

DEC 07 2022

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

LAURA A. AUSTIN, CLERK
BY:  DEPUTY CLERK

IN RE:
POLICY ON MASK WEARING
AND COURTHOUSE ENTRY
DUE TO COVID-19

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AMENDED STANDING ORDER 2022-8

The Court continues to monitor the local and national emergency occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that COVID-19-related deaths have substantially decreased in the United State over the past eight months and as of early November 2022 this decline has been largely sustained and remained relatively stable.¹ COVID-19 levels in our district have remained in the low to medium range since September 23, 2022. While mask wearing is still recognized by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an effective method to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the CDC has relaxed its COVID-19 mask guidelines. Therefore, Standing Order 2022-8 which was entered on March 14, 2022, is AMENDED as follows:

1. As long as COVID-19 levels in the Western District of Virginia remain in the low and medium ranges based on the CDC's COVID-19 County Check tool located on the CDC website, the Clerk is no longer required to communicate with the Court Security Officers, Clerk's Office, Probation Office, and judge's chambers in each divisional courthouse as to COVID-19 Community Levels. Should COVID-19 levels rise, the Clerk shall consult with the Chief Judge to determine whether further precautions are warranted.

¹ Center for Disease Control and Prevention article "COVID-19 Data Review: Update on COVID-19 Related Mortality" updated November 16, 2022

2. The mask requirement in public spaces, internal Clerk's Office space and internal Probation Office spaces is lifted.

3. Mask wearing during court proceedings and in judge's chambers in courthouses shall be at the discretion of the presiding judge.

It is so **ORDERED**.

Entered: 12/7/2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Urbanski', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael F. Urbanski
Chief United States District Judge