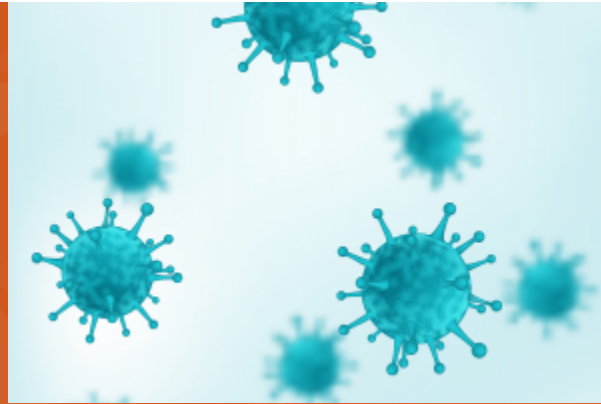


COVID-19 Alert: Massachusetts Announces Mask Advisory

Massachusetts Issues Mask Advisory for Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Residents

By: Amanda E. Thibodeau and Matthew L. Mitchell
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In response to the spread of the Delta variant and the emerging Omicron variant, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has announced an updated “**Mask Advisory**” that affects all private-sector employers.

Effective, **Tuesday, December 21, 2021**, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health now advises that all residents, *regardless of vaccination status*, wear a mask or face covering when indoors, when not at home. The Mask Advisory applies to private-sector work settings and implies that employers take steps to encourage face covering and social distancing in work environments. The Mask Advisory represents a change-in-course from the recent roll-back of state-mandated COVID-19 safety protocols.

The Mask Advisory does not have the legal authority of a mandate, and there is no threat of fines or enforcement for those who disregard the recommendation. That said, the Mask Advisory may be interpreted as establishing a minimum standard of care for employers. As such, we recommend that all Massachusetts employers consider re-instituting formal face covering and social distancing protocols for their work environments.

Morse is focused on assisting our clients through these unprecedented times. Please contact **Matthew Mitchell** or **Amanda Thibodeau** should you have questions concerning this subject, or any other COVID-19 response matters.

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