Recent Governmental Actions/Pronouncements Impacting COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts by Horry County Schools

> Horry County Board of Education

Monday, May 17, 2021

DATE	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION
May 11, 2021	Governor Henry McMaster	State	Executive Order No. 2021-34. Section I, directs DHEC to take action to allow for parents, guardians, legal custodians, foster- care providers, or other representatives authorized to provide consent for or on behalf of a student in any South Carolina public school to opt out of any face covering requirement imposed by any public school official or public school district in South Carolina. The DHEC opt-out form that schools must use, unaltered, to get parental or legal guardian consent for a student is available <u>here</u> . In order to be valid, the form must be completed without change by the parent or guardian (or student, if age 18 or older). <u>https://governor.sc.gov/news/2021-05/gov-henry-mcmaster- issues-order-empowering-parents-decide-masks-schools- restricts</u>

DATE	Ξ	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION
May	12, 2021	State Superintendent Molly Spearman	State	In an email statement to South Carolina district superintendents, South Carolina Superintendent Spearman stated the following: "Rather than wage a debate over constitutionality that would pit elected officials, students, and families against one another, Superintendent Spearman has, effective immediately, rescinded the state face covering policy with the exception of the school bus requirement that is now required by the federal governmentSuperintendent Spearman and the SCDE continue to urge schools and districts to follow DHEC's public health guidance as they have throughout the pandemic." https://www.wistv.com/2021/05/12/sc-superintendent-cancels- mask-policy-students-schools/



DATE	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION
May 12, 2021	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC)	State	<ul> <li>"Option to Opt-Out of Mask Use</li> <li>As of May 11, 2021, Executive Order No. 2021-34. Section I, directs DHEC to take action to allow for parents, guardians, legal custodians, foster-care providers, or other representatives authorized to provide consent for or on behalf of a student in any South Carolina public school to opt out of any face covering requirement imposed by any public school official or public school district in South Carolina.</li> <li>The DHEC opt-out form that schools must use, unaltered, to get parental or legal guardian consent for a student is available <u>here</u>. In order to be valid, the form must be completed without change by the parent or guardian (or student, if age 18 or older)."</li> <li>Interim COVID-19 guidance for schools:</li> <li>Management of known and possible COVID-19 cases</li> <li>(https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/Interim-DHEC-Guidance-for-School-Response-to-COVID-19-05.12.21.pdf.)</li> <li>SCDHEC Opt-Out Form</li> <li>https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/D-4286.pdf</li> </ul>

DATE	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION	
May 12, 2021	Horry County Schools	District	(Via Email to HCS Parents and HCS Employees) "After a thorough review of Executive Order 2021-23 by our General Counsel, we are prepared to move forward with our best good-faith effort to reconcile these conflicting directives. In order for the opt- out procedure to take effect as soon as possible, schools will accept signed/completed paper copies of the SCDHEC opt-out forms starting tomorrow, Thursday, May 13, 2021, from parents (or students over the age of 18)." NOTE:	
			<ol> <li>The decision to allow parents the option to choose whether their children wear masks in public schools was enacted by Governor Henry McMaster through his Executive Order No. 2021-23 which has the force of law in S.C.</li> <li>Governor Henry McMaster directed SCDHEC to develop an opt- out form which parents can sign to indicate they do not want their child to wear a mask while at school. (However, children who ride buses, due to Federal regulations, still must wear a mask.)</li> </ol>	

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May 12, 2021	Horry County Schools	District	NOTE:
			3. Per Governor McMaster's Executive Order, SCDHEC developed a mask opt-out form for parents to sign indicating they do not want their child to wear a mask at school. The SCDHEC opt-out form specifically states that for the form to be valid, the form must not be altered or changed by the parent in any way.
			4. SCDHEC did not specify a date range for the validity of their opt- out form.
			5. Horry County Schools did not develop the opt-out form and <u>has no</u> authority to change it or add a date range to it.
			***On April 28, Governor McMaster signed into law the General Assembly's SC COVID-19 Liability Immunity Act that provides protection from liability for entities that follow SCDHEC protocols and guidelines.***
			https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess124_2021- 2022/bills/147.htm#:~:text=A%20JOINT%20RESOLUTION%20TO%20E NACT,DEFINE%20NECESSARY%20TERMS%3B%20TO%20PROVIDE

DATE	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION
May 13, 2021	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	Federal	<ul> <li>Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People</li> <li>"Summary of Recent Changes</li> <li>Update that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance</li> <li>Update that fully vaccinated people can refrain from testing following a known exposure unless they are residents or employees of a correctional or detention facility or a homeless shelter"</li> <li>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html</li> </ul>

DATE	SOURCE		ΑCTION
DATE May 14, 2021	SOURCE SCDHEC – Dr. Edward Simmer, Director	LEVEL State	ACTION "As the state's public health agency, we have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of all South Carolinians. This includes advising our residents what activities are safe for them.
			Per CDC, people should still continue to wear masks when in schools, healthcare facilities, correctional facilities, homeless shelters, and on commercial transportation. Also, people who have weakened immune systems should consult with their physician to determine the best course of action for them.
			Those who have not been fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks, socially distance, and take all other needed precautions to prevent COVID-19. This includes children, especially those in school. With the approval of the Pfizer vaccine for those 12 years and older, we are hopeful that as more 12- to 15-year-old children get vaccinated, this revised guidance can be extended to them as well.
			This decision is based on the latest science that tells us that the currently approved vaccines are working. The risk of being infected or spreading COVID-19 once fully vaccinated is very low, and therefore wearing a mask if you are fully vaccinated is not needed."
			https://scdhec.gov/news-releases/south-carolina-public-health- officials-release-statement-new-cdc-mask-guidelines

DATE	SOURCE	LEVEL	ACTION
May 16, 2021	SCDHEC – Brandi Hagman, COVID-19 Response Schools Coordinator	State	<ul> <li>(Via Email to District Superintendents)</li> <li>"CDC updated their website this morning to clarify that the new recommendations for fully vaccinated people do NOT apply to schools: <u>https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html</u>.</li> <li>CDC recommends schools continue to use the current COVID-19 prevention strategies for the 2020-2021 school year to include</li> <li>Consistent implementation of layered prevention strategies to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission in schools</li> <li>Consideration of indicators of community transmission to reflect levels of community risk</li> <li>Phased prevention strategies based on levels of community transmission</li> <li>The following public health efforts provide additional layers of COVID-19 protection in schools:</li> <li>Testing to identify individuals with a SARS-CoV-2 infection to limit transmission and outbreaks</li> <li>Vaccination for teachers and staff as soon as possible"</li> </ul>

## Recent Disease Activity, by County As of 5.12.2021



COVID-19 Recent Disease Activity, by County

As of 11:59 PM on 5/11/2021

