

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

FILED

MAR 14 2022

IN RE: MASK PROTOCOL FOR PERSONS)
WHO WORK IN OR VISIT THE FEDERAL)
COURTHOUSES IN THE WESTERN)
DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA)

G.O. 22-2

CARMELITA REEDER SHINN, CLERK
U.S. DIST. COURT, WESTERN DIST. OKLA.
BY CRS, DEPUTY

ORDER

On February 25, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) issued updated guidance regarding indoor mask recommendations. The updated guidance relies on local COVID-19 Community Levels to assess the preventative steps, including the use of face coverings¹, that should be imposed. COVID-19 Community Levels – which are classified as low, medium, or high – are based on hospital bed utilization, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases. The CDC publishes these data on a county-wide basis each week, and areas can fluctuate between the three tiers based on local conditions. The guidance provides that in areas of high-risk individuals should “[w]ear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status”.²

As of March 11, 2022, Oklahoma County and its surrounding counties moved into the low-risk tier; Comanche County, however, remains in the high-risk tier. Therefore, in accordance with CDC guidance, it is ordered that effective immediately:

Persons who enter the federal courthouses in **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma** are not required to wear face coverings while in public areas of the courthouses including

¹ A face covering is a mask or similar covering that covers both the nose and mouth. Face shields do not comply with this requirement.

² COVID-19 Community Levels, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html#anchor_1646415596059 (last accessed Mar. 11, 2022) (footnote omitted).

courtrooms, but they may continue to wear a mask based on personal preference. Persons who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or who are recovering from COVID-19 must wear a mask consistent with G.O. 21-11 (filed Dec. 30, 2021). Judges have discretion to require the wearing of masks during specific proceedings based on their evaluation of the conditions then in effect.

All persons who enter the federal courthouse in **Lawton, Oklahoma** are required to wear face coverings while in the public areas of the Lawton Courthouse. Children two years of age or younger are relieved of this requirement. Persons without an appropriate face covering will be provided a mask upon entering the Lawton Courthouse.

The Clerk of Court is directed to post the COVID-19 Community Risk Levels for Oklahoma County and Comanche County on the Court's website³ each Friday. The mask mandate contained in G.O. 21-10 (filed May 28, 2021) will be in effect at the federal courthouses in the Western District of Oklahoma any time the risk level is in the high tier.

To the extent noted above, this General Order supersedes G.O. 21-10 (filed May 28, 2021) and shall remain in effect until further order of the Court.

ENTERED for the Court this 14th of March, 2022.



TIMOTHY D. DeGIUSTI
Chief United States District Judge

³ www.okwd.uscourts.gov.