

# California governor says mask mandate to end after June 15

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In this March 10, 2021, file photo, California Gov. Gavin Newsom wears a mask during a visit to a vaccination center in South Gate, Calif. Gov. Newsom said Tuesday, May 11, 2021, the nation's most populous state would stop requiring people to wear masks in almost all circumstances on June 15, describing a world he said will look "a lot like the world we entered into before the pandemic." (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, File)

California Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday the nation's most populous state would stop requiring people to wear masks in almost all circumstances on June 15, describing a world he said will look "a lot like the world we entered into before the pandemic."

"We're not wearing face coverings. We're not restricted in any way, shape or form from doing the old things that we used to do, save for huge, large-scale indoor convention events like that, where we use our common sense," Newsom said [in an interview](#) with Fox 11's Elex Michaelson.

California has required people to wear masks in [public places](#) since June 18. The guidance requires people to wear a mask when gathering indoors with people who are not vaccinated. Fully vaccinated people can meet indoors without wearing a mask. They can also not wear a mask outdoors, except when attending large gatherings such as sporting events, festivals and concerts.

The California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board is considering changing its workplace mask rules later this month. The proposed rules would not require employees to wear masks indoors if all workers are fully vaccinated and no one has [coronavirus](#) symptoms, the Sacramento Bee [reported](#).

Last month, Newsom announced he would lift most of the state's coronavirus restrictions on June 15 if the state's coronavirus case numbers continued to improve. But at the time, Newsom and state public health officials said the state would not lift the mask mandate after June 15.

Tuesday, Newsom appeared to change his mind about that, telling Fox 11 that the state would only require masks "only for those massively large settings where people from around the world, not just around the

country, are conversing."



In this Jan. 8, 2021, file photo, California Gov. Gavin Newsom removes his face mask during a news conference in Sacramento, Calif. Gov. Newsom said Tuesday, May 11, 2021, the nation's most populous state would stop requiring people to wear masks in almost all circumstances on June 15, describing a world he said will look "a lot like the world we entered into before the pandemic." (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli, Pool, File)

"We'll make guidance recommendations, but no mandates and ... no restrictions on businesses large and small," Newsom said.

Representatives from the California Department of Public Health did

not return phone and email messages asking for more details on Newsom's comments.

About half of the states require people to wear [masks](#) in public. In early March, Texas became the largest state to get rid of its mask mandate, a move Newsom called ["absolutely reckless."](#)

At the time, Newsom [told reporters](#) "we're never going to subscribe to the point of view of some other states."

But that was more than two months ago. Since then, the rate of people testing positive for the coronavirus in California is just 1.1%, a fact Newsom cited in his interview with Fox 11, noting it is "the lowest in the nation." More than 14.6 million people are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus, and another 5.1 million are partially vaccinated.

Another change since March: Organizers seeking to remove Newsom from office gathered enough verified signatures to make it likely Newsom will face a recall election later this year. That recall effort was fueled mostly by anger over Newsom's handling of the pandemic.

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