

# TOWN OF NORWICH, VERMONT

## RULE REQUIRING WEARING FACE COVERINGS INDOORS IN PUBLIC SPACES

### Section 1. Authority

This Rule is adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Norwich under authority of Act 1 of the 2021 Special Session, “an act relating to temporary municipal rules in response to covid-19.”

### Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Rule is to require all persons to wear face coverings while indoors at locations that are open to the general public to prevent and mitigate the spread of covid-19 and protect the public health and safety of the Town of Norwich.

### Section 3. Definitions

For the purpose of this Rule:

- (1) “Face Covering” means any cloth or tightly woven fabric that can be worn on a person’s face, over their nose and mouth, and that substantially complies with the CDC’s recommended guidance for masks, such as surgical masks, N95 respirators, double-layer cloth gators, or any similar mask that fits snugly around the nose and chin, has multiple layers and/or inner filter pockets, and does not let light through when held up to a light source.
- (2) “Person” means any individual, regardless of their vaccination status, including but not limited to an employee, an owner, a customer, a licensee, an invitee, a visitor, or any other natural person.
- (3) “Public Building” means any building or portion of a building within Town of Norwich that is regularly accessible to the general public. For purposes of this Rule, a Public Building shall not include a private residence or residential unit, a public pre-school or K through 12 school (which remains under the authority of the school board under Act 1 of the 2021 Special Session), a church or other house of worship, or office space where the occupant(s) of offices are physically separated from the general public by doors or enclosed offices.

### Section 4. Requirement to Wear Face Coverings

All persons in the Town of Norwich shall wear face coverings while indoors at a Public Building or other locations that are open to the general public.

### Section 5. Exemptions

Face coverings are not required for:

- a) Any Person (i) under the age of 2, (ii) with a medical condition that is complicated or irritated by a facial covering, (iii) for whom wearing a mask result in undue difficulties breathing, or (iv) who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

- b) Any Person who is alone in a Public Building, so long as they remain alone (i.e., no other Person is present).
- c) Any Person entering a business, or a portion of a business, located within a Public Building, including but not limited to retail, food and beverage, gym, theater, or similar high-traffic business, which actively screens and limits who may enter its premises to only Persons with established proof of vaccination for the covid-19 virus, but only to the extent that the Person is actually screened and provides proof of vaccination.

**Section 6. Other Laws**

This Rule is in addition to all other ordinances and rules of the Town of Norwich and all applicable laws of the State of Vermont. All ordinances, rules, or parts of ordinances, rules, resolutions, regulations, or other documents inconsistent with the provisions of this Rule are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

**Section 7. Severability**

If any section or provision of this Rule is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such finding shall not invalidate any other part of this Rule.

**Section 8. Effective Period.**

This Rule shall take effect immediately upon the approval by the Selectboard and shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed 45 days following its initial adoption. The Selectboard shall meet during the 45-day period in which this initial Rule is in effect and vote to rescind this Rule or to extend it for an additional 30 days. Thereafter, the Selectboard shall meet at a minimum once every 30 days to reconsider this Rule, at which meeting the Selectboard shall vote to rescind this Rule or to extend it for an additional 30-day period. The filing of a petition under 24 V.S.A. §§ 1972 and 1973, shall not govern the taking effect of this Rule.

The Selectboard may also vote to suspend the ordinance at any time before April 30, 2022, based on the CDC's community transmission data for Windsor County being at or below "moderate" for ten consecutive days or more (as measured by the CDC).

**Section 9. Posting Requirements**

Each Public Building and each separate business or separate premise within a Public Building must post signage at the entrance and at other appropriate locations stating that Persons entering are required to wear face coverings by order of the Norwich Selectboard unless exempt. Other locations can be alternative entrances (back doors, etc.) or at transaction locations such as registers. Signage requirements will have an effective date of Friday, December 10, 2021.

**ADOPTED by the Selectboard of the Town of Norwich at its meeting  
on this 8th day of December, 2021.**

**SIGNATURES of Selectboard**

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Roger Arnold

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Claudette Brochu

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Mary Layton

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Rob Gere

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Marcia Calloway