



NAZARETH AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

On Tuesday, August 31, 2021, the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) with the support of Governor Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) issued an Order, [signed by Pennsylvania's Acting Secretary of Health](#), **directing** school entities to **require** all staff, students, visitors, and volunteers, **regardless of vaccination status**, to wear face coverings indoors. The Nazareth Area School District must comply with the Order which takes effect on **Tuesday, September 7, 2021**, until further notice by the DOH. This Order supersedes the Board-approved NASD Health and Safety Plan and any exemptions outlined in the NASD Health and Safety Plan.

The following are the **exemptions** outlined by the Order that apply to the school setting for children/students:

- If wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or a disability.
 - *The physician's letter must **specifically** address and provide a medical rationale as to how wearing a face mask or alternative face covering would either cause or exacerbate an identified and medically diagnosed medical condition, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental condition, or a disability.*
- When an individual is:
 - Engaged in an activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating and drinking, or playing an instrument that would be obstructed by the face covering
 - Participating in high-intensity aerobic or anerobic activities, including during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals.
- When a child/student is participating in a sports practice activity or event, whether indoors or outdoors.
- If an individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired or has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

Religious exemptions previously submitted to the administration do not qualify as exemptions under this Order. Medical exemptions previously submitted to the district will be reviewed in light of the exemption requirements provided in the Order. Families will be contacted if the medical exemption they originally submitted no longer qualifies under the Order. If it is determined that a previously submitted medical exemption does not meet the Order exemption requirements, families will be given a two-week grace period to obtain a new medical exemption that meets the Order exemption requirements.

For additional information on the Order or exemptions please visit the [Pennsylvania Department of Education's website on the masking Order](#) and/or the PDE [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

We recognize this Order will be met with relief by some and frustration by others. As a school community, we must rise above our divided beliefs regarding face coverings to become models for our children on how to cultivate a culture of **kindness**, **respect**, and **understanding** with each other.