Dear Colleagues,

Your health and safety are a top priority, and it is our responsibility to take action to minimize risk for our workforce and those we serve. With each month’s developments, we are learning more about how to deal with COVID-19 and recognizing it will be with us for quite some time. Since the beginning, we’ve protected our workforce and state by being flexible and guided by science in our decision making. Looking ahead, we know additional adjustments will be necessary. **Our latest adjustment includes requiring our employees to wear face coverings in all state buildings.** You can find details in the updated [Face Coverings Policy for Agency Staff](#).

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidance to recommend that everyone, including fully vaccinated people wear a mask indoors in public if they are in an area of substantial or high transmission, or if their personal circumstances make it advisable, to reduce the risk of being infected with the delta variant and possibly spreading it to others.

Transmission rates in a fast growing number of Minnesota counties are high enough that even fully vaccinated people should wear masks indoors. As Minnesota’s second largest employer, state agencies will lead by example and effective immediately implement the new CDC guidance. Because of the fast moving situation, all state offices regardless of location will reinstitute universal indoor masking policies.

**What does this mean for our agency?**

Effective immediately--

- All DOC employees must wear face coverings inside state buildings.
- We will strongly recommend that all visitors wear face coverings.

This pandemic continues to pose a serious threat to the health of all Minnesotans and actions now can save lives tomorrow. We are following the data closely and will continue to take a commonsense approach to keeping people safe. Minnesota Management and Budget has issued this workplace guidance as an employer for the state workforce and facilities. It does not apply to non-state buildings or businesses.

Your supervisor and our HR team are available if you have questions or want to talk. As always, you can access our [Employee Assistance Program (EAP)](#) and other well-being resources at any time.

If you or your family and friends haven’t done so yet, please visit [VaccineConnector.mn.gov](http://VaccineConnector.mn.gov) to make an appointment to get vaccinated.

Thank you and be safe,

-Paul