

I am in favor of the updates to the Indoor Masking Guidance. In addition, I suggest a modification to the language in the guidelines. The following is from an email that I sent to the County Council on August 10, 2021. I received only an automated acknowledgement of receipt. No one from the County Council has responded to my concerns to this date. I urge members of the Council to take the time to consider these suggestions and concerns.

I am writing to request that you update the new county masking guidelines with clarifying language. Currently, the website states that face coverings must be worn "...when indoors at any location accessible to the public". There are many people actively looking for loopholes in this guideline.

*I am a member of a house of worship whose leadership interprets this language to mean they are **exempt** from masking since only members (and not the general public) regularly access the facility. I do not think this is the spirit of the rule and I also do not think this organization is the only one in the county to be misinterpreting the guidelines.*

I respectfully request that you add language explaining what it means to be "accessible to the public". I hope such clarification will force facilities to enforce the use of masks indoors.

I will add that I also reported to the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services in August 2021 that a non-public school in the county was publishing guidelines that neither required nor encouraged mask use for the school. Again, I received no response. And, to my knowledge, that school continues to operate in 3 locations with no masking requirements. [I ultimately moved my children, before the start of the school year, from that school to another non-public school with a strong masking policy.]

Thank you for your consideration.