

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

IN RE:  
COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT  
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY COVID-19

GENERAL ORDER

WHEREAS, the Court continues to review its operations to identify measures that will help protect court employees and the public from the COVID-19 virus, while at the same time preserving its core mission of serving the public through the fair and impartial administration of justice;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has recently updated its guidance concerning the wearing of masks to reduce the spread of COVID-19 (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>);

WHEREAS, the CDC's new guidance advises the adoption of mask-wearing practices based on the level of prevalence of COVID-19 in the community;

WHEREAS, according to current data published by the CDC, as well as data from other reputable sources, the District of Connecticut is currently experiencing a low level of COVID-19 (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>; see also <https://www.covidactnow.org/us/connecticut-ct/>);

WHEREAS, when the COVID-19 level in the community is low, the CDC advises that the wearing of masks should be based on each individual's personal preference, informed by that individual's personal level of risk;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, **effective immediately and until further order of the Court**, that:

- 1) This order supersedes the General Order entered on August 2, 2021.
- 2) In courthouse hallways, individuals are not required to wear masks. Judges may require individuals to wear a mask when in their chambers.
- 3) In courtrooms and jury assembly and deliberation rooms, individuals are not required to wear masks unless the presiding judge orders otherwise. It may be necessary during

jury trials and other large gatherings for individual judges to impose mask orders because such proceedings often require individuals to sit together in close quarters for long periods of time.

- 4) Any person who wishes to wear a mask in any location in the courthouse may do so.

This order is based on the current levels of prevalence of the COVID-19 virus in the communities served by the Court. Should there be a significant change in the prevalence levels in those communities, the Court may revisit this order.

SO ORDERED:

Dated: March 4, 2022  
Bridgeport, CT

  
Stefan R. Underhill  
Chief United State District Judge