



Chambers of  
**Erick L. Larsh**  
PRESIDING JUDGE

# Superior Court of California County of Orange

700 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE WEST  
SANTA ANA, CA 92701

## **FIFTH AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 20/16 REQUIRED SAFETY MEASURES AND FACE COVERINGS IN COURT**

On March 4, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19. Since then, guidance, directives, and orders have issued addressing face coverings in public settings.

On June 11, 2021, Governor Newsom issued Executive Orders [N-07-21](#) and [N-08-21](#) and the State Public Health Officer issued an [Order](#) which rescinded the Blueprint for a Safer Economy, substantially decreasing the face covering requirements for vaccinated individuals, and removing social distancing requirements effective June 15, 2021. On June 15, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings reducing the recommendations for face coverings for vaccinated individuals in indoor public settings. On June 17, 2021, the Orange County Health Officer issued an [Order](#), which among other things, required all County residents and visitors to wear face coverings in accordance with and as required by the CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings. Based on the Orange County Health Officer's order and the CDPH guidance, I issued the Third Amended Administrative Order No. 20/16, which provided (1) face masks are required in court facilities for unvaccinated individuals; (2) face masks are generally not required in court facilities for fully vaccinated individuals; and (3) specified individuals are exempt from face mask requirements.

On July 27, 2021, in response to the rising number of COVID-19 cases and the spread of the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant circulating in the United States, the Centers for Disease Control issued [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#) which added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear a face mask in public indoor settings in areas with substantial or high transmission rates, such as Orange County. On July 28, 2021, the CDPH issued an updated [Guidance for the Use of Face Masks](#), recommending that fully vaccinated people mask in indoor public settings across California. The Orange County Health Officer's June 17, 2021 [Order](#) still requires all County residents and visitors to wear face coverings in accordance with and as required by the CDPH. On July 29, 2021, the Orange County Health Care Agency issued a press release affirming that masks are required for unvaccinated individuals and recommended for fully vaccinated individuals. As a result, the Third Amended Administrative Order No. 20/16, was rescinded and I issued a Fourth Amended Administrative Order No. 20/16.

Due to further COVID-19-related developments, I now find it necessary to issue a Fifth Amended Administrative Order No. 20/16.

Pursuant to my authority to control matters before the Court (Code Civ. Proc., § 128; Gov. Code, § 68070); my authority as the Presiding Judge (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 10.603); the inherent powers of the Court (*In re Reno* (2012) 565 Cal.4<sup>th</sup> 428, 522); and in compliance with state and local guidelines and the Fourth Amended Administrative Order No. 20/16 is hereby rescinded, and I order as follows:


- Regardless of vaccination status, all people including but not limited to court employees, building tenants, justice partners, law enforcement officers, attorneys, members of the public, jurors, parties, and contractors entering any courthouse or court facility in the County of Orange, must wear a face mask at all times in the public areas, including courtrooms, and in any shared non-public areas of the courthouse.
- Judicial officers are encouraged to wear masks at all times, both while on the bench and when interacting with other individuals in the courthouse, including Court employees.
- Face coverings should completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of face without gaps. Face masks required under this Order means a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers. A face mask shall have no visible holes or openings and must cover both the nose and mouth. A face mask does not include a scarf, ski mask, balaclava, bandana, turtleneck, collar, or single layer of fabric.
- Individuals who are not wearing a face mask will be denied entry to the building. Individuals who remove their masks after entering the building will be reminded to wear them. If they refuse, they may be denied services, and they will be asked to leave the court building immediately. Persons who refuse to leave voluntarily will be escorted from the building by court security personnel.
- Children under the age of three years old are exempt from this Order.

- Members of the public with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask who seek an exemption from this Order as a reasonable accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act or California Rules of Court, rule 1.100, must contact the Court's ADA site coordinator at <http://www.occourts.org/general-info/> or at [ADAInformation@occourts.org](mailto:ADAInformation@occourts.org). Employees with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask who seek an exemption from this Order as a reasonable accommodation must contact Human Resources.
- Social distancing of at least six feet (6') shall no longer be enforced in courthouses, courtrooms, and public areas, unless otherwise required.

This Order will remain in effect until 30 days after the Governor declares that the State of Emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted, or until amended or repealed.

THIS ORDER IS EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 16, 2022.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 15 day of February 2022, at Santa Ana California.



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Erick L. Larsh  
Presiding Judge