

**Alert | Labor & Employment**



June 2021

**COVID-19 Changes Are Coming: What California Employers Can Expect – Q&A**

Changes are coming to the COVID-19 landscape in California. Gov. Newsom recently announced that, as of today, June 15, 2021, “we can start to open up” and engage in “business as usual.” And while hopeful, the announcement is leaving Californians to ask what “business as usual” means. Following is a Q&A with the governor’s responses, to address the more frequent questions and concerns as we continue towards the hopeful end of our lockdown excursion.

**Q. WHAT DOES REOPENING ‘REALLY’ MEAN?**

“In short, the state has announced that all counties will eliminate the color-coded system and be allowed to re-open at the same time, irrespective of transmission statistics. In turn, capacity limits will be removed, physical distancing restrictions will be relaxed, and mask

Vaccine Verification/ Negative Testing	OR	Indoor Mega Events <b>REQUIRED</b>	Outdoor Mega Events <b>RECOMMENDED</b>
Capacity Limitations		<b>NO RESTRICTIONS</b>	<b>NO RESTRICTIONS</b> <i>for attendees, customers and guests</i>
Masking		<b>FOLLOW CURRENT CDPH GUIDANCE</b> for Face Coverings	<b>FOLLOW CDC RECOMMENDATIONS</b> and CDPH Travel Advisory

mandates will either be limited or gone entirely. Nevertheless, significant discretion will still be provided to counties, cities, and local businesses—all of whom will retain the option to impose their own rules with respect to social distancing and mask mandates.”

**Q. WHAT COUNTIES WILL BE AFFECTED?**

“All California counties will be affected, although the degree of effect may vary. As noted above, counties, cities, and even businesses will all be provided significant discretion to retain previously in place COVID restrictions with respect to masks or other protections. As a result, despite the state-wide easing, individual counties may impose stricter rules than others. To date, however, several counties, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Solano, and Sonoma have confirmed that they plan to be aligned with the general reopening framework.”

**Q. ARE WE DONE WITH MASKS?**

“California will generally align with the U.S. Center for Disease Control’s mask recommendations. Currently, this reflects that if individuals are fully vaccinated, they will not be required to wear masks in most settings. The sole exceptions to this relaxation deal with healthcare and public transportation settings, such as at airports and on trains.”

**Q. WILL WE HAVE TO WEAR MASKS IN THE WORKPLACE?**

“We may possibly need to wear masks in the workplace. Generally, if everyone within the workplace is vaccinated, masks will not be required. However, if someone is not vaccinated, then everyone in the office will need to wear a mask. Even once collectively vaccinated, however, social distancing should still be maintained.”

“Exceptions exist for certain industries and settings. Masks will be required in hospitals prisons, homeless shelters, select indoor workplaces, and places like theme parks. Employers may also retain discretion to continue requiring masks, such as in stores.”

**Q. MASKED RIDERS NO MORE? WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC TRANSIT?**

“When using public transit or air travel, masks may be required by other state, federal or local laws. The federal requirement is currently expected to expire September 13, 2021. However, vaccinated individuals will not need have a COVID test if traveling within the U.S.; or quarantine after travel.”

**Q. IS THIS THE LAST WE WILL HEAR OF COVID RESTRICTIONS?**

“Despite this general guidance, the COVID landscape remains in flux and subject to frequent change. For the most up to date information, please refer to your own local county and city restrictions for more tailored guidance.”

For more information and updates on the developing situation, visit [GT’s Health Emergency Preparedness Task Force: Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) and [Business Continuity Amid COVID-19](#) page.

*\*Infographic Source: Greenberg Traurig.*

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