I am a business representative in Virginia's Blue Ridge region, and I write today to respectfully request that the Board votes to end the permanent COVID-19 workplace standard

Throughout the pandemic;as well as in pre-pandemic times;our top priority has always been the safety of our employees and the customers that we serve. Although the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic initially called for measures to stop the spread & we are now entering a new phase in our economic recovery in which many of these measures are counterproductive and unduly burdensome. As an organization whose mission is to bring people together to collaborate on and address significant challenges and opportunities facing our region, unnecessary regulations that limit our ability to bring people together and communicate dampen our ability to actively and efficiently address pandemic recovery. Our business remains committed to the health and safety of our employees and customers, and revocation of the permanent standard will not change that focus.

Thank you for your consideration.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120662 2022/03/09 23:00:10 Sharrell Harris Mask Mandate I'm in opposition to end the mask mandate so quickly...We must be cautious and take the necessary steps or we might find ourselves back to square one..I've had family members, friends pass from this disease young and old...Have friends that are still suffering from the after affect of this disease. I know people want to get back to normalcy..but that will never be...its not normal to lose millions of people to a disease..so we might have to accept this new normalcy of wearing mask in order to preserve life

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120663 2022/03/09 23:29:28 Matt S. End Mask Mandates It is time to stop mandating mask usage by teachers.The students and visitors to schools have the option to wear masks. Do the same for teachers. It makes no sense to Force teachers (or anyone else) to continue to wear masks against their will.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120664 2022/03/10 9:00:11 Anonymous Masks and planning for everyone's safety Seems it would be most responsible to do mass testing if masks are going to be fully dismissed. We wish someone would pull together a comprehensive plan that considers immunocompromised citizens and their caregivers. Immunocompromised students and employees and their family/caretakers deserve to feel safe going to school and going to work. People living with immunocompromised people remain very concerned about their responsibility in protecting people in their home.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120665 2022/03/10 9:22:02 Tired WAKE UP PEOPLE... Masks NEVER worked. We were never shown any studies to prove that masks work. Wearing masks and getting vaccines (for which NONE are not FDA approved by the way) is political theater. COVID is coronavirus which is the common cold. Please remember people die from the flu/pneumonia every year. The government has absolutely NO RIGHT to tell us how to live our lives! They have no right to force us to get vaccines and lock us down. They don't control us. Stop complying!!!! PLEASE END ALL MANDATES!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120666 2022/03/10 10:06:49 Anonymous masks everywhere must end I'm so fed up with the masking. It's not like they work! They do nothing. Studies have proven it. Study after study and expert after expert show that this masking is absurd. The virus goes right through the cloth masks, and even more easily out the sides and top and bottom. There are gaps. How do you think you can breathe if it traps your breath? People take them off to do certain things. ; Does the virus just stop then? You have to have it to spread it and right now Virginia's case rate is at below 7% of the population. Still, many places are requiring masks. The medical profession is the most stubborn. They DO NOT WORK!!!!!!!! Unless the medical profession wants to hand N95 to all that enter, this mandate must be abandoned. I'm fed up! People look like total morons when they put them on...showing their idiocy and adherence to empty virtue signaling.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120667 2022/03/10 10:57:23 Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus Dear Commissioner Pan:

On behalf of the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association's (VHHA) 26 member health systems, with more than 104,000 employees, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of Labor and Industry's (the Department) Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (hereafter referred to as the DOLI Regulations). We strongly support the proposed revocation of the DOLI Regulations.

Infection prevention and control is a daily, ongoing focus within Virginia hospitals and health systems. Operating under the oversight of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and various other accreditation and regulatory authorities, hospitals and our ancillary facilities are required to consistently demonstrate that their patients and staff receive and provide care in a safe environment. This includes development and implementation of comprehensive infection control plans, quality improvement programs, managing supply chain, training employees and caregivers, ensuring employees have the

resources they need, planning for future health emergencies, and working with congregate care settings to institute strong infection control practices, among other activities.

The DOLI Regulations were a duplicative regulatory scheme that introduced contradiction and uncertainty to an already highly regulated industry that has a moral obligation to ensure the safety of its patients and employees, regardless of any regulatory requirement. By repealing the DOLI Regulations, the Department will afford hospitals and health systems the opportunity to once again focus on the safety of their patients and employees rather than compliance with burdensome and duplicative regulations.

Sincerely, Sean T. Connaughton, President & CEO

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120668 2022/03/10 11:01:55 Anonymous When does the masking end? What are the metrics that indicate the end of masking? What are the maskers looking for to stop the masking requirement? The masks never worked. When people were all masked up the most, the virus was spreading the most. Even the liberal RTD ran an article about a study that showed that masks did nothing, even in a home where someone was covid positive. In homes where there was no masking, some people got positive, others did not. In homes with masking and distancing the results were the same. At what point does this end? What metric must society reach, what amount of information has to go out for the stubborn maskers to understand that the masks do nothing, other than cause social damage?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120669 2022/03/10 12:37:51 Mr. VanWinkle What is happening???? <!DOCTYPE html>
<html><head> </head> <body><p>I just woke up, I'm very confused.
why is everyone yelling about masks?</p><p>what is a Covid? </p>
<p>
Do we have a vaccine for polio yet?</p><p>what happened to telegrams??

Where are all the phone booths??

</p><p>Why do I get weird looks when I go into public with my hulk costume on?? My grandkids told me need masks now and the mask doesn't

come off of the costume body.</p><p>please help me</p> <p> </p> </body>
</html>

No Comment

120670 2022/03/10 12:38:58 Connie Mask MandatesMask Mandates

Please let the individual decide to wear a mask or not. The staff and faculty should be able to make their own decision regarding this issue. The parents and students are able to make their own choice and we should also!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120671 2022/03/10 12:48:29 William Evans, Alpha OneSource Elimination of 16VAC25-220

As a small business owner in Virginia, I support the elimination of the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. The adoption of this proposal would be a great step in the right direction for small businesses across the Commonwealth

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120672 2022/03/10 13:04:50 Stephen Bozzo, Owner, Bozzo Family Vineyards LLC repeal the DOLI Covid permanent standard

We own and operate Bozzo Family Vineyards LLC, a licensed Virginia farm winery near Purcellville, Loudoun County, Virginia. We observe guidance from government agencies such as VDH, CDC, and FDA at our small business for our 5 employees, customers, and management. We follow strict Covid protocols for sanitation, hand washing, and earlier Virginia government imposed requirements for social distancing, capacity, outside service, and lockdowns, most of which have now all (thankfully) been rescinded. We supplied written training materials, barriers, nitrile gloves, disposable service wear, masks, including surgical, cloth face coverings, KN95 and N95, hand sanitizers, wash stations, Covid19 pay, and more our employees and customers. All of these mitigation tasks took time, training, money, and effort and many caused lost business which will not be recovered. We haven't had any instance of Covid19 at our business among our employees.

It is far past time that the VA government rescinded this permanent standard for a disease we are all now living with and managing. We don't need Virginia (or other) government agencies telling us to do what we already know to do, while imposing even more record and other requirements. We have all the incentives we need in times of worker shortages, higher costs, run-away inflation, and supplier shortages to protect our employees, customers, and businesses. Just let us conduct our business and repeal this rule.

As a small business owner in Virginia, I support the elimination of the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. The adoption of this proposal would be a great step in the right direction for small businesses across the Commonwealth. Sincerely, Stephen Bozzo, 1433 Harle PL SW, Leesburg, VA 20175

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120673 2022/03/10 16:02:56 Joe Hill There is No Proof SARS-CoV-2 Exists There is No Proof SARS-CoV-2 Exists

The Commonwealth of Virginia Department of General Services; in a September 2, 2021 letter responding to a FOI request of August 26, 2021; has no proof a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus exists.

It appears much of the Covid-19 pandemic was based on an international scam, perhaps the greatest scam in history.

FOIs reveal that health/science institutions around the world (177 and counting!) have no record of Sars-Cov-2 isolation/purification, anywhere, ever

<https://www.fluoridefreepeel.ca/fois-reveal-that-health-science-institutions-around-the-world-have-no-record-of-sars-cov-2-isolation-purification/>

If there is no proof a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus exists, then no one has proof of what is causing Covid-19.

If there is no proof a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus exists, then no one can develop a test to confirm someone has a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus.

If there is no proof a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus exists, then no one can make a scientific determination as to what does and does not work (such as masks, social distancing, voodoo dolls, or any other measure) in controlling a physical Sars-Cov-2 virus.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Virginia Department of General Services is not and would not be expected to be a recognized medical or scientific authority.

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120674 2022/03/10 16:34:39 Rick James Eliminate the Virginia Permanent Standard Dear Regulatory Coordinator Bernhardt, I work for Adams Construction Company and we're proud to be a 75 year old Virginia based paving contractor located in Roanoke, Virginia. We are a seasonal employer and the large majority of our employees work outdoors. Compliance with the Virginia Permanent Standard has been arduous, costly, burdensome and lacking benefit for the vast majority of our

employees. We were considered an essential employer at the beginning of COVID and we figured out how to work safely and still be productive prior to this standard being implemented. As a small business owner in Virginia, I support the elimination of the Virginia Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention. The adoption of this proposal would be a great step in the right direction for small businesses across the Commonwealth. Sincerely, Rick James, Roanoke, VA

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120675 2022/03/10 16:51:12 Anonymous Eliminate the Virginia Permanent Standard It is time to return to some type of normal. This has had a negative effect on too many people

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120676 2022/03/10 16:55:18 J Riddle End Mask Mandate in Dental Offices/Physician Offices The time has come to end mask mandates for patients in dental and physician offices as well as for our employees who are not involved in the care of patients. As a Practice Administrator I assure you we will always follow appropriate PPE guidelines for providing patient care but requiring my clerical team members to sit masked for 8 hours a day is no longer needed. Patients are highly dissatisfied and this causes disruption in our offices. It adds to the stress of care giving each day. The hours I am spending as an administrator having to discuss which guidelines we follow and why we are different than other places like the grocery store, school or church. Please let us get back to welcoming our wonderful patients with warm smiles and greetings. They come to our office already anxious and nothing is more helpful than a smile. Please let our team members have the ability to interact unmasked. I have new employees who I have never seen their full face. This impacts my ability to cultivate long term employees. We want to create a business culture that is supportive of our team members and take time to get to know each other. It is time to allow us to be responsible and be unmasked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120677 2022/03/10 17:12:38 WWG1WGA MASK MANDATE NO MORE MASK FOR ANYONE ANYWHERE!!!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120678 2022/03/10 20:58:22 Anonymous Remove All COVID Restrictions and Impositions All COVID-related impositions on the populace should have been removed by June 2020, so yes, they should be removed now. Masks do nothing to stop the spread of the illness, the vaccines do nothing to stop the spread of the illness, and what does work to treat and prevent the illness was outlawed, namely HCQ and Ivermectin. Allow doctors to treat their patients. This Bolshevik show-of-force called COVID protocols or whatever has all been a sham.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120679 2022/03/10 21:35:43 Anonymous Comment from J Riddle is 1000% accurate
Comment from J Riddle is spot on! No reason for masks for non contact patient care, and constantly having to enforce and explain why we're different than costco or wood grill. Remove all mandates. Please, get rid of the masks for physicians and dental offices

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120680 2022/03/10 23:09:01 Anonymous Eliminate all COVID restrictions/mandates permanently
It's time to get back to pre-Covid life! Remove all mandates and restrictions - masks in all settings, vaccine mandates in all settings, testing requirements. Get rid of it all and let the individual manage their own health as always in the past!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120681 2022/03/11 7:16:36 Anonymous Mask mandates have ended already idiots Every U.S. state has now ended (or announced an end to) indoor mask requirements. So what are you cry babies on this forum whining about?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120682 2022/03/11 10:03:00 OVER ITPLEASE REMOVE MASK MANDATES FOR STATE AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES State and federal idiots are going by CDC guidelines. On 3/1/22 the Roanoke area was in the Medium range for 2 days and folks weren't forced to wear masks, then 2 days later, Roanoke County was in the High range and masks were required again. Roanoke City is in the Medium range now (3/11/22) and no masks but Roanoke County is in the High range and having to wear masks. ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS!!!! Enough already and rescind the mask mandate!!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120683 2022/03/11 10:06:57 Jordan Lunara Please remove masking mandates The mandate of masking is no longer something that is scientifically valid. N95s are plentiful at this point. If an individual wants to protect one's self, they can certainly wear an N95. Pandemic is now endemic, it is time to release.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120685 2022/03/11 11:16:40 Jeff Prough Rescind 16VAC25-220 entirely Rescind 16VAC25-220 in its entirety.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120687 2022/03/11 12:53:03 Anonymous Please adopt 16VAC25-220 As a small business owner in Virginia I support the elimination of the Virginia Permanent Standard for infectious disease prevention. It's time to free up the resources of small businesses who are struggling to recover from this long ordeal.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120688 2022/03/11 13:53:34 Jennifer mask mandate Please remove the mask mandates for healthcare workers in non clinical settings. We are at no more risk than any other public space. We thank you for rescinding this outdated requirement.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120689 2022/03/11 13:57:47 Jennifer W masks Please remove all mask mandates EVERYWHERE in the workplace. In fact, they should be banned in schools! Not enough are stopping wearing them out of fear of being bullied. Please END THE MANDATES. Send a clear message!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120690 2022/03/11 13:59:13 Stacy Holmes NO MORE MASK FOR NON CLINICAL WORKERS No more masks for non-clinical workers!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120691 2022/03/11 14:12:56 Edwin H. Shelton Proposed revocation of the Standard for Infectious disease Prevention Revoke the standard. No mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120692 2022/03/11 14:30:37 Anonymous END THE MASKS! Please end these mask mandates!! It's long overdue! End them in every single workplace and school!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120693 2022/03/11 15:42:33 anonymous masks in school They actually need to ban them. Many children are still wearing them for fear of being bullied by the mask police. Take these ridiculous things off everyone's faces once and for all!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120694 2022/03/11 16:24:58 Amie Guckian Stop all mask and vaccination mandates immediately
Im writing to ask you all to stop all mask and vaccination mandates immediately. In the workplace, and at all schools, including universities.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120695 2022/03/11 18:56:29 Jess M End mask for front desk staff at doctors and dental practices
Please end all mask for employees who already work long hours and very hard for every patient and practice they work at. This should be optional. Let people make their own individual decisions rather they want to wear one or not

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120696 2022/03/12 8:06:34 David Reppard Eliminate Mask Mandates Wearing masks should be a personal choice. Current medical and scientific analysis confirm masks are no longer needed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120697 2022/03/12 9:35:00 Harold King Mask mandate Optional

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120698 2022/03/12 10:11:08 Anonymous Mask mandates in the workplace I do not believe that masks prevent the spread of this airborne viral infection. If you can feel your breath through it...it does nothing to prevent anything. It did not prevent anything over the past 2 years as it continued to spread. Common sense should have prevailed-if your sick stay home-wash your hands etc. Also, the vaccines that are pushed to the public do not work to prevent an infection or to prevent the spread of the infection. What good does it do? It makes the drug companies and the government money and spends our tax dollars to help develop, purchase and dispense this so call vaccine. I do not believe masks or vaccines should be mandated or should be a condition of ones employment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

120699 2022/03/12 10:29:05 Kim Hicks Repeal mask mandate >I support choice. There shouldn't be a mask mandate in the workplace.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120700 2022/03/12 12:12:14 Leslie Reppard Eliminate Mask Mandates It's time to eliminate the mask mandates

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120701 2022/03/12 21:25:00 Sarah F.End Mask Mandates I am in favor of ending mask mandates for employees and businesses.

With vaccines and natural immunity in place, there is no reason to continue a mandate that has only perpetuated a false sense of safety. In particular, teachers should not be required to wear masks (no matter their vaccine status) when they are interacting with students and the public who are given a choice independent of their vaccine status.

We must also recognize that the benefits of returning to normalcy and a less fearful state of life/mind outweigh the risks of covid.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120702 2022/03/13 8:44:40 Anonymous End all mandates. It's time. End all mask, vaccine and screening mandates for medical offices.

Medical offices have always taken precautions during flu season, and covid is no different. We handled flu season without masking, and we can handle covid that way too. Please, for the sake of our mental health and retaining good employees, please, stop all mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120703 2022/03/13 15:49:33 Anonymous Mask mandates have not ended for healthcare, but they should. Contrary to a previous comment made, mask mandates have NOT ended everywhere. Medical offices are still required to wear masks. It's time for this to end, especially for front office staff. It's been 2 years, and mental health, morale and retention of employees are all very real problems within health care. All of the same staff and patients can gather anywhere else without masks, and only because they are in a particular building-a medical office-do they need to wear a mask. It is becoming increasingly difficult to enforce as most everywhere else no longer requires a mask. For those who cannot be vaccinated or suffer from other health issues, by all means continue to mask, however it should no longer be mandatory in medical offices. Remove all mask mandates, vaccine mandates and all other covid restrictions and requirements-in medical offices and everywhere. And in doing so, do not allow the option for owners or managers to have the freedom to continue enforcing the masking,vaccines or other measures.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120704 2022/03/13 18:04:43 Hazel Remove the Mask How can you stop something you don't know what it is the mask can't stop what you call Covid only God can stop whats not for us not a mask.. if People world wide would choose

God and not power and money these sickness would not be ..thanks for listening \ or reading.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120705 2022/03/13 21:55:04 Tyler No More Mask Mandates All mandates must end now. Individuals need to have personal responsibility and that means making their own health decisions. Masking employees is creating a caste system in our society where the paying clients can be free to breathe air, but the employee is dehumanized by wearing a mask all day. This is not healthy for those forced to wear masks, as masks were never intended for all day wear. Additionally, the CDC has changed their guidelines and there is now much evidence that masks actually don't do much. Wearing masks all the time is actually detrimental to ones health. So enough already with the masks please. Freedom, liberty.. you know, what America stands for.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120709 2022/03/14 8:58:37 Virginia Coalition for a Strong Virginia Economy Repeal Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus (16VAC-25-220) Dear Virginia Safety & Health Codes Board Members:

On behalf of the Virginia Coalition for a Strong Virginia Economy, we fully appreciate the challenges of governing and operating safe workplaces during a global pandemic. Social distancing, enhanced sanitation, remote work, and various administrative and physical workplace controls have become normalized over the last two years. Further, these circumstances were always intended to be temporary, and it is clear that §16VAC25-220 has not been broadly implemented nor is it more protective than CDC guidance and the OSHA General Duty Clause as evidenced by the success of other states without a final permanent standard. As such, the Coalition supports the revocation of §16VAC25-220.

We encourage the Board to adopt a simple Guidance Document for all employers to utilize in helping to protect their workers, suppliers, and customers.

Thank you for your consideration.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

120710 2022/03/14 9:33:07 Lucy Kelly Relieve Childcare Centers of Mandatory Masking!

As a parent of a child in a Virginia childcare program, I welcome this change! Currently, the VA Early Childhood Education guidance says: As relates to staff, providers should refer to the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) standards and updates. Note that updated guidance will encourage employers to permit workers and customers the choice of whether to wear a mask, except as otherwise required by their employer or VOSH pursuant to Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A. The VA DOLI is

therefore governing the mask requirements for caregivers in childcare centers. Centers and their parents should instead be allowed to work together to find appropriate measures for their particular communities. Children need to get back to normal! I urge you to take into consideration the needs of children and the effects of mandatory masking of caregivers around small children -- for additional information, download the Children, COVID, and the urgency of normal toolkit

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/61e5afd7a33d334ec9f84595/t/62115f823054865c6d5497a3/1645305731693/Urgency+of+Normal+Toolkit.pdf>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120711 2022/03/14 9:33:10 Anonymous Employee Mask Mandate At this time, based on the current situation with COVID, it is time to end the mask mandate for employees in public schools. Employees who choose to wear a mask to protect themselves can.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120714 2022/03/14 10:55:52 Ann masks Please repeal the current mandate in all work places!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120716 2022/03/14 11:12:07 Jake Coleman REVOKE IT! I'll keep this short, as the meeting is apparently not working. Revoke it.

Do it. Masks have proven to be useless and so is this rule/guidance/whatever. The real world hasn't been wearing a mask since 2020. And studies released by various scientific outlets in both 2020 and early 2021 have proved this was (because it's all but gone) an aerosol virus; meaning that if you were within 30 feet of another person breathing the same air (i.e. an office) even with a face covering, there was still a chance to catch covid (assuming one of the other persons was contagious... which is an utterly important but often neglected part of any covid safety concerns).

End the stupid protocol, it's useless and doesn't work unless we were all sitting at our desk wearing biosafety level 4 positive pressure suits.

Studies in reference:

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0885_article

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/08/yes-more-data-support-covid-19-aerosol-transmission>

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120718 2022/03/14 11:14:26 Lee Gibson End the mask mandates completely The mask mandates have never worked. End them and never bring them back.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120724 2022/03/14 13:08:18 james pentecost End All Mask Mandates. They Don't Work and Never Have Many studies have shown the inefficacy of cloth and surgical masks, the ones we've been mandated to wear for two years running. Let's stop with the fear mongering science fiction and political science and return to sanity and freedom. aip.scitation.org/doi/10.1063/5.00744229

brownstoneinstitute.org/articles/more-than-150-comparitive-studies-and-articles-on-mask-ineffectiveness-and-harm

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120725 2022/03/14 13:09:18 Anonymous Please end all mask mandates Please end all mask mandates for ALL Virginia employees, the CDC implemented this guidance, as should Virginia. I am all for choosing to wear a mask if you have co-morbidities or are fearful but, let others who do not have these issues make a decision for their health and to not mask. Vaccinated or unvaccinated, masks DO NOT work.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120726 2022/03/14 13:25:29 Anonymous Useless masks I have never been so disgusted at the mandates to wear masks!!No one speaks to anyone anymore; people are completely absorbed in their

telephones now more than ever. It was all a mechanism to see how we would bend and submit to the government's control. It's sickening to see how quickly people swallowed this mess hook, line and sinker! It's painful to see how Biden, CDC, big Pharma all used fear. I've talked to people on the phone during all this who were scared to death; panicking if they couldn't get that stupid no-shot-shot! A shot and a mask for the common cold! That's what they want, the globalists, they want to control us and bring us into submission

BIGGEST FACTOR and false claim - THE MASKS DON'T WORK OR PREVENT ANYTHING. Yet many of us are still suffering by having to still wear these stupid things. Meanwhile, people have lost time from work; lost monies; made us suffer from this stupid bio-weapon and yet, our congressmen and others, including BIG PHARMA are raking in the money while the average citizen is still suffering from this evil event. The only comforting thought is this, they will ALL stand before a holy God and answer for this GREAT EVIL and travesty they have done to us. God help them!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120732 2022/03/14 15:53:46 Anonymus There is no reason to continue the mask mandate
Please end all mask mandates in Virginia. There is no reliable, scientific data that shows
mask reduce the transmission of Covid.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120737 2022/03/14 16:52:02 Katie End the mandate now ! End the mandate now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120738 2022/03/14 17:10:32 Britt Ford Please end all Mask mandates I am a 26 yr VA
resident. I respectfully request you end the mask mandate for all employees.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120739 2022/03/14 17:11:18 Ali Darab End ALL mask mandates immediately. End the mask mandates now. Masks have repeatedly been scientifically proven to be statistically insignificant in the prevention of Covid-19. The mask mandates were never anything more than fear mongering and security theater / health theater. End the mandates now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120740 2022/03/14 18:16:35 Dave End the mandates End the mandates, we know know that masks and lockdowns do not work. The bulk of masks use have holes in the stitching large enough to let the virus through. People now realize we will not bead Covid, we have to live with it like the flu.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120741 2022/03/14 18:27:30 Brian Keefer Repeal Unneeded Regulations It has been proven since the scamdemic began that masks readily available to the public serve no protective purpose. The fact that most schools and businesses do not enforce correct wear, social distancing, and allow mask removal in crowded eating areas shows that the mask mandate was created to allow authority figures to pick and choose who suffers a penalty

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120743 2022/03/14 19:15:10 Bill End the mandates Kill the mandate. There has never been a medical justification for face coverings. I support anyone who CHOOSES to wear one if they find comfort in it

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120744 2022/03/14 19:35:42 P. Moog End the mask mandate Just end it!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120745 2022/03/14 20:11:27 Anonymous No mask mandate

We live in a free society and mandating such things is anathema. These things should be left to individuals to decide for themselves and their children. If such things are clearly of benefit, voluntary compliance would have a sufficient participation rate. Mandates, such as this, are nothing more than thinly veiled tyranny through fear and coercion. This is not the government's role - it is overreach.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120746 2022/03/14 20:27:53 Faheem Darab End Any and All Covid-19 Mandates Immediately- They harm public health and welfare Hello, Please end these mandates for masks immediately. They don't prevent the spread of disease and they are more harmful than beneficial. Any other mandate related to covid should be scrapped. Public health has been harmed and our welfare and business has been as well. Record numbers of small businesses closed during covid due to government mandates, while large corporations thrived and feasted off these small business corpses. These policies transferred wealth from the middle class to the wealthy - as designed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573

120747 2022/03/14 20:59:33 MG End the Branch Covidian Maskhole mandates. Now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120748 2022/03/14 21:13:58 Ahmad Darab End ALL mandates End all covid related mandates. None of them were based in any evidence based medicine. Virginians should be responsible for their own health and well-being.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120751 2022/03/14 23:03:36 Josh Fields Mask mandated If customers aren't wearing masks coming into the stores to shop the workers aren't protected by wearing a mask anyway. This should be a choice of the worker not anyone else. We are tired of working long shifts with masks on our face not being able to breathe. We've worked 2 years through COVID, we know how to handle this ourselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120753 2022/03/15 2:38:51 Theodore Barthel Conrath II Covid Regulations I believe that it is time to repeal all Covid 19 regulations in our Commonwealth

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120756 2022/03/15 9:27:15 R Logsdon Mask mandate In a retail setting, if customers have the freedom to choose whether or not to wear a mask, then employees in any of the establishments should also have the freedom to choose.

Actually, in any work place there should be a freedom of choice. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask, wear a mask. My body, my choice.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120757 2022/03/15 9:31:38 CLCB End mask mandates in settings where not directly working with covid patients Please end mask mandates in chiropractic offices for employees and patients and make them optional, for the health and well being of all. The 2 years of mandates are seriously affecting the quality of life, especially for employees who must wear them all day when working and interacting with healthy people.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120758 2022/03/15 9:42:32 Ron L. Enough is enough! There is now evidence from the CDC that masks don't work. Is someone going to go around making sure you have an n95 with the nose bridge pressed in? This is purely political at this point. I don't need politics in my healthcare! Do the right thing better late than never.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120759 2022/03/15 10:00:47 Charles Logsdon Please end the mask mandate Please end the mask mandatory mandate. You can still catch Covid19 with or with out a mask.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120760 2022/03/15 10:31:46 Lee Hurlock End The COVID Related Mandates! There is no longer a need to mandate supposed COVID safety protocols. Personally, I am not convinced the mandates were effective as represented. Science indicates that the protocols mandated may have been minimally preventative from exposure to infection at best. A person has a right to choose and those who may be at higher risk may choose to continue to follow the protocols that are minimally helpful, but there is no need for mandating such almost useless requirements.

Having followed mandated protocols, I have recovered twice from COVID variants using natural treatment, including vitamins. The second occurrence I was able to also obtain Ivermectin for treatment. I was much better in 24 hours and over symptoms in about 4-5 days following Ivermectin treatment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120761 2022/03/15 10:33:00 BH - anonymous Pfizer retiree Enough of this! Spending 38 years in big pharma as a senior manager and director of training provided me a modicum of knowledge about viral infections, their course, and most importantly prevention, especially with the seasonal flu.

History has seen many viral illnesses - colds, flu, H1N1 in 2009, SARS in 2003, HIV...on & on. NEVER has the world seen the hysteria seen these past 2-3 years. Individuals must exercise their free will and commonsense to take steps to protect their health on their own.

From the start this pandemic has been continually overstated, used politically, and now must be put to rest.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120762 2022/03/15 10:56:29 Dick A School Masks The science does not support the use of common masks. The only mask worthy of consideration is one that bears a strong resemblance to a WWII gas mask. Mental health and learning experiences are both heading South. As a population school age children are not likely to develop severe reactions to the Wuhan flu. Get Government out of education and out of the way to progress.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120763 2022/03/15 12:33:41 David Sic semper tyrannis History always repeats. No Comment

120764 2022/03/15 12:38:07 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.

No Comment

120765 2022/03/15 12:50:56 Anonymous End it Stop trying to control us. When it's convenient for others they preach my body my choice. But, now you are scared of a flu and are willing to allow the government to control you. End this now. At this point we are no longer America we are not free.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

COVID-19 is not the flu.

120766 2022/03/15 13:47:06 L Schex End the mandates End all mask and all COVID mandates. Follow the science. Masks never worked to stop any spread, but have caused untold damages in reduced oxygen supply especially to our children.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120767 2022/03/15 14:11:25 Anonymous DOLI / CDC - are these legitimate agencies any more?

Is there any independent thinking, research or other responsible efforts to vet the substance of these decisions before they're made? are there any honest science oriented people in these agencies, or just political run-of-the-mill decision makers? Or is this being shoved down DOLI's throat from above politically? I am convinced DOLI has no real idea if masks should be mandated, why, for what groups, for how long, any real dangers (not theoretical) with and without them, what equipment is necessary, and so on...

It is difficult to make good decisions when relevant information is greatly withheld -I'll give them only that much...

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120768 2022/03/15 16:45:59 AP Unnecessary and ineffective- no more masks Masks have been scientifically proven to be ineffective at preventing transmission of C19, especially since most masks are not rated to protect from pathogens. This is actually creating a more dangerous environment

and promoting a false sense of security. furthermore masks are become commonly discarded/trash items littering public areas

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120769 2022/03/15 17:10:11 Anonymous End the mask mandates Cloth masks are ineffective in preventing the spread of anything

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120772 2022/03/15 20:43:20 Daniel Baxter Repeal of regulations in the workplace enacted by Government due to COVID Regulations enacted by Governor Northerm are restricting business and workers in Virginia. It is time to recind the regulations and return the Commonwealth to normal. Sincerely Daniel Baxter

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120775 2022/03/15 23:01:33 resident and employee End All Mandates! Please end all mask mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120776 2022/03/16 8:33:58 Laura Parr End the Mandates!!!! Masks are useless. This is just another form of attempted control and a governmental overreach of the power that we the people should hold; end the mandates and lose the masks!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120777 2022/03/16 10:29:22 VA Teacher End the mask mandates for everyone, especially teachers ! End the mask mandates for teachers and all other workers. Please allow this to be a personal decision, not a overstepping of freedom

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120778 2022/03/16 10:59:20 Wm. Green Reversion of mask mandate Selfish, spoiled citizenry may end the mandate. I get it, but I choose personally to vaccinate mask up in public. My choice! I've lost far to many loved ones, family & friends that I miss dearly.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120779 2022/03/16 11:10:12 VA Teacher End the mask mandate How ridiculous is it that I am with three blocks of maskless students every day yet I'm still wearing one? Enough!This is long overdue. End the mask mandate now for those of us who deserve to have our freedom of choice. Children have more rights over adults in this matter right now...embarrassing for our state.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120786 2022/03/16 14:40:40 VA citizen END ALL MANDATES AND EMERGENCY LAWS & POWERS, especially 45 days of VOTING! End all mandates and emergency laws and powers, especially 45 days of VOTING!!!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The current standard is not an emergency law, nor does it deal with voting rights.

120791 2022/03/16 17:01:27 Anonymous Revoke the Standard I am typically always for health and safety standardization in workplaces as it makes it easier to enforce. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be a problem that not even our own government can handle, let alone under-resourced and understaffed workplaces. It is very difficult to control individual behaviors and this Standard holds employers responsible for what employees do outside of the workplace. Particularly referring to reporting of positive cases to the VDH/VDOLI then having to spend time proving that the exposure did not happen at the workplace. We do not have epidemiologists, medical professionals, or public health advocates on staff. We have made every effort to comply with a disease that can even be transmitted while wearing masks, making it difficult to convince employees of its usefulness.

The Standard was great at the start of the pandemic when direction in this area was needed. However, it has been two years with no end in sight and with constant changes in preventive/control measures. At this time, employers should be allowed to decide how best to protect their employees. Revoke the VDOLI COVID-19 Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120792 2022/03/16 17:04:05 Barry DuVal, President & CEO, Virginia Chamber of Commerce Re: Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Dear Commissioner Pan and Members of the Safety and Health Codes Board,

On behalf of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce's more than 28,000 business members, we are grateful for the Board's announced intent to revoke the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220.

This is welcome news and goes a long way to removing the barriers and burdens we have previously cited regarding the permanent standard. While the health and safety of our workforce and customers remains a top priority for Virginia businesses, we agree that it is past time for the revocation of the existing standard.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Board on future guidance to ensure employers have the resources and tools necessary to best protect their workers and customers, while allowing for maximum flexibility and economic growth.

Thank you for this action and for your service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120795 2022/03/16 21:31:45 Sheila Kay Maintain the scientific COVID Standards Maintain the scientific COVID STANDARDS

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120799 2022/03/17 8:31:47 Anonymous END all COVID restrictions and mask mandates! Stop the insanity and end the fear-mongering of politicians and government officials that have been drunk with power for the past 24 months!! SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120800 2022/03/17 9:27:42 Anonymous End this mandate As a VA employee, I have done everything that I was supposed to do throughout the pandemic...wore my mask, stayed away from people when possible, got vaccinated...but now that we are finally seeing this become endemic, the state is not doing its part to help people who are suffering mentally and emotionally. There was a time for masks, but that is over. This mandate is ridiculous and seems like a last bit of control for VA to hang on to. We can no longer force the students to wear masks, but we can force the teachers. Really?

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120801 2022/03/17 11:02:13 Bruce Whitehurst, Virginia Bankers Association Revoke the Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention, 16VAC25-220 The Virginia Bankers Association (VBA) represents banks of all sizes and charters and has served as the organized voice for Virginia's \$615 billion banking industry and its 42 thousand employees since 1893. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Department of Labor and Industry's Proposed Revocation of the Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (DOLI Standard).

The VBA strongly supports revocation of the DOLI Standard. Virginia banks unwaveringly provided banking and financial services to their customers throughout the pandemic. They have invested substantial time and resources protecting the health and safety of their employees related to COVID-19, and will continue to do so in alignment with the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Virginia Department of Health. The DOLI Standard is not needed and should be revoked because of the existing Virginia General Duty Clause, the increased vaccination rate, downward

infection trend, and employer familiarity with infectious disease safety protocols. The VBA requests that any guidance document adopted by the DOLI Board for employers to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to their workers be comprised of essential uncomplicated recommendations that are aligned with CDC guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 804-819-4701 or bwhitehurst@vabankers.org.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120802 2022/03/17 11:12:23 Kevin Rooney Masks Hello! So I just wanted to throw my input on about this whole mask situation. I find it quite interesting when we talk about following the science, the masks never provided protection at least not the face diapers that we were told we needed to wear. Dr. Fauci himself actually made the statement in the very beginning and then flip-flopped like most politicians do when they get pressure from whatever source was behind this.

Having spent eight years working in a hospital and three years on the infectious disease committee at Fauquier hospital I know a little bit of such protocols! Last year at the school board meeting I walked up and was the first one to make public comments, wearing my gas mask from the military. I did this to prove a point and brought up N 95 and N 100 mask and stated their specs. Having mild COPD I can tell you firsthand how harmful this mask , to quote our president, malarkey is hurtful.

Having said that I do not know why we are required this 30 day comment period. Did we get to have a comment. When our previous governor implemented this mask mandate I don't think so. So why do you all get to have it two different ways. And if you're gonna say it's a law then things need to change obviously.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

120803 2022/03/17 12:16:24 John A. Hall Mask mandate Covid It is time to move on, lift the covid mask mandates allow nature to do what it is designed to do. If an individual wants to take higher precautions to protect themselves then that is their right. Remember their rights should not impede another individuals. Period.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

120806 2022/03/17 16:08:33 Amalgamated Transit Union Maintain the Standard to Protect Virginia Workers The Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) submits the following Comments regarding the proposed final revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19 (the Standard), which is under consideration by the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board (the Board). As the labor union representing over 2,200 bus, rail, and paratransit workers employed throughout Virginia, the ATU comes before the Board on their behalf, urging the Board to keep the Standard in place in order to maintain for transit workers – and all working Virginians – the essential protections they need as COVID-19 continues to be a deadly presence in the Commonwealth’s workplaces.

The ATU strongly opposes revocation of 16 VAC 25-220, which would leave workers unacceptably vulnerable to a virus that still endangers them at work.

The SARS CoV-2 virus qualifies easily as a hazard warranting Board action. The Board is empowered to adopt – and maintain – whatever feasible and evidence-based standards are necessary to ensure that no worker will suffer material impairment of health or functional capacity.[1] A material impairment is one of real importance or great consequence.[2] Meanwhile, the Board’s own most recent briefing package list fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, pain (including chest pain), loss of taste or smell, and confusion among the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.[3] Long-term complications from the disease can include organ failure, heart conditions, acute respiratory distress, and blood clots.[4] Plainly, these outcomes constitute important and consequential threats to workers’ health and physical function such that the Board is justified in protecting workers from COVID-19.

The aforementioned health impairments also might support the conclusion that COVID-19 is a grave danger to Virginia workers. This finding, however, is not required for the Board to maintain the Standard. Only when issuing an emergency temporary standard – not a permanent standard like the one under consideration now – must the Board determine that workers are exposed to grave danger from exposure to substances or agents determined to be toxic or physically harmful or from new hazards...[5] Therefore, the Board’s preliminary finding that, allegedly, COVID-19 no longer poses a ‘grave danger’... is irrelevant to the pending decision of whether to maintain the Standard. The Board is not bound by its prior conclusion about grave danger or lack thereof, and that conclusion should play no role in the Board’s decision about the Standard’s future.[6]

Moreover, the real and great health threats posed by COVID-19 continue to be substantial hazards for Virginia workers. Consider the following, as noted in the Briefing Package:

[M]ost experts think that [Omicron] won’t be the final variant of concern. There are two likely scenarios going forward...One is that Omicron continues to evolve, creating some sort of Omicron-plus variant that is worse...The other possibility is that a new, unrelated variant appears.[7]

NERVTAG [The New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group] thinks Omicron's mildness is likely pure chance and the next one is likely to be more severe again... It is...not true that variants are becoming milder. Delta was more severe than Alpha which was more severe than the original [virus]. Omicron is milder than Delta but likely not milder than original [virus]... and it’s not part of a steady progression to mildness.[8]

Further, there are signs that SARS-CoV-2 cases are likely to increase in Virginia soon. Scientists who monitor Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wastewater testing data are raising concerns about potential case rises in parts of the United States.[9] Increases in SARS CoV-2 levels in wastewater are concentrated in areas including Middle Atlantic states, which reasonably would include Virginia.[10] Such increases presage rising COVID-19 cases – and as long as COVID-19 is prevalent, so are its associated threats to Virginia workers. Similarly, many COVID-19 experts expect that rising levels of the BA.2 variant (a subvariant of Omicron) in Europe indicate that the United States is likely to experience a new surge in infections in the coming weeks.[11]

Importantly, Virginia workers face the hazards of COVID-19 not as members of the general public – all of whom live with some threat of the disease – but as individuals incurring elevated risks on account of their employment. As stated in the Briefing Package, as of March 14, 2022, 71.4% of Virginia’s COVID-19 cases, 59.4% of Virginia’s COVID-19 hospitalizations, and 32.8% of Virginia’s COVID-19 deaths occurred in the Commonwealth’s working-age population.[12] While in most cases, it is impossible to determine with certainty where a COVID-19 patient was exposed to SARS CoV-2, the health disparities between working Virginians and others are too stark to be coincidental. Instead, they are due to the fact that most Virginia workers’ livelihoods depend on them congregating together for work, creating environments in which SARS CoV-2 spreads easily and with devastating effects.

Public health experts and researchers confirm the connection between workforce participation and the risk of developing COVID-19:

One of the reasons that Black and Hispanic individuals suffer higher rates of COVID-19 than members of other racial groups do is because they are overrepresented in occupations that subject workers to the highest SARS CoV-2 exposure risks.[13]

In California, work in an essential job – including transportation and logistics – is associated with an increased chance of developing COVID-19 and an increased chance of death.[14] There is no reason to believe that this is not the case in Virginia.

In Massachusetts, workers in certain occupations – including transportation – have higher COVID-19 death rates than other workers do.[15] This result is likely due to higher incidence of workplace exposure to SARS CoV-2. Again, there is no reason to believe that these findings would be invalid in Virginia.

In New York, transit workers in public-facing jobs have greater SARS CoV-2 exposure and COVID-19 infection risks than members of the general public do. This appears to be a result of these workers’ enhanced occupational exposure to members of the public. As a result, workplace infection mitigation plans are necessary to protect the transit workforce.[16] Virginia transit workers are exposed to these same hazards.

Fortunately, the Standard mitigates these risks effectively. As of March 14, 2022, Virginia had the seventh lowest COVID-19 case rate of all U.S. states.[17] At this time, when COVID-19 cases are declining and workers are reaping the benefits of the Standard’s protections – which are nearly unequalled in the United States – there is no reasonable basis for revoking the Standard. The Board cannot allow it to become a victim of its own success, nor can the Board itself fall victim to ever-shifting political expediencies. To revoke the Standard would be to deprive Virginia workers of the protections on which they depend to preserve both their lives and their livelihoods. It would, further, represent an unconscionable abdication of the Board’s responsibility to maintain the regulatory conditions necessary for Virginia workers to stay healthy and safe on the job.

Even if COVID-19 were endemic in Virginia – a question regarding which there is no expert consensus – it would be necessary and appropriate for the Board to leave the Standard in place.[18] A disease is endemic when case numbers are stable within a population over a long period of time.[19] Endemic COVID-19, therefore, would be analogous to other persistent workplace hazards in Virginia. These include the dangers of using aerial devices and cutting equipment in tree trimming, operating motorized construction equipment in reverse, and working in confined spaces within the telecommunications industry, to name just a small proportion of the relevant examples. None of these hazards is likely to disappear from Virginia workplaces in the foreseeable future. Yet, in each case, the Board has understood its responsibilities to encompass the promulgation of Virginia-specific regulations regarding these matters. In no such case has the Board cited the persistence of a hazard as a reason not to maintain corresponding protections for workers.[20] There is no reasonable basis for applying a different approach to COVID-19. The Board, therefore, must leave the Standard in place as an essential protection against a hazard that is likely always to be present in Virginia workplaces.

The ATU appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed final revocation of the Standard – supplementing our comments on this rule from October 2020, January 2021, and July 2021 – and we thank the Board for its consideration. For further information regarding the matters discussed herein, please contact ATU Associate General Counsel Laura Karr at lkarr@atu.org or (240) 461-7199.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120809 2022/03/17 22:02:54 Anonymous End the mask mandate! End all covid mandates, for everyone.....including health care.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120811 2022/03/18 8:48:06 Kevin Cannon, AGC (on Behalf of the Construction Industry Safety Coalition) Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus The Construction Industry Safety Coalition (CISC) respectfully submits these comments to the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's (DOLI) Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220 (Standard).

These comments support the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board decision to adopt a proposed revocation of its COVID-19 Standard, 16VAC25-220 based on emerging scientific and medical evidence that the current widespread variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a), and as discussed in the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *National Federation of Independent Businesses v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration*, 595 U.S. ____ (2022).

The Construction Industry's Proactive Efforts to Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on Construction Workers.

The CISC is comprised of national trade associations representing virtually every aspect of the construction industry, of which many reside and work in Virginia. The CISC was formed in 2013 to provide data and information to Federal OSHA on regulatory, interpretive, and policy initiatives. The CISC speaks for small, medium, and large contractors, general contractors, subcontractors, and union contractors alike. The CISC represents all sectors of the construction industry, including commercial building, heavy industrial production, home building, road repair, specialty trade contractors, construction equipment manufacturers, and material suppliers.

From the outset of the pandemic, the construction industry has been at the forefront of efforts to protect construction employees from the virus. The CISC developed a COVID-19 Exposure Prevention Preparedness and Response Plan (the Response Plan) in March of 2020, which has been made available in both English and Spanish and provided at no cost to the construction industry (see, e.g., <https://www.buildingsafely.org/covid-19-coronavirus/>). The CISC updated the plan four times to account for changes in guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As discussed more fully below, the Response Plan is tailored to the construction environment, which Federal OSHA has generally classified as low risk.

In addition to the Response Plan, the CISC organized two safety stand downs related to COVID-19, one in April 2020 and the other in January 2021. The most recent stand down was designed, in part, to reinforce that construction employers and employees must stay vigilant when complying with key COVID-19 prevention efforts.

Moreover, from April 19, 2021, to April 23, 2021, CISC members partnered with the CDC to conduct a Vaccine Awareness Week in Construction campaign to raise awareness of the safety, effectiveness, and benefits of COVID-19 vaccination among construction workers. The CISC encouraged participation in Vaccine Awareness Week, distributed education materials and a new industry public service announcement, and encouraged participation in the CDC and NIOSH vaccination education webinars for the construction industry.

COVID-19 Transmission Rates, Hospitalizations and Deaths Have Declined Sharply.

The data supporting the DOLI Standard has changed significantly from the best evidence available on COVID-19 transmission from January 2020 when the rule was issued. In recent months, significant changes in the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 transmission have emerged. Data from 2020 and 2021 reflects a time when the Delta variant swept through the country. The Delta variant was far more deadly than the Omicron variant which is accountable for most current COVID-19 infections. DOLI must consider the differences between the nature of the variants and levels of community transmission in determining whether a COVID-19 standard is appropriate.

According to CDC data, as of the week ending March 5, 2022, no COVID-19 cases in the United States were due to the Delta variant, with 100 percent of cases were attributable to the Omicron variant. See, <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions>. Contrast this to December 2021, which showed 25.7 percent of COVID-positive individuals in the United States were infected with the Delta variant, and 73.8 percent were infected with the Omicron variant. This trend shows that Omicron, which is more contagious but far less lethal than Delta, has become the dominant variant. In fact, Omicron has been so contagious that the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Dr. Antony Fauci, famously stated that just about everybody will be infected by it. In addition,

the Omicron variant seems to cause fewer hospitalizations and deaths than previous mutations of the virus.

Additionally, based on local conditions and trends in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the University of Virginia (UVA) COVID-19 Model Projections (updated March 2, 2022) indicate that new confirmed COVID cases in the state already peaked at 114,148 per week during the week ending January 16, 2022. The model predicts with 95% confidence that there will be only 279 cases per week in Virginia by the end of April 2022. See, <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/see-the-numbers/covid-19-data-insights/uva-covid-19-model/> (last visited March 10, 2022).

Finally, in March 2022 the CDC also issued new metrics for measuring the threat of COVID-19 which looks at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. Specifically, the CDC metrics now consider new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, the percentage of inpatient hospital beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and the number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days. Based on the new CDC metrics for measuring the threat of COVID-19, more than 90% of the United States is a low to medium threat. See, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html> (last visited March 10, 2022). The CDC also acknowledges that at this point in the pandemic, the United States has high rates of vaccine and infection-induced immunity in the population and that medically significant disease can be minimized and prevent excessive strain on the healthcare sector even while SARS-CoV-2 virus continues to circulate

The Construction Industry is Low-Risk for COVID-19 and There is No Grave Danger in Construction Justifying the Need for the Standard.

As a general matter, construction operations are low risk with respect to the transmission and spread of COVID-19. Early in the pandemic, Federal OSHA explained that the level of risk of occupational exposure to COVID-19 depends in part on the industry type, need for contact within 6 feet of people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2, or requirement for repeated or extended contact with persons known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV2. See, <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OSHA3990.pdf> (last visited March 10, 2022). Workers, such as construction workers, that have minimal occupational contact with the general public or other coworkers are generally considered to have a low exposure risk.

Federal OSHA also established a webpage further analyzing when certain types of construction work fall into the various COVID-19 risk exposure categories. According to Federal OSHA's own assessment, most construction work poses low exposure risk; construction work only crosses into high exposure risk when it takes place at indoor work sites occupied by people such as other workers, customers, or residents suspected of having or known to have COVID-19, including when an occupant of the site reports signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Therefore, construction work is unlikely ever to pose a high exposure risk or very high exposure risk. See, <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/control-prevention/construction> (last visited March 10, 2022).

In addition, in June 2021 Federal OSHA published an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) 29 CFR 1910 Subpart U - COVID-19 applicable to healthcare services and healthcare support services, where the Agency described the high risk of COVID-19 transmission posed by indoor work environments with close human contact. The preamble to this rule acknowledged that the primary way the SARS-CoV-2 virus spreads from an infected person to others is through the respiratory droplets and that most commonly this occurs when people are in close contact with one another in indoor spaces (within approximately six feet for at least fifteen minutes) (CDC, May 2021). 86 Fed. Reg. 32,376, 32,392 (June 21, 2021). Federal

OSHA later referenced a study by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, which found that indoor settings contributed to 95% of reported clusters. And the preamble further acknowledged that there are a number of factors – often present in healthcare settings – that can increase the risk of transmission: Indoor settings, prolonged exposure to respiratory particles, and lack of proper ventilation (CDC, May 6, 2020). 86 Fed. Reg. 32,393, 32,392 (June 21, 2021). While these factors may be commonly present in healthcare settings, they certainly are not common occurrences in construction environments.

Finally, the current widespread variants of the COVID-19 virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace under Va. Code §40.1-22(6a), and as discussed in the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *National Federation of Independent Businesses v. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration*, 595 U.S. ____ (2022).

The Supreme Court noted, that while COVID-19 is a risk that occurs in many workplaces, it is not an occupational hazard in most. The CISC agrees with the Court that Federal OSHA—and by extension OSHA State Plans—do not have the authority to regulate daily lives and the universal risk OSHA seeks to regulate is not supported by the OSH Act. The Supreme Court was clear that [p]ermitting OSHA to regulate the hazards of daily life—simply because most Americans have jobs and face those same risks while on the clock—would significantly expand OSHA’s regulatory authority without clear congressional authorization.

Conclusion.

The CISC appreciates DOLI’s consideration of these comments. Based on new data, coupled with the fact that almost two years into the pandemic lockdown orders have long been lifted across the country, suggests that individuals can no longer be said to have a higher risk of COVID-19 infection from workplace exposure as opposed to some other community-based exposure. Given these circumstances, the CISC respectfully requests that DOLI permit revocation the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120812 2022/03/18 10:24:00 Johanna Carrington, parent of teacher end the mask mandate. Masks are demoralizing, dehumanizing, and completely ineffective. Please end this charade now

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120813 2022/03/18 11:31:29 Manuel Gago Legal Aid Justice Center This regulation had saved workers lives This regulation had saved workers lives

Dear Mr. Withrow and the Members of the Safety and Health Codes Board,

My name is Manuel Gago, and I'm a senior community organizer with the Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC). LAJC is a statewide organization that provides free legal representation to low-wealth people throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, aiming to address the root causes of injustice and poverty. Among other things, LAJC provides representation to individuals in their efforts to maintain safe and healthy workplaces where their dignity is recognized and upheld. I want to make a comment on behalf of our client base and Virginia's workers.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been on the ground working with the community and workers in a host of industries. When COVID-19 first began sweeping across the nation as a part of a still-ongoing global pandemic, Virginia was the first state to adopt workplace standards to protect workers and their families from the deadly virus. These standards served as a leading example for other states across the US. Locally, these standards protected workers and have kept Virginia safe and productive. Although Americans and Virginians are understandably anxious to be back to normal, even today, much remains uncertain about the full impact of the virus going into the future¹ COVID-19 is not gone just because people want it to be gone. We have to create a new normal – the old normal no longer exists.

COVID-19 has already killed more than 967,450 Americans and 19,392 Virginiansⁱⁱ (as of March 17, 2022). This is up from 924,000 Americans and 17,779 Virginians when we last gave an oral public comment to this Board in February 2022. In other words, in Virginia alone, more than 1,600 individuals have died in just the past month.

As the world barrels into reopening despite waning efficacy of vaccines,ⁱⁱⁱ variants that are more resistant to vaccines,^{iv} the lack of a vaccine for children under 5 years of age, efficacy concerns for vaccines for immunocompromised individuals,^{vi} the ability to be reinfected,^{vii} and the near-certainty of future variants,^{viii} it is imperative that we take a moment to pause and consider what the health outcomes are of removing all protections. Indeed, right now, Europe is starting to see yet another surge.^{ix}

No one enjoys taking COVID-19 precautions like wearing masks, but we do it because we live in a society, and part of living in a society means considering that the choices we make impacts not just our own selves, but all of society. This is why we get vaccinated for diseases like polio and mumps, why employees are required to wash their hands after going to the bathroom, and why smoking is no longer permitted in restaurants, to name but a few commonplace public health measures. We do these things because it protects ourselves and, importantly, those around us.

Virginia's standards have saved lives with common-sense protections that this Board adopted, like wearing masks, reporting cases, and exposure notification. The standards are simple, easy to manage ways to mitigate the continued spread of COVID-19 as we try to create a new normal. What is more, by maintaining enforceable measures, employers that are not in compliance are not gaining a competitive advantage over employers that are playing by the rules. Furthermore, given variations of these standards have already been in place for more than a year and a half, employers have already invested in these measures and, thereby, in protecting their most valuable asset – their workers' lives. These are not new costs, but instead, we are simply maintaining those that have already been in place now for a long time.

In the end, Virginia is a leader on this issue, and this standard has saved lives. Let's not go backward. Finally, we should always put human lives over some extra dollars of profit.

Thanks so much for your time and for giving us the opportunity to make this comment.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

120814 2022/03/18 15:11:34 Anonymous Covid Protocols Mask mandates are no longer necessary among vaccinated employees. Please lift them. SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120815 2022/03/19 11:15:00 Firefighter / EMT End the Masks and Mandates The masks and mandates need to go away for the reasons below.

The vaccine is not to keep people from getting COVID-19, but to help them from giving it to other people and keeping vaccinated people that get COVID-19 from getting as sick as those that are not vaccinated.

There is no scientific proof that there is one single type of mask that works better than others to stop the spread of COVID-19.

The only types of masks that people could wear to stop the spread of COVID-19 would be a half mask respirator with filter cartridges, supplied air respirators, or a PAPR. These masks require yearly fit testing, plus how many people would wear any of these for a whole day while at work much less when they go out shopping, to dinner, etc.?

I personally know people that have been fully vaccinated that wear N95 masks and / or double layer mask when they are out in public, and they have still gotten COVID-19.

Gym's, fitness centers, and martial art schools in the same localities that are not doing the same thing because of the ever-changing CDC and Dept. of Health recommendations and these businesses not knowing the best thing to do. Some are saying masks no matter what, some are saying no masks if fully vaccinated, and others are saying only fully vaccinated allowed but you still have to wear a mask.

At some point COVID-19 is going to have be treated like the flu and other disease that hospitals, doctor offices, etc. have yearly vaccines for that everyone is recommended to get every year. The world is not running around with masks on every day because of the flu.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120816 2022/03/19 12:42:04 Librarian End the ineffective and discriminatory policy The fact that these standards were made permanent by the DOLI should give people pause as to the intentions behind creating long term restrictions to what should have been a short term problem. Most other states have dropped masking mandates weeks ago and VA is still waiting to catch up. As far as effectiveness, employees are no more protected than before by the burdensome requirements and unvaccinated employees are singled out by forced masking and restrictions on distancing. Masked and vaccinated co-workers have contracted Covid at a higher rate in my workplace than unvaccinated co-workers with symptoms that were worse in many cases. Remove the DOLI policies and allow employees to conduct their own risk assessment, especially since customers are allowed these same freedoms

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550

120817 2022/03/19 14:05:55 Virginia AFL-CIORe: Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention The Virginia AFL-CIO, a state federation of the national AFL-CIO, represents over 300,000 union members and their families. With more than 300 affiliated local unions in the Commonwealth, unions represent workers in a broad range of industries including healthcare, first response, food processing, manufacturing, hospitality, construction, transportation, utilities, grocery and retail service, education, and others; in private and public sectors; in stationary and mobile workplaces. Our members work side-by-side millions of non-unionized workers. We have been engaged with the COVID-19 rulemaking since Virginia first proposed emergency temporary standards in 2020 through comments and testimony and have continued to support the work of the Safety and Health Codes Board in protecting workers.

The Commonwealth, through its Department of Labor and Industry and Safety and Health Codes Board, was the first state to thoughtfully and expediently issue a permanent standard to protect all workers from COVID-19. Now the Commonwealth has proposed to become the first state plan under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to revoke existing, permanent protections for workers, including those in health care settings, and are doing so just as an emerging COVID-19 omicron variant surge is expected and as Federal OSHA is expected to issue a permanent COVID-19 standard to protect health care workers.

The Virginia OSHA COVID-19 standards—temporary and permanent—in workplaces have been preventing workplace exposures and have saved lives. The permanent standard requires workplace outbreak reporting so that outbreaks can be easily identified early on for intervention to slow the spread, and so that outbreaks can be identified by industry for more targeted interventions. The existence and enforcement of this standard ensures workers are notified when they are exposed to COVID-19 on the job and requires employers to provide effective prevention measures. Virginia was the first state to recognize that COVID-19 spreads through small aerosolized particles in the air and therefore, instituted common sense measures to prevent such airborne exposures, like ventilation and respiratory protection. These prevention measures slow transmission in workplaces, preventing infections and keeping businesses running.

The COVID-19 crisis is still a pandemic. But OSHA protections are not promulgated and issued solely to address pandemics or other worst case scenarios. These protections are regularly issued and are absolutely critical to prevent worker exposures to endemic hazards, including silica, lead, asbestos, and many other hazards. The Occupational Safety and Health Act requires employers to always keep workplaces free from recognized hazards. The significant illnesses and deaths caused by COVID-19 exposures at the workplace are known. More than 1.6 million people have been infected and nearly 20,000 people have lost their lives due to this virus in Virginia alone.¹ Workers continue to need strong protections to prevent workers from inhaling COVID-19 and becoming infected, sick and dying.

COVID-19 is not yet endemic and may not be. As Virginia plans to remove protections in high risk workplaces, where individuals are unable to control their exposure as they are required by their employer to be together and share the same air, cases of COVID-19 are exponentially rising across the globe due to a more transmissible omicron variant of COVID-19.²

Virginia must not move backwards. Virginia must not remove safety protections from workers. The Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19 must not be revoked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541

Calling a standard permanent does not mean that it could never be amended or revoked. It just means that it was not adopted as an emergency standard under Va. Code §40.1-22(6b).

120818 2022/03/19 14:37:19 Petrina Jones Wroblewski, Columbia Gas of Virginia Proposed
Revocation of Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus (16VAC-25-220) Re:
Proposed Revocation of Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus
(16VAC25-220)

Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. supports the proposed revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220. We support a simple Guidance Document with flexibility in continued efforts to keep customers and employees safe.

Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc., a natural gas local distribution utility company, serves over 280,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers across the Commonwealth of Virginia and employs over 470 employees. Columbia Gas of Virginia operates out of seven local offices in Buena Vista, Chester, Fredericksburg, Lynchburg, Staunton, Suffolk, and Warrenton serving customers in over 100 counties, cities, and towns.

We appreciate the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board Members and the dedicated employees of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry for their efforts towards meeting workplace safety challenges during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

120820 2022/03/19 16:43:20 Anonymous Follow the science, CDC and the voters in Va. It's past time to end the mandates. Follow the science, CDC and the voters in Va. It's past time to end the mandates.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120821 2022/03/19 17:10:00 Tina End ALL Mandates for ALL End all mandates and regulations now. Treat ALL people with respect and dignity and allow working individuals to make their own risk assessments when it comes to covid 19 mitigation measures. This has been a gross overreach of government into the daily lives of the citizens of VA. Repeal the regulations now!

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120822 2022/03/19 17:54:33 Anonymous Let people decide for themselves The fact that the CDC stated that masks are no longer needed in schools in most situations WEEKS AGO, and most of the country has dropped mask requirements for teachers, but VA requires a 30 day comment period and multiple meetings, is absolutely absurd. Masks had their time of effectiveness when vaccines and treatments were not available, but now is the time for personal responsibility, which the rest of the county has already realized. Please end this mandate and let people decide for themselves how to protect themselves.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519

The Department does not respond to political commentary.

120823 2022/03/19 20:58:39 Mark Fraser, PhD, Aerosol Scientist and OSHA Safety Officer

16VAC25-220 should be Revoked because the PPE are Ineffective and Can Cause Long Term Health Issues Executive Summary: The requirement for employees to wear face coverings at work under 16VAC25-220 (the Standard) should be revoked because the available cloth and surgical masks are known to be ineffective in preventing the transmission of germs and viruses, including SARS-CoV-2. Furthermore, prolonged use may lead to numerous health problems arising from oxygen deprivation, exposure to elevated CO2 levels, and respiratory infections.

My Background: I have a Ph.D. in Physical and Analytical Chemistry with over 40 years of R&D experience developing sensor technologies for hazardous chemicals, biologicals, and explosives. Three of my patents (U.S. patents 6034768, 8137466 B2, and 8252088 B2) address airborne threats including aerosols. I have also been trained as an OSHA Safety Officer under CFR 1910.1450 and formed an Emergency Response Team equipped with sensing technologies, cleanup procedures, and Personal Protective Equipment (Level A Hazmat suits and SCBA respirators).

Discussion: The Standard, subsection 40(G), specifies the mandated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): employees shall wear a face covering or surgical mask that covers the nose and mouth to contain the wearer's respiratory droplets and help protect others and potentially themselves. This selection of PPE was unfortunate because these types of masks bear no certification of effectiveness against germs and viruses and, in fact, were known to be ineffective against these pathogens at the beginning of the COVID outbreak.¹ The inadequacy of the specified PPE is compounded by the fact that these types of masks cannot filter aerosols (micron-sized microdroplets that can remain buoyant in air, increasing transmission distances for tens of meters indoors). Aerosols have been identified as a key transmission mechanism² for COVID-19. Finally, the specified PPE were provided to employees without any training in donning, proper fitting, or safe disposal, contrary to established OSHA best practices.³ It is well-known that proper training is essential to maximizing PPE effectiveness and that improper use poses substantial risk of exposure.

Sufficient data have been acquired to allow the performance of Mask Mandates to be assessed. The unmistakable conclusion is that COVID infections were driven largely by seasonal and endemic factors, whereas Mask Mandates had no discernable impact on infections here in the U.S.⁴ Thus, the following can now be stated regarding the effectiveness of 16VAC25-220: The mandated PPE in the Standard failed to protect employees; This failure is intrinsic to the specified PPE such that it could not provide the desired protection; and, Finally, that the PPE vulnerabilities should have been known and understood at the start of the Pandemic. Language in the Standard suggests that Respirators, such as N95, were also a considered option (they do provide superior, quantifiable protection when worn properly) but they were not available for most employees because of supply limitations.

The Standard has also contributed to the Public misconception that indoor environments are safe if everyone is masked, even if the masks are inadequate on an individual basis. This is scientifically false, contrary to OSHA best practices, and unfortunately has not been refuted by Public Officials. Consideration of two simple cases proves this fact: If you enter a contaminated environment, your ineffective PPE means that you will be exposed. For the second case, if you enter an initially uncontaminated environment that has just a single transmissive source, the inadequacy of their PPE quickly contaminates that environment leading inevitably to your own eventual exposure there as well. An interdependent network of substandard PPE does not make an environment safer, instead, it maximizes Risk ensuring that everyone can be exposed.

The Standard also failed to address the possibility of short and long-term health issues raised by prolonged use of PPE. These issues include: difficulty in breathing, skin rashes, and CO2 intoxication.⁴

Also, cloth masks are known to put workers at increased risk of respiratory illness and viral infections.⁵ Finally, the virus can remain infectious for several days on mask surfaces, raising the possibility of self-contamination when the mask is handled or removed with bare hands.

Conclusions: Considering the PPE specified under the Standard provided little or no protection against the SARS-CoV-2 virus and long-term use presents health risks to employees, the Standard should be revoked.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

120825 2022/03/19 23:01:38 Anonymous Repeal The Rules At 16VAC25-220 Because The Are Substantively And Procedurally Defective I have provided an extensive written comments in support of repealing the rules at 16VAC 25-220. Please read them and respond to them. The written comments describe only a few of the substantial substantive issues with these rules. In addition, as discussed in the comments, the Safety and Health Codes Board (Board) should not maintain and should reject the Board's position that there is no further judicial review as long as the Board took a vote. Further, I note that the Office of Attorney General's response to the questions posed in Governor Youngkin's Executive Order (EO) 6 fails to transparently engage in a discussion of the procedural problems.

The Suspected COVID and return to work provisions remain unworkable, vague and not supported by evidence. Prohibiting consideration of serologic tests is anti-science and illegal. The rules do not have a rational approach to economic feasibility.

The Board should not have argued that a vote of the Board precludes further judicial review. The Board improperly argued that a vote taken before consideration of the proposed rules was dispositive.

OAG in its response to EO6 has misstated the holdings of the Court of Appeals and has not addressed salient issues that EO6 effectively asks to consider. DOLI staff lacks authority to propose a rule, but it was DOLI staff and not the Board that initially proposed the First Permanent Covid Rule. The proposed rule should have had an economic impact statement and regulatory flexibility analysis available for a 60-day comment period but the process did not provide for this. The Board never evaluated the likely substantial negative impact of the proposed rule Suspected COVID and return to Work Restrictions where the Symptoms are not really COVID. In 2020 and 2021, The Board, Governor Northam and Commissioner Oliver Failed to address the confusing overlaps between Executive Orders and the rules. The illegal mandates of Governor Northam under Executive Order 63 also undermine the validity of the rules.

The claims that these rules were useful is not supported. They should certainly be repealed.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

Although not the purview of the Department, Governor's Executive Orders addressing the pandemic have been upheld by Virginia Courts on numerous occasions.

The legal issues raised by the commenter have been previously addressed by the Department during the adoption phase of the current standard and were also raised in litigation which the Department ultimately prevailed in.

120826 2022/03/19 23:15:34 Nandan Kenkeremath, Leading Edge Policy & Strategy, LLC Repeal The Rules At 16VAC25-220 Because The Are Substantively And Procedurally Defective I have provided extensive written comments in support of repealing the rules at 16 VAC 25-220. Please read them and respond to them. The written comments describe only a few of the substantial substantive issues with these rules. In addition, as discussed in the comments, the Safety and Health Codes Board (Board) should not maintain and should reject the Board's position denying further judicial review as long as the Board took a vote. Further, the Office of Attorney General's response to questions posed in Governor Youngkin;s Executive Order (EO) 6 fails to transparently engage in a discussion of the procedural problems.

The Suspected COVID and return to work provisions remain unworkable, vague and not supported by the evidence. Prohibiting consideration of serologic tests is anti-science and illegal. The rules do not have a rational approach to economic feasibility.

The Board should not have argued that a vote of the Board precludes judicial review. The Board improperly argued that a vote taken before consideration of the proposed rule was dispositive.

OAG in its response to EO6 has misstated the holdings of the Court of Appeals and has not addressed salient issues that EO6 effectively to consider. DOLI staff lacks authority to propose a rule, but it was DOLI staff and not the BOard that initially proposed the first version of the Permanent COVID Rule. The proposed rule should have had an economic impact statement and regulatory flexibility analysis available for a 60-day comment period, but the process did not provide for this. The Board never evaluated the likely substantial negative impact of the Suspected COVID and return to work provisions, where the symptoms are from flus, colds and all manner of circumstances that are not COVID. In 2020 and 2021, the Board, Governor Northam, and Commissioner Oliver failed to address the confusing overlaps between Executive Orders and the rules. The illegal mandates of Governor Northam under EO 63 also undermine the validity of the rules. The claims that these rules were useful is not supported. They should be repealed. SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

Although not the purview of the Department, Governor's Executive Orders addressing the pandemic have been upheld by Virginia Courts on numerous occasions.

The legal issues raised by the commenter have been previously addressed by the Department during the adoption phase of the current standard and were also raised in litigation which the Department ultimately prevailed in.

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
VIRGINIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (VOSH) PROGRAM**

16 VAC 25-220, Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-COV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19

Combined Townhall, Public Hearing, Direct to DOLI Public Comments 2.17.22 to 3.3.2022 (the first 15 days of the 30 day comment period from 2.17.2022 to 3.19.2022), With Department Response

The Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board held a public hearing on March 14, 2022

The Department developed the following standard responses to issues raised multiple times by Commenters (highlighted in yellow):

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356	[REVOICATION]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357	[REVOICATION AND CDC UPDATE]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359	[REVOICATION AND MASK EFFECTIVENESS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366	[REVOICATION AND EMPLOYER RIGHT TO REQUIRE MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370	[PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371	[VIRGINIA STANDARD LEGALLY ADOPTED]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374	[LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382	[FDA APPROVED CLEAR MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519	[30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537	[VIRGINIA RANKINGS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541	[GRAVE DANGER]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550	[ABILITY TO STAY CURRENT WITH CDC CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557	[EFFECTIVENESS OF VACCINES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573	[VIRGINIA STANDARD DOES NOT MANDATE VACCINES/SHUTDOWNS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119575	[EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO FILE COMPLAINT]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119703	[VACCINES ARE NOT DANGEROUS]

Public Hearing Comments

02-001 3/14/2022 Nandan Kenkeremath Leading Edge Policy & Strategy Virtual (703-407-9407)
nandank@comcast.net. I want to make several points. First, I strongly support the revocation of the COVID

Rules currently found at 16 VAC 25-220. Large sections of these standards never made sense and were not workable. I am going to highlight one but dozens of the provisions made no sense. I doubt most were meaningfully followed and the rules likely did little to reduce the transmission of COVID.

The "Suspected" COVID and return to work provisions in the rule, remain unworkable, vague and not supported by evidence. The rules did not make sense of how to deal with

symptoms like a cough, sneeze, runny nose or headache which are also symptoms of flus, colds, or allergy. The rule states that people with any of those symptoms may not be at a worksite. The rules, if followed, would badly damages businesses and employees. This scheme would mean employees lose work and employers lose an employee for a length of time. That time could repeat each time there is an additional or continued symptom. Employees would use up their sick leave, they may miss important training, projects or job opportunities. And many temporary or contract employees may have no sick leave and no alternative funds-- all because an employee has a cold or a cough or a headache. Symptoms of COVID were shared with colds, flu and all manner of situation. There was no meaningful way for an employer to enforce these rules and it was unwise to think they would. I don't know why the Board ever thought such a scheme was reasonable. I don't know why unions would want their members to lose time, wages, and opportunities based on vague and unworkable standards.

I also want to note that the statement of the Office of Attorney General (OAG) regarding the holdings of the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals as related to a specific question asked under Executive Order 6 is in error. OAG stated:

“EO6 orders the Board and DOLI to seek guidance from the OAG regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard. The answer is yes: the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard, as affirmed by the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals.”

Both the Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals ruled that a specific challenge was moot. The two courts viewed the Permanent Standard to be distinct from the Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) and that any challenge to the Permanent Standard would need to arise from new and separate lawsuits. Stating that these courts reviewed whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed for the Permanent Standard cannot derive from a holding of mootness. I will highlight these points more specifically in other written comments. OAG seems to be answering the question of whether courts dismissed a challenge. They did. That is not the question asked in EO6.

At the last hearing I provided comment on the meaningful right to challenge the rules and meaningful judicial review under the emergency provisions. With respect to judicial review, I have never seen a position of a regulatory body that opposed judicial review of regulations as

we saw in 2020 and 2021 here in Virginia on this issue. The Safety and Health Board argued that all that was necessary to preclude further judicial review was to show that it had taken a vote. In other words, the argument of the Board was that its self-determination was dispositive and other arguments could not be considered in court. It was and is an astounding position. It is just as astounding that a lower court in Virginia accepted that position. Effectively, the regulatory community was denied judicial review of their actual issues. The Board never submitted the full record to the Court and only provided the part it wanted to provide.

Members of the regulated community alleged numerous errors of law. Neither the Board nor the Court addressed any of these claims of errors of law, the record, or the alleged facts. This is astonishing and I would ask the Board to take the proper steps to make sure this does not ever occur again.

When I last provided written comments on the Permanent Rule, DOLI staff provided a statement to the effect that the commenter (me) is connected to a lawsuit challenging the Emergency Temporary Standard and would not address a number of my comments. I want to restate there is no comment period penalty for parties that pursue their rights in court or participate in such activities.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

Although not the purview of the Department, Governor's Executive Orders addressing the pandemic have been upheld by Virginia Courts on numerous occasions.

The "suspected" COVID-19 related requirements were directly based on OSHA and CDC guidance documents which employers stated on numerous occasions they wanted to be able to comply with.

02-001 3/14/2022 Dale Bennett Virginia Trucking Association Virtual (804-355-5371)

SUMMARIZED from public hearing recording.

Speaking on behalf of VA Trucking Assn. Our employer membership works within and outside the state of Virginia to deliver all essential products for the community everyday needs. Our industry does a good job protecting our drivers. As an industry we have been able to keep infection rates very low and below the rate of the US population. Our survey data shows a low mortality rates due to COVID for our drivers in the industry. The fact that we are driving outside Virginia and on interstates to deliver goods, we need the adoption of a simple uniform set of guidelines for all truckers working within all states as opposed to a myriad of various state requirements. We request a uniform guideline for truckers

working in all states and not a Virginia state specific standard and therefore support the revocation of the VA Standard.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11937

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
VIRGINIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (VOSH) PROGRAM**

16 VAC 25-220, Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-COV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19

Combined Townhall, Public Hearing, Direct to DOLI Public Comments 2.17.22 to 3.3.2022 (the first 15 days of the 30 day comment period from 2.17.2022 to 3.19.2022), With Department Response

The Department developed the following standard responses to issues raised multiple times by Commenters (highlighted in yellow):

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119356	[REVOCATION]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357	[REVOCATION AND CDC UPDATE]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359	[REVOCATION AND MASK EFFECTIVENESS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366	[REVOCATION AND EMPLOYER RIGHT TO REQUIRE MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119370	[PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371	[VIRGINIA STANDARD LEGALLY ADOPTED]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374	[LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119382	[FDA APPROVED CLEAR MASKS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119519	[30 DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537	[VIRGINIA RANKINGS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119541	[GRAVE DANGER]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119550	[ABILITY TO STAY CURRENT WITH CDC CHANGES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119557	[EFFECTIVENESS OF VACCINES]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119573	[VIRGINIA STANDARD DOES NOT MANDATE VACCINES/SHUTDOWNS]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119575	[EMPLOYEE RIGHT TO FILE COMPLAINT]
SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119703	[VACCINES ARE NOT DANGEROUS]

Direct to DOLI Comments

01-001 3/3/2022 Mark A. Mix, President The National Right to Work Committee Comments on Proposed Revocation of the Virginia Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220

We support revocation of the above referenced Standard. While the Standard arose out of a government declared emergency involving a finding of a grave danger to employees in the workplace from a rapidly spreading virus that health care providers did not yet know how to treat, such grave danger no longer exists.

With developing knowledge, expertise, and resources and with a large and growing portion of the population vaccinated or having immunity following infection and recovery, these regulations are no longer necessary. Indeed, the issue is not exclusively a workplace issue, but is one that impacts the community at large as the virus can be caught anywhere at any time, making it almost impossible to pinpoint exactly where an employee contracts the virus. As the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled, COVID-19 can and does spread at home, in schools, during sporting events, and everywhere else that

people gather. That kind of universal risk is no different from the day-to-day dangers that all face from crime, air pollution, or any number of communicable diseases. *NFIB v. OSHA*, 595 U.S. (2022) (slip op. at 6-7).

Jose Phelps, President of Winchester Metals, Inc., made a very good point at the February 16, 2022 hearing: an employer can do all it can to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in the workplace, yet what good does that do when employees can leave and go to happy hour unmasked, have dinner with friends the next night, and have one of their kid's friends over the next night? Safety & Health Codes Bd. Mtg. Recording, 15:00-18:34,

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Nirginia-Safety-and-Health-Codes-Board-Meeting-in-Response-to-Executive-Order-6-20220216-1510-1.mp4>.

We urge DOLi to revoke the regulations and allow health conditions, prevention, and treatment to once again be private matters between individual employees and their physicians. They are quite capable of following the developing and changing guidance from the CDC and the medical community. Employers should not be forced into that relationship.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

With regard to potential exposures away from work, the Department does not have jurisdiction over such matters. The primary purpose of the current standard was to implement requirements that could serve to reduce or mitigate against the spread of the virus in the workplace, which for many people comprises a minimum of 50% of their waking hours. Reducing the risk of virus spread in 50% of a person's waking hours accomplishes the purpose of the standard.

01-002 3/17/2022 Hobey Bauhan Virginia Poultry Federation Comments of the Virginia Poultry Federation Regarding Proposed Revocation of Permanent

Standard for COVID for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220

I am writing on behalf of Virginia Poultry Federation (VPF) concerning the referenced matter. VPF is a statewide trade association representing all sectors of the poultry industry. Virginia's largest agricultural sector, the poultry industry contributes about \$13 billion annually to the

Virginia economy; supports the livelihood of some 1,100 family farms; and employs more than 15,000 people. Poultry plants in Virginia have been successful in implementing COVID-19 prevention measures throughout the pandemic, and will continue to make worker health and safety a top priority. The Federation has previously testified before this board in opposition to the ETS and subsequently the

permanent standard. We have repeatedly stated: First, a one-size-fits all, static regulation is inappropriate in light of the changing scientific understanding of COVID-19.

Second, OSHA and CDC guidance are updated frequently and are a more appropriate mechanism to guide protective measures. Finally, VOSH already has the ability under the OSHA general duty clause to cite a company that fails to take actions to protect its workers from COVID-19, as recommended by OSHA or CDC.

We agree with the current staff recommendation that you should make a finding that there is no longer a continued need for the permanent standard based on emerging scientific and medical evidence that the current variants of the virus no longer constitute a grave danger to employees in the workplace.

We encourage the board to revoke the permanent standard and for the Department to adopt a simple Guidance Document for all employers to utilize in helping to protect their workers, suppliers, and customers. We understand the proposed guidance document shared with the

Board will be put out for public comment, and we will weigh in on that during the comment period.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

The Department disagrees that the Standard is a one size fits all regulatory approach. At its core the Standard is a risk management system to prevent or limit the spread in the workplace of the SARS-CoV-2 virus which causes COVID-19.

It is designed to provide certain basic protections for all employees and employers within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health program. It provides certain mandatory requirements for all employers and specific additional requirements for healthcare and high risk job tasks centered around mitigation of hazards.

01-003 3/18/2022 Kate Bates, President & CEO Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Chamber Letter in Support of Revoking the COVID-19 Permanent Workplace Safety Standards

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce would like to thank you for considering the revocation of the Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19. We agree with your proposed finding that there is not a continued need for these standards, and we support revoking them. The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented challenges for businesses and government alike. Because the health and safety of our workforce and customers has been a top priority of ours, creative solutions were necessary, and all parties worked with the information available at the time to adapt as best they could. Today, with vaccines and boosters readily available, high-quality N95

masks widely available to the general public, and infection rates dropping, the circumstances we face today suggest that it is time for these standards to be revoked.

In recent weeks, the CDC has updated its guidance on how to calculate community transmission levels, focusing more on hospital capacity. Under this new framework, Arlington County is currently in low transmission, which means masks should be optional for most, although still needed for people who have had symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19. However the permanent standard still uses the old CDC framework, which is much more restrictive. This inconsistency causes confusion for businesses who simply want to follow the rules and keep their employees and customers safe.

We know that our members will be able to continue to maintain a safe working environment without these standards in place. We welcome the chance to work with you in the future on guidance to make sure that employers have the resources and tools they need to protect their workers and customers, while supporting flexibility and economic growth.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

01-004 3/19/2022 Nandan Kenkeremath Leading Edge Policy & Strategy, LLC RE: Comments on Repeal of VA Department of Labor and Industry, Safety and Health Codes Board Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220.

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March 19, 2022

Submitted Electronically

Safety and Health Codes Board

RE: Comments on Repeal of VA Department of Labor and Industry, Safety and Health Codes Board Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19, 16VAC25-220

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal to repeal 16 VAC 25-220, Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19. I am a concerned citizen and lawyer with extensive background in regulatory law and policy. I have worked on dozens of statutory programs for many years as Senior Counsel to the Energy and Commerce Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives and worked in the Office of General Counsel for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. I have substantial concerns with the rules at 16 VAC 25-220 et. seq and support their repeal. These comments describe only a few of the

substantial substantive issues with the rules. In addition, as discussed below, the Safety and Health Codes Board (Board) should not maintain and should reject the Board's position that there is no further judicial review as long as the Board took a vote. Further, I note that the Office of Attorney General's response to the questions posed in Youngkin Executive Order (EO) LEADING EDGE POLICY & STRATEGY, LLC

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6 is in error and fails to transparently engage in a discussion of the procedural problems. These comments identify a wide range of procedural issues which undermine the validity of the rules.

COMMENTS

I. The Board Should Repeal the Rules at 16 VAC 25-220 et seq

I strongly support the repeal of the COVID Rules promulgated by the Safety and Health Codes Board and currently found at 16 VAC 25-220. Large sections of these standards never made sense and were not workable. I am going to highlight a few substantial problems but dozens of the provisions made little sense. Moreover, §16VAC25-220 has not been broadly followed nor is it more protective than CDC guidance and the OSHA "General Duty Clause" as evidenced by the success of other states without a final permanent standard.

II. There Are Important Substantive Problems with the Current Rules

A. The "Suspected" COVID Provisions Remain Unworkable, Vague and Not Supported by Evidence

The "Suspected" COVID and return to work provisions in the rule, remain unworkable, vague and not supported by evidence. The rules did not make sense of how to deal with symptoms like a cough, sneeze, runny nose or headache which are also symptoms of flus, colds, or allergy. The rule states that people with any of those symptoms may not be at a worksite. The rules, if followed, would badly damages businesses and employees. This scheme would mean employees lose work and employers lose an employee for a length of time. That time could repeat each time there is an additional or continued symptom. Employees would use up LEADING EDGE POLICY & STRATEGY, LLC

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their sick leave, they may miss important training, projects or job opportunities. And many temporary or contract employees may have no sick leave and no alternative funds-- all because an employee has a cold or a cough or a headache. Symptoms of COVID were shared with colds, flu and all manner of situation. There was no meaningful way for an employer to enforce these rules and it was unwise to think they would. I don't know why the Board ever thought such a scheme was reasonable. I don't know why unions would want their members to lose time, wages, and opportunities based on vague and unworkable standards.

The term "suspected to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus" means "a person that has signs or symptoms of COVID-19 but has not tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and no alternative diagnosis has been made." See §16VAC25-220-30. The proposed rule defines "signs of COVID-19" are "abnormalities that can be objectively observed, and may include fever, trouble breathing or shortness of breath, cough, vomiting, new confusion, bluish lips or e face, etc." The proposed rule defines "symptoms of COVID-19" as "abnormalities that are subjective to the person and not observable to others, and may include chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea, congestion, runny nose, diarrhea, etc." "Symptomatic" means a "person is experiencing signs and/or symptoms attributed to COVID. The proposed rule states "[a] person may become symptomatic 2 to 14 days after exposure to the SARS-Cov-2."

This combined structure has three fundamental problems. The first problem is those same symptoms may be unrelated to COVID. The proposed rule does nothing to address this

problem and neither the Board nor DOLI staff analysis has done anything to address the
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problem that is both obvious and was directly pointed to by me and others in prior comments. The proposed rule states that employers shall not permit employees or other persons suspected to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus to report to or remain at the work site or engage in work at a customer or client location until cleared for return to work. The universe of employees with suspected COVID-19 that pose the stated risk includes, among a broader universe, anyone who has a cough or headache or sore throat or congestion or runny nose, or fatigue, as just some examples. Neither the Board nor DOLI staff has made any effort to work on the problems posed by cold, flus, allergies, and all manner of other issues that are not COVID. Indeed, I would posit the universe of “suspected COVID” but is really not COVID vastly exceeds the universe that is COVID.¹ DOLI staff and the Board in the rule force an unworkable

¹ According to CDC: Both COVID-19 and flu can have varying degrees of signs and symptoms, ranging from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe symptoms. Common symptoms that COVID-19 and flu share include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults

According to CDC cold symptoms can include sneezing, stuffy nose, runny nose, sore throat, coughing. Less frequently there is fever. According to CDC overlapping symptoms from allergies include cough, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing, fatigue, headache, sore through, congestion or runny nose.

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and damaging scheme on employees who cannot afford absences for common colds, flus and allergies. It may be that Some settings might deserve such caution that even a cough, headache, sore throat, congestion, or runny nose should warrant removal from the worksite. That might be the right approach at a nursing home for employees in contact with nursing home patients. That same level of caution across the board will substantially and negatively impact businesses and are not necessary or useful.

The second problem is that the rule is filled with words of vague and indefinite meaning. Such an approach does not satisfy the requirements for standards of law. Who decides the “alternative diagnosis?” Is that the employee, the employer, a doctor, a relative? If it is a medical professional what kind of delay and economic burden does this pose? What is the standard for an alternative diagnosis? Does the alternative diagnosis have to rule out COVID? Or can someone have COVID and an alternative diagnosis. Someone can have COVID with no symptoms at all. What must the employer or DOLI learn about the “alternative diagnosis”? Who defines abnormalities? If symptoms are “subjective” can an employer rely on the subjective views of the employee? Can other information besides the symptoms come to play. What if a person believes something is a cold because his or her spouse had a cold? What if the person previously had COVID?

It is unrealistic to expect employers and contractors, including small and medium sized employers to evaluate alternative diagnosis or expect timely assessments by medical personnel <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/infographic-overlapsymptoms.html>

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in the time frames for the kinds of low-level symptoms described. There is no evidence that this is feasible or that this approach is necessary or even useful. If anything, the rules creates situation in which employees would be skittish to cooperate at all.

Pursuant to the rules, employers are required to prohibit employees or other persons known or suspected to be infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus to report to or remain at the work site or engage in work at a customer or client location until cleared for return to work. See §16VAC25-220-40 (B)(5) and §16VAC25-220-40 (C). Similar language covers subcontractors. See §16VAC25-220-40 (B)(6). No employee or subcontractor can return to the worksite until at least 72 hours since the signs of any symptom have passed and ten days have elapsed, whichever period is longer.

The return-to-work test-based strategy can be problematic because of the lack of testing availability but should not have been removed from the proposal. The regulation also requires compliance with symptom-based strategy if a known asymptomatic employee refuses to be tested. The Rule is asking both employers and employees to affect their business and livelihood, based symptoms that cannot be evaluated as being beyond ordinary and common circumstances. This is neither workable, feasible, nor supported by an evidence of operation.

B. Prohibiting Consideration of Serologic Tests Is Anti-Science and Illegal

Pursuant §16VAC25-220-40(B)(3), employers are prohibited from even considering serologic test results in deciding when an employee can return to work. A prohibition on using relevant medical information for decisions is an unprecedented political restriction of medical assessments. Not only has the Board seen fit to prohibit serologic testing from being conclusive

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or determinative of any issue, but the Board has outright prohibited employers from considering scientific evidence in their decision-making. Such an across-the-board prohibition is per se unreasonable and unnecessary.

The proposed rule frequently refers to the standards applicable to the industry which is language that may be appropriate for guidance but is too vague to be meaningful. This is compounded by numerous vague and unworkable definitions. For example, the physical distancing requirement in the rules are unworkable and ambiguous. Distancing is not available for restaurant wait staff, personal services, physical instructors. The application of this rule is overly broad, unclear and not justified.

C. The Rule Does Not Have A Rational Approach to Economic Feasibility That Meets the Statutory Standards

The rules definition of economic feasibility at §16VAC25-220-30 is not appropriate. The rule defines “economic feasibility” to mean the employer is financially able. The standard does not ask whether the employer could stay in business or avoid releasing employees in order to find the funds to pay for the costs of the rule. The failure to provide an economic impact assessment or regulatory flexibility analysis for comment compounds this problem.

III. The Board Should Not Have Claimed A Vote of the Board Precludes Further Judicial Review and That Position Undermines the Validity of the Rules

A. The Boards Argued that a Vote of the Board Precludes Further Judicial Review

With respect to judicial review, I have never seen a position of a regulatory body that opposed judicial review of regulations as we saw in 2020 and 2021 here in Virginia on this issue.

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The Safety and Health Board argued that all that was necessary to preclude further judicial review was to show that it had taken a vote. In other words, the argument of the Board was that its self-determination was dispositive and other arguments could not be considered in court. It was and is an astounding position. It is just as astounding that a lower court in Virginia accepted that position. Effectively, the regulatory community was denied judicial review of their actual issues. The Board never submitted the full record to the Court and only provided the part it wanted to provide.

The response to EO6 discussed below, and what I have seen in responses to comments, is, at best, oblivious to this fundamental issue. However, the Board's position in court was clear.

Here is relevant text from the Board's Memorandum in Support of Motion to Dismiss Petition Seeking Judicial Review of the provisions at 16 VAC 22-250 after the emergency temporary standards process:

In this case, the Board issued the ETS pursuant to Virginia Code Section 40.1-22(6a). (citations omitted). That section imposes three requirements for a valid emergency standard; the Board must (1) determine "that employees are exposed to grave danger," (2) determine "that such emergency standard is necessary to protect employees from such danger;" and (3) publish the emergency standards "in a newspaper of general circulation, published in the City of Richmond, Virginia. Va. Code 40.1-22(6a)

Memorandum at 31.

The Board's Memorandum further states:

The Board had a similarly long discussion regarding the second element: whether the ETS was necessary to protect the employees from the danger of COVID-19. See Exhibit 1 to Defendant's Rule 3:11 Request for Reply. The Board received a recommendation

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from VDOLI staff that it should determine that the emergency temporary standards were necessary to protect employees from COVID-19. Id.

Two big points. First, the Board argued that the fact of a vote, meant there was no reason for further judicial review. The Court did not allow for review of whether the actual specific components of regulations met the standards or were supported by evidence, whether the rules were rational, whether the rules were Constitutional or any of the issues raised by the regulated community in court.

B. The Board Argued the Court Should Dismiss Without Reviewing Consideration of An Actual Proposed Rule

The Circuit Court did not review the record as a whole. The only thing submitted for record was the first portion of a transcript before any discussion of the actual proposed rule.

Here are is the discussion of some of the members of the Board in relation to this vote.

The portion of the transcript requested by describes Claimants' points entirely. On page 147 of the transcript requested by the Board in the court case there are the following exchanges:

MR. FULTON: Yes, I mean, trying to sum that — I'm sorry, but we're saying it is a grave danger basically and we need to pass an emergency standard, but there is nothing as to what that standard is that we need to pass an emergency standard, but there is

nothing as to what that standard is?

MR STIFF: Correct, John. It's just that the Board would agree it's a grave danger and there's a need for a standard, but we have to work through several other issues before we even get to what that standard is and what it says. So this is just grave danger, and that a standard is needed.

The relevant conversation continues on pp 147-148 of the transcript with Mr Glaize:

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MR. GLAIZE: I'm wondering if this is an appropriate time to make a comment before I vote as we've had very little discussion after this motion.

MR. STIFF: Go ahead.

MR: GLAIZE: I would just like the Board to hear that I do believe this is a grave danger to employees; however, at this point in time, I am not convinced that there is a need to promulgate this regulation. For that reason, I vote no.

Earlier Mr. Malveaux again points out that there has not be a discussion of the regulation at all. On P. 144 of the transcript:

MR. MALVEAUX: It is the second have that is giving me pause about the need for a variety of reasons that we haven't really discussed yet.

Similarly, on page 141 of the transcript Tina Hoover identifies that there has not been an actual discussion on a rule:

MS. HOOVER:I guess, I really need to understand how the verbiage in the regulations that we may put together, how that will impact us, such as the poultry industry, manufacturers that have already went and put measures in place for safe guarding their employees...

The transcript provided to the Circuit Court is from Wednesday June 24, 2020. That means the Circuit Courts judicial review of "the record" is only the record up to June 24, 2020 and not beyond. The portion provided to the court is only to page 149, shortly after the vote in question. The last time stated is 2:40 on that day. There was no discussion of the actual proposed rule on June 24, 2020. The hearing record (not transcript) states:

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Mr. Withrow stated that the next step would be to review the Draft emergency temporary standard with amendments. Mr. Stiff suggested that the Board continue this to another day and asked the Board members for their availability.²

As stated in the briefing document from DOLI dated March 14, 2022, the Board continued its meeting of June 24th on June 29, 2020, July 7, 2020 and July 15, 2020. Again, several big points. First, none of the records from the additional days was submitted to the Circuit Court. Second there was no discussion of a specific proposed rule on June 24, 2020.

The Board claimed that:

The Board had a similarly long discussion regarding the second element: whether the ETS was necessary to protect the employees from the danger of COVID-19. See Exhibit 1 to Defendant's Rule 3:11 Request for Reply.

Why did the Board make this statement which is clearly in error? Should not the Board correct the Board's mistake?

C. The Board's Claim that Judicial Review Under Va. Code § 40.1-22 (7) Is

Effectively Ended When the Board Has Taken a Vote Is Without Basis

The Board effectively states that by satisfying the requirement there be a determination under Va. Code § 40.1-22 (6a), there can be no judicial review of other legal arguments

concerning the sufficiency of evidence, whether that evidence support each element of the ETS, whether there is delegated authority for certain actions, whether regulations are economically feasible or any other legal argument. In the Boards argument, a vote equals non-reviewability. 2The record of the meeting of the Board which is available here https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=meeting\92\31004\Minutes_DOLI_31004_v2.pdf. (last visited March 19, 2022).

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Assuming non-reviewability of the underlying basis of decisions and rules is greatly frowned on in the law. Similar language is used where an agency must make determinations in numerous contexts. All of those provisions have been judicially reviewable regarding the basis, logic, and other aspects of the determination. The Board has effectively claimed their own determination is committed to the discretion of the Board and not subject to judicial review despite the clear language in Va. Code § 40.1-22 (7) that there is judicial review.

Even if the vote reviewed by the court was after a consideration of the rule—and it was not-- there was no discussion of whether any given component of the ETS was necessary to address a grave danger. Members of the regulated community alleged numerous errors of law. Neither the Board nor the Court addressed any of these claims of errors of law, the record, or the alleged facts. The Board had the court dismiss the claims without any discussion or evaluation of the administrative record, simply because there was a vote of the Board. This is astonishing and I would ask the Board to take the proper steps to make sure this does not ever occur again.

Without meaningful judicial review and a meaningful right to judicial review it is hard to state that what is on the books is legitimate. Among issues and arguments that were never reviewed by the court include but are not limited to:

- Governor Northam's Directives Regarding the Emergency Temporary Standards in Executive Order 63 Were Beyond His Authority and In Contravention of Statutory Law and Process And, Thus, Undermine the Validity of the regulations
- The Board Did Not Consider Whether the Full Sweep of the Regulations And Each Component of the Regulations Meets Statutory And Procedural Standards

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- The "Suspected" COVID Provisions are Unworkable, Vague, Not Supported by Evidence and Not Across the Board "Necessary" to Protect Against "Grave Danger"
 - The Board Has Never Shown the Rule Meets the Test of Economic Feasibility for ALL Employers and the Definition of Economic Feasibility Does Not Meet the Statutory Standard
 - Both Specifically and Overall, the Rules are Too Vague, Ambiguous, and Uncertain
- None of these arguments were reviewed by the Court and no record for review of these issues were provided. Such an approach denying judicial review of these types of arguments has never previously existed in Federal law or Virginia law and it is inappropriate that the Board advocated such an argument.

IV. The Statement of the OAG regarding the holdings of the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals In Response To Executive Order 6 is in Error; The OAG has Not Otherwise Provided an Analysis to Review

OAG stated:

“EO6 orders the Board and DOLI to seek guidance from the OAG regarding whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and

promulgation of the Permanent Standard. The answer is yes: the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard, as affirmed by the Richmond Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals.”

Both the Circuit Court and the Virginia Court of Appeals ruled that a specific challenge was moot. The two courts viewed the Permanent Standard to be distinct from the Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) and that any challenge to the Permanent Standard would need LEADING EDGE POLICY & STRATEGY, LLC

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to arise from new and separate lawsuits. Here is a specific statement from the Court of Appeals Opinion:

Appellants never challenged the permanent standard in the court below and are precluded from doing so for the first time on appeal. See Rule 5A:18. Appellants could conceivably initiate a new lawsuit seeking judicial review of the permanent standard under Code 40.1-22(7), which would require the circuit court to consider the record of adoption. But this Court is precluded from reviewing that record for the first time on appeal. See Rule 5A:18.

I strongly disagree with the analysis of the Court of Appeals, but it is certainly incorrect to state the Court of Appeals ruled on whether “[t]he proper legal and administrative procedures were followed during adoption and promulgation of the Permanent Standard.” Stating that these courts reviewed whether the proper legal and administrative procedures were followed for the Permanent Standard cannot derive from a holding of mootness. Note also, the Court of Appeals never ruled on the second issue raised on Appeal which was the error of the Circuit Court’s discussion of the appropriate standards for review. OAG seems to be answering the question of whether courts dismissed a challenge. They did. That is not the question asked in EO6. As discussed above, the Circuit Court did have language concerning that the ETS was in compliance with statutory standards. Regardless the Circuit Court did not opine on the Permanent Covid Rule process which had process and details that occur after the ETS process. Not only has the OAG mischaracterized the court cases, the OAG has failed to do the analysis requested under EO6, or at least has failed to show it. It is EO6 that asks for this analysis.

V. There are Many Significant Procedural Problems Related to the Rules on the Books
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A. DOLI Staff Lacks Authority to Propose the Rule, but It Was Staff and Not the Board That Proposed the First Permanent COVID Rule

VAPA defines “agency” to be any authority, instrumentality, officer, board or other unit of the state government empowered by basic laws to make regulations or decide cases. It is apparent from, Va. Code §40.1-22 that the Virginia Safety and Health Board (Board) is empowered by the basic laws to make regulations in this case and not DOLI staff. See also definition of “agency” under 16VAC25-11-20. The Board must propose regulations not DOLI staff. The Board may not delegate the authority to propose regulations that satisfy VAPA or form the basis for a final regulation. The Board has exclusive regulatory authority regarding any such standards and the Board did not provide and did not vote on this “proposal” before seeking comment or submitting to the Virginia Registrar. Accordingly, this proposal did not satisfy the requirement that it constitutes the necessary proposal from the Board.³

B. The Proposed Rule Must Have the Economic Impact Statement and Regulatory Flexibility Analysis Available for a 60-day Public Comment Period but The Process Did

Not Provide for This

Va. Code §2.2-4007.05 styled Submission of proposed regulations to the Registrar states:

The summary; the statement of basis and purpose, substance, and issues; the economic impact analysis; and the agency's response shall be published in the Virginia Register of Regulations and be available on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall, together with the notice of opportunity for oral and written submittals on the proposed regulation.

It is clear the economic impact analysis must be available for public comment. This was not the case. The economic impact analysis must include the effect on small businesses as set out in Va. Code §2.2-4007.04(A)(2).

3 Va. Code §40.1-51.1 provides a structure where the State Health Commissioner provides advice and the

Department of Labor and Industry staff provides drafting as proposals for the Board. This structure does not make

DOLI the agency with delegated authority for the rules.

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Under Va. Code §2.2-4007.1(B), the agency proposing a regulation shall prepare a regulatory flexibility analysis in which the agency shall consider utilizing alternative regulatory methods, consistent with health, safety, environmental, and economic welfare, that will accomplish the objectives of applicable law while minimizing the adverse impact on small businesses. The agency shall consider, at a minimum, each of the following methods of reducing the effects of the proposed regulations on small businesses:

1. The establishment of less stringent compliance or reporting requirements;
2. The establishment of less stringent schedules or deadlines for compliance or reporting requirements;
3. The consolidation or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements;
4. The establishment of performance standards for small businesses to replace design or operational standards required in the proposed regulation; and
5. The exemption of small businesses from all or any part of the requirements contained in the proposed regulation.

The process was further in violation of 16VAC-11-50 which requires that the agency shall accept public comments in writing for a minimum of 60 calendar days following the publication of a proposed regulation. The comment period of July 27, 2020 to September 25, 2020 did not qualify both because there was no regulatory impact statement and because the Board did not vote on the ETS as a proposed permanent regulation. Commenters need 60 days to comment on the regulatory impact analysis and the regulatory flexibility analysis. The regulatory flexibility analysis, and the basic standard to determine whether a provision is necessary to protect against a grave danger, must be component by component.

C. The Board Never Evaluated the Likely Substantial Negative Impact of the Proposed Rule "Suspected" COVID and Return to Work Restrictions Where the Symptoms Are Not Really COVID

It is possible to model the impact of the problem of an aggressive "suspected" COVID section with a difficult return to work policy. CDC has information on other medical issues that share COVID symptoms. A 2018 CDC study looked at the percentage of the U.S. population who were sickened by flu using two different methods and compared the findings. Both

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methods had similar findings, which suggested that on average, about 8% of the U.S. population gets sick from flu each season, with a range of between 3% and 11%, depending on the season. The 3% to 11% range is an estimate of the proportion of people who have symptomatic flu illness. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm>

Common colds are the main reason that children miss school and adults miss work. Each year in the United States, there are millions of cases of the common cold. Adults have an average of 2-3 colds per year, and children have even more. Sore throat and runny nose are usually the first signs of a cold, followed by coughing and sneezing.

<https://www.cdc.gov/features/rhinoviruses/index.html>

According to CDC 7.7% of adults have been diagnosed with allergies annually.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/allergies.htm>

In 2015, 20.0% of women and 9.7% of men aged ≥ 18 years had a severe headache or migraine in the past 3 months. Overall and for each age group, women aged ≥ 18 years were more likely than men to have had a severe headache or migraine in the past 3 months. For both sexes, a report of a severe headache or migraine in the the past 3 months decreased with advancing age, from 11.0% among men aged 18–44 years to 3.4% among men aged ≥ 75 years and from 24.7% among women aged 18–44 years to 6.3% among women aged ≥ 75 years.

Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2015. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/index.htm>.

These statistics would suggest 4x these numbers for the yearly presence of headaches.

Each year, on average in the United States, norovirus causes:

- 900 deaths, mostly among adults aged 65 and older
- 109,000 hospitalizations
- 465,000 emergency department visits, mostly in young children
- 2,270,000 outpatient clinic visits annually, mostly in young children
- 19 to 21 million cases of vomiting and diarrhea illnesses

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<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/trends-outbreaks/burden-US.html>

There are many more conditions that have symptoms that overlap with suspected COVID conditions. However, it is possible to model out the lost days from this proposal with a series of assumptions. Certainly, one could provide a range. The modelling could include the cost of getting a professional “alternative diagnosis.” The 10-days without symptoms can be modelled as pure days lost.

D. The Board, Governor Northam and the Health Commissioner Oliver Have Eliminated the Confusing Conflicts and Overlaps Between the Safer at Home Document and the Proposed Rule

Northam and Oliver Executive Order 72 and Order of Public Health Emergency 9, (collectively “EO72” or the “Orders”) tried to accomplish the same illegal objectives as the cross-references to the Orders in the ETS. This approach illustrates the same lack of concern for the confusion caused by this matrix of rules to the regulated community. Specifically, under enforcement sections or EO72, the Governor and the Health Commissioner claim that DOLI can enforce the Orders when DOLI is supposed to enforce the regulations of the Board. In addition, EO72 had a rule of construction which states:

Construction with the Emergency Temporary Standard “Infectious Disease Prevention:SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19” Where the Emergency Temporary Standard “Infectious Disease Prevention: SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19” adopted by the Safety and Health Codes Board of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry pursuant to 16 Va. Admin. Code §§ 25-60-20 and 25-60-30 conflicts with

requirements and guidelines applicable to businesses in this Order, this Order shall govern.

The terms guidelines applicable to businesses refer to the document incorporated by reference in the Orders is styled Safer at Home: Phase Three Guidelines for All Business Sectors (“Safer at Home” document). The Safer at Home document has mandatory sections and sections that ultimately appear mandatory in additional circumstances due to certain statements in EO72

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and by cross-reference from the mandatory sections. The combined sections of EO72, the Safer at Home document, and the ETS formed a complex matrix of overlapping and confusing rules.

Separately, EO72 and Order of Public Health Emergency 9 claims the source of authority for DOLI enforcement over the Orders is §40.1-51.1—the general duty clause. Specific regulations of the Board supercede the general duty clause. If an employer is following regulations on a topic, the general duty clause cannot add more and anything in conflict.

Moreover, §40.1-51.1(C) sets out the universe of enforcement as Title 40 or standards, rules, and regulations promulgated thereunder. Regardless, this structure of overlap and confusion poses substantial questions as to the point and status of the permanent rule. The Safer at Home document covered numerous areas that overlap with the permanent rule including with respect to employee monitoring, requirements that employees with symptoms of COVID must not stay at the work site, with respect to return to work protocols. While the Safer at Home document and the permanent rule overlap on this subject matter, they use different language. According to EO72, the Safer at Home document would apply, and the permanent rule would not, although that is based on whether one is a conflict. This overlap creates substantial confusion in an area that is separately substantially confusing in both documents.

E. The Illegal Mandates of Governor Northam In EO 63 Regarding an Emergency Temporary Standard or Rule Undermine the Validity of the Permanent COVID rule
On May 26, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam issued a revised Executive Order 63 that provides in part:

“E. Department of Labor and Industry

Except for paragraph B above, this Order does not apply to employees, employers, subcontractors, or other independent contractors in the workplace.

The Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry shall promulgate emergency regulations and standards to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The regulations and standards adopted in accordance with §§ 40.1-22(6a) or 2.2-4011 of the Code of Virginia shall apply to every employer, employee, and place of employment within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health program as described in 16 Va. Admin. Code § 25-60-20 and Va. Admin. Code § 25-60-30.

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These regulations and standards must address personal protective equipment, respiratory protective equipment, and sanitation, access to employee exposure and medical records and hazard communication. Further, these regulations and standards may not conflict with requirements and guidelines applicable to businesses set out and incorporated into Amended Executive Order 61 and Amended Order of Public Health Emergency Three.”(Emphasis added).

The Governor’s directives in EO63 as mandates to the Department of Labor and Industry are illegal, in excess of authority and inconsistent with law. The directive fails all tests related to

Separation of Powers and violates the independence of the Board itself. The Board is a separate statutory creation of the General Assembly with separate duties and powers from those of the Governor.

The Governor's mandate that "The Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry shall promulgate emergency regulations and standards to control, prevent, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace" was issued in excess of the Governor's authority and is, therefore, void. Workplace standards and whether they are emergency standards are set forth in the basic laws and policies of this Commonwealth or implemented by the Board following regular and reasonable procedures. Workplace standards in this Commonwealth have never been based on unilateral directives from the Governor and no such authority is available to the Governor.

The Governor's mandate that "The regulations and standards adopted in accordance with §§ 40.1-22(6a) or 2.2-4011 of the Code of Virginia shall apply to every employer, employee, and place of employment within the jurisdiction of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health program" is both in excess of the Governor's authority and unlawfully constrains the lawful discretion of the Virginia Safety and Health Codes Board. The scope of any regulations under the basic laws must be decided by the Board through a process based on statutory policies and standards, rather than by directive from the Governor.

The directive in EO63 that "[t]hese regulations and standards must address personal protective equipment, respiratory protective equipment, and sanitation, access to employee exposure and medical records and hazard communication" is unlawful because the scope of LEADING EDGE POLICY & STRATEGY, LLC

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any regulations under the basic laws must be decided by the Board through a process based on statutory policies and standards, rather than by directive from the Governor. The directive in EO63 that "[t]hese regulations and standards may not conflict with the requirements and guidelines applicable to businesses set out and incorporated into Amended Executive Order 61 and Amended Order of Public Health Emergency Three" is unlawful because the scope of any regulations under the basic laws must be decided by the Board through a process based on statutory policies and standards, rather than by directive from the Governor.

The Governor has no authority to cabin the lawful exercise of authority or discretion by executive agencies with a separate legal existence or to subvert all otherwise-lawful regulation in the Commonwealth to his whims. Nor can the independent agencies abdicate the responsibility that the legislature has given them to regulate in a manner that meets certain legislative policies and procedures out of a desire not to adopt regulations which conflict with the Governor's aims.

It appears that neither DOLI Staff nor the Board ever questioned the authority of the Governor's EO63 mandates. DOLI's website states "In accordance with Executive Order 63, the Department presented to the Safety and Health Codes Board an emergency temporary standard/emergency regulation to address COVID-19, applicable to all employers and employees covered by Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) program jurisdiction." In document styled Draft Safety and Health Codes Board Public Hearing and Meeting Minutes, June 24, 2020, the second sentence describes the Governor's directive in EO63. The draft agenda for the July 24, 2020 meeting describes the directives in EO63 under Summary of Rulemaking Process.

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119359

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119366

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119371

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119374

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119357

SEE RESPONSE TO COMMENT 119537

Although not the purview of the Department, Governor's Executive Orders addressing the pandemic have been upheld by Virginia Courts on numerous occasions.

The legal issues raised by the commenter have been previously addressed by the Department during the adoption phase of the current standard and were also raised in litigation to which the Commenter was a part and on which the Department ultimately prevailed.

The "suspected" COVID-19 related requirements were directly based on OSHA and CDC guidance documents which employers stated on numerous occasions they wanted to be able to comply with.

With regard to serologic testing issues addressed in the current standard, they were in keeping with CDC guidance at the time of adoption and the CDC continues to state that ""Antibody testing does not replace virologic testing and should not be used to establish the presence or absence of acute SARS-CoV-2 infection."" <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/resources/antibody-tests-guidelines.html>, January 24, 2022.