

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



Wednesday, 21 September 2022

SENSIBLE CHANGES TO MASK SETTINGS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In a sensible step to ensure national consistency, and with COVID case numbers well below their winter peak, masks will no longer be mandatory to wear on public transport.

From 11.59pm on Thursday, 22 September, face masks will no longer be required on public transport or in taxis, rideshare services or tourism vehicles and will instead be strongly recommended, in line with the existing indoor mask recommendations.

Masks continue to be strongly recommended in indoor settings, in situations where people can't physically distance, for people who have any COVID symptoms and for anyone who may be immunocompromised or vulnerable to COVID.

The requirement to wear face masks will remain in some circumstances – like visiting a hospital, care facility or any other indoor space that is publicly accessible in a healthcare setting, including allied health providers.

Masks are also required if you have COVID or are a close or household contact and are not required to quarantine – for example, because you have tested negative on a rapid antigen test.

The decision brings Victoria in line with mask requirements in most other states, and will provide more national consistency on the approach to mask wearing.

Face masks remain a low-cost and highly effective tool to help reduce transmission and protect the most at-risk members of the community.

With more Victorians becoming eligible for their fourth dose of the COVID vaccine, it is important that people continue to stay up to date with their vaccinations to help protect themselves and the community.

People should also maintain good ventilation indoors, get tested if they have symptoms and speak to their doctor about COVID treatments.

For further information on mask requirements, visit the coronavirus website at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/face-masks, which will be updated to reflect the changes once they are in effect.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

“These sensible changes provide consistency for the community on mask wearing requirements and I thank the Chief Health Officer for his advice on this matter.”

“As we move to living with COVID, it's important we ensure enduring behaviour change in the community – and that means giving people the choice to wear masks to protect themselves and those around them.”

“It's vitally important that Victorians stay up to date with their COVID vaccinations, to help prevent serious illness and to ease pressure on the health system.”