



# What's New in HR Law

## Ontario Will Lift Most Mask-Wearing Requirements Effective June 11, 2022

June 8, 2022 | By [Cassandra Ma](#)

### Ontario Government Announces Lifting of Mask Mandates and COVID-19 Directives

On June 8, 2022, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health [announced](#) that provincial mask-wearing requirements for most public settings will expire effective 12:00 AM on June 11, 2022. Mask mandates will be maintained in specified high-risk settings, such as long-term care homes, retirement homes, shelters, group homes, hospitals, and health care settings; however, the Government will no longer require mask-wearing on public transit.

Also on June 11, 2022, all remaining [COVID-19 Directives issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health](#) will be revoked and replaced with Ministry of Health guidance for health care workers and organizations. The Directives currently still in force are:

- Directive #1 for Health Care Providers and Health Care Entities;
- Directive #2.1 for Hospitals Within the Meaning of the *Public Hospitals Act*, Private Hospitals Within the Meaning of the *Private Hospitals Act*, Psychiatric Facilities Within the Meaning of the *Mental Health Act* and Regulated Health Professionals who Practice Within Them;
- Directive #3 for Long-Term Care Homes under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*;
- Directive #4 for Ambulance Services and Paramedics under the *Ambulance Act*; and
- Directive #5 for Hospitals Within the Meaning of the *Public Hospitals Act* and Long-Term Care Homes Within the Meaning of the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*.

*This article is for the purposes of only general information and does not constitute legal advice or opinion.*

The decision to lift these public health measures is based on improvements to Ontario’s COVID-19 situation and the high vaccination rates among Ontarians. The Government may reinstitute provincial mask-wearing requirements if pandemic circumstances worsen at a late date, similar to what occurred when COVID-19 case counts rose in April 2022.

## Check the Box

Employers operating in high-risk public settings should look out for further announcements from the Ontario Government and ensure compliance with applicable mask-wearing guidelines. This may require a careful review of existing mask-related policies and updating them as necessary.

Despite the impending expiry of most provincial mask mandates, the Chief Medical Officer of Health has advised that individual organizations may continue to implement their own mask-wearing policies. Given the ever-evolving circumstances of the pandemic and the possibility of new COVID-19 variants arising, employers may wish to remain prudent and maintain mask-wearing protocols in their workplaces. Such an approach may help to continue preventing occupational COVID-19 exposure and related risks to employee health safety.

## Need More Information?

For more information about public health measures relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, contact 416.408.3221 or your regular lawyer at the firm.



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