

Pa. to Ease Restrictions, but Not Masking (Yet)

PUBLISHED ON

May 4, 2021

Pennsylvania has joined some of its neighbors in announcing a timetable to lift COVID-related restrictions on businesses across the state.

Gov. Tom Wolf announced that starting Memorial Day, the [state will lift almost all of the restrictions imposed on businesses](#), and, most importantly, any capacity limits. That's welcome news for restaurants, bars, entertainment venues and other hospitality businesses, which have operated at limited capacity for more than a year, not to mention other businesses that are looking to bring their employees back into their offices.

Wolf follows his counterparts in states such as [New York and New Jersey](#), whose governors recently released similar "back to normal" timetables. Wolf's announcement also comes on the same day that President Joe Biden announced his goal to have [70% of adults at least partially vaccinated by early July](#).

The ease of capacity restrictions, however, does not end the masking requirements of both employees of businesses and its patrons. Wolf emphasized that all masking restrictions will remain in place until at least 70% of the state is fully vaccinated (which, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, doesn't occur until two weeks after a person's final vaccination shot). Until then, indoor masking requirements will remain, as well as masking requirements outside around people not of the same household when 6 feet of social distancing cannot be maintained, in line with guidance from the CDC.

It should also be noted that certain Pennsylvania laws are superseded by national regulations. Current federal government organizations that specifically use guidance from the CDC could hold certain businesses to a higher standard. Employers should continue to be familiar with CDC standards, as government entities like the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration likely will follow that guidance](#) - especially when it comes to workplace exposure - until it makes its own. Clients should be on the lookout for additional guidance prior to Memorial Day on these and other areas not covered by today's press release. If you have any questions about the easing of restrictions, please contact [Dan Desmond](#), [Josh Schwartz](#), [Martin Siegel](#), [Brian Korman](#) or any of the attorneys in the [Barley Snyder COVID-19 Response Service Team](#).

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