



Seventh Amended Executive Order 72 and Mask Guidance: An Update for Veterinarians

May 20, 2021

[New masking guidance](#) for [fully vaccinated](#) people was released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on May 13, 2021. Governor Northam amended Executive Order 72 to align with the updated CDC guidance on May 14, 2021. This update is provided to help the Virginia veterinary community keep up with changing COVID-19 orders and guidance.

For the purposes of the newly amended COVID-19 Executive Order, veterinary clinics are considered **businesses** (and not healthcare facilities). [Executive order 72 \(Seventh Amended\)](#) reads “Any business not listed in section I, subsections A or C must adhere to the Guidelines for All Business Sectors expressly incorporated by reference herein as best practices” and refers to the document “[Guidelines for all Business Sectors](#)”, the introductory section of which should be used by veterinarians as a best practice guide. These best practices include enhanced cleaning and enhanced workplace safety strategies, such as employee screening for symptoms of COVID-19, encouraging sick employees to stay home and complying with recommendations for [proper mask use](#). Specific guidance associated with some of these best practices are detailed below.

- **Mask use:** Unvaccinated people can spread COVID-19 to others even if they do not feel sick. Encourage employees, clients and other persons who are not vaccinated, or whose vaccination status is unknown, to wear [masks](#).

[Fully vaccinated](#) people do not have to wear masks or practice physical distancing in most indoor or outdoor settings, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. **Fully vaccinated** means 2 weeks or more have passed since getting the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (e.g., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or getting

one dose of a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson & Johnson [Janssen]).

[Businesses](#), including veterinary practices, retain the ability to require masks in their establishments. For businesses that choose to relax mask requirements for fully vaccinated employees and clients, support those who are fully vaccinated but are still uncomfortable around others by allowing them to continue wearing a mask if they choose to do so. **Employees and clients who have not been vaccinated, or are not yet fully vaccinated, need to continue to wear a mask.** Unvaccinated employees should be encouraged and supported to make arrangements to get a vaccination. It is simply the right thing to do to protect an individual's health and the health of those around them, including family, friends and coworkers.

- **Facility cleaning and employee health:** Resources available to assist with best practices for veterinary hospitals and other businesses can be found on the [VDH Businesses page](#) as part of the “General Resources for Patrons and Businesses” and the “Screening, Symptom Monitoring, and Quarantine/Isolation in Workplaces” tabs.

A quick reference infographic describing when a person can return to work after COVID-19 illness or a COVID-19 exposure has been updated to reflect updated guidance for people who are fully vaccinated and can be found [here](#).

- **Vaccination:** Authorized COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. COVID-19 vaccination is an important tool to bring us closer to enjoying the activities we have missed. Getting vaccinated is up to you. Vaccines are now more widely accessible in Virginia for everyone 12 and older. Pre-registration for COVID-19 vaccination is no longer necessary. To find a COVID-19 vaccination appointment, visit vaccinate.virginia.gov or call 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682).