

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order Lifting COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

03/4/2022

EO Formally Lifts Statewide School and Daycare Mask Mandate Effective March 7th

TRENTON – At his final COVID-19 press briefing, Governor Phil Murphy announced the signing of Executive Order No. 292, which lifts the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in addition to the statewide school and daycare mask mandate, effective on Monday, March 7. This major step has been made possible by the Murphy Administration’s comprehensive and successful pandemic response efforts.

“With COVID-19 moving into an endemic, the time has come to move toward normalcy,” **said Governor Murphy**. “In the past two years, New Jerseyans have shown great strength, resiliency, and kindness during one of the most difficult and trying times in the history of our state. The steps I am taking today have been made possible by our highly-successful vaccination efforts and the collective efforts of the people of our state.”

“Conditions have improved in our state—immunity is high, cases have dropped significantly, therapeutics have improved, and testing is rapid and readily available. So, it does make sense to relax restrictions as we learn to live with the virus,” **said Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli**. “But taking masks off doesn’t mean that other strategies should be abandoned. In fact, they become more important. So, please continue to wash your hands frequently, physically distance, stay home when you’re sick, and get vaccinated and boosted to protect yourselves, your families, your friends, and our children.”

“For nearly two years, New Jersey’s school communities have persevered through countless challenges brought on by COVID-19 – always with the shared goal of protecting the health and safety of our school staff, students, and their families,” **said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education**. “While we recognize this virus has been unpredictable, we look forward to this next milestone in our road ahead.”

EO No. 292 terminates the Public Health Emergency declared in EO No. 280, effective on Monday, March 7. The State of Emergency declared in EO No. 103 will remain in place to ensure that the State continues to have necessary resources as COVID-19 is managed on an endemic level. It is common practice for states of emergency for major crises to remain in place to allow the State to receive and distribute federal funding without any unnecessary red tape or bureaucratic obstacles, as exemplified by Governor Christie’s State of Emergency declaration for Superstorm Sandy, which remains in effect to this day.

Additionally, EO Nos. 111, 112, 207, 252, 253, 283, and 290 remain in full force and effect under the State of Emergency except that any civil or criminal immunity related to the COVID-19 response bestowed by Executive Order No. 112 shall not be in effect. EO No. 292 also extends various Administrative Orders, Directives, and Waivers taken by the Executive Branch departments and agencies in response to the pandemic to allow for an orderly transition as we move towards an endemic.

Copy of Executive Order No. 292 (<https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-292.pdf>)

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