



DIOCESE OF OAKLAND

2121 HARRISON STREET, SUITE 100 ÉOAKLAND, CA 94612-3788
510.893.4711 É FAX: 510.893.0945 É www.oakdiocese.org

February 14, 2022

To: Pastors/Parochial Administrators and all Parish and Chancery Employees

From: Department of Human Resources

Re: Mask Mandate – Effective February 16, 2022

Effective February 16, 2022, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties will align with California Department of Public Health and lift the mask mandate in indoor settings for vaccinated individuals. This mandate does not apply to schools.

The Diocese of Oakland will continue to follow the directives of both, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and the new mask mandate will be implemented effective February 16th.

The following applies to all who worship, work, volunteer or attend parish/school sponsored events in the Diocese of Oakland:

Mass/Worship Services

Masks

Individuals who are vaccinated are not required to wear a mask indoors. Anyone who is unvaccinated must continue to wear a mask indoors.

Clear and visible signage must be posted at all entrances to the church. **(English/Spanish)**. Please communicate the mask mandate in your bulletin and website.

Pastors please note: these protocols are all on the “honor system”. **No one should be forced or requested to “prove” their vaccination status to participate in worship**. Some may wish to continue wearing a mask indoors and it should not be assumed they are not vaccinated. Our ushers and greeters should extend a warm welcome and answer questions about the new policy, but they should never be used as “mask police”.

Sign of Peace

The Sign of Peace should still be exchanged without physical contact, except for family members.

The Eucharist

It is strongly encouraged that the faithful receive Communion in the hand, however provision should be made so that anyone who wishes to receive on the tongue may do so, from a priest. If the priest does not feel comfortable with this, he may delegate to another, trained minister.

We are not authorizing the distribution of the Precious Blood for the time being.

Communion Vessels should continue to be thoroughly washed after each Mass once they have been purified.

Misc.

Gatherings before and after Mass are safer outdoors.

Parish Office/Chancery Office

Vaccinated employees and volunteers will not be required to wear a mask indoors. Proof of vaccination must be on file for employees and volunteers at each site.

Unvaccinated employees and volunteers who do not provide proof of vaccination, will be required to always wear a mask while indoors.

Visitors may remove their mask indoors if they show proof of vaccination.

Employees and volunteers may choose to continue wearing a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status. It should not be assumed a person is unvaccinated if they choose to wear a mask.

Meeting Indoors

Please continue to exercise caution when meeting in-person. Follow masking recommendations stated above and meet in rooms which provide adequate spacing and ventilation from windows and doors, when practical.

Please continue using the **sign-in** sheets so anyone experiencing Covid symptoms knows not to enter the office space. Clear and visible signage must be posted at all entrances to the office. **(English/Spanish)**.

Providing disposable masks, as needed, as well as cleaning and sanitizing products, promotes a safer environment for employees, volunteers, and visitors.

Festivals/Events/Gatherings

The policy for Parish/School Festivals and Events and gatherings which was provided las August 27, 2021,has been modified to reflect the new mask mandate. Please see the updated policy **here**.

If you have you have questions or need further assistance, please contact the Department of Human Resources if at 510-267-8359 or gespinoza@oakdiocese.org.