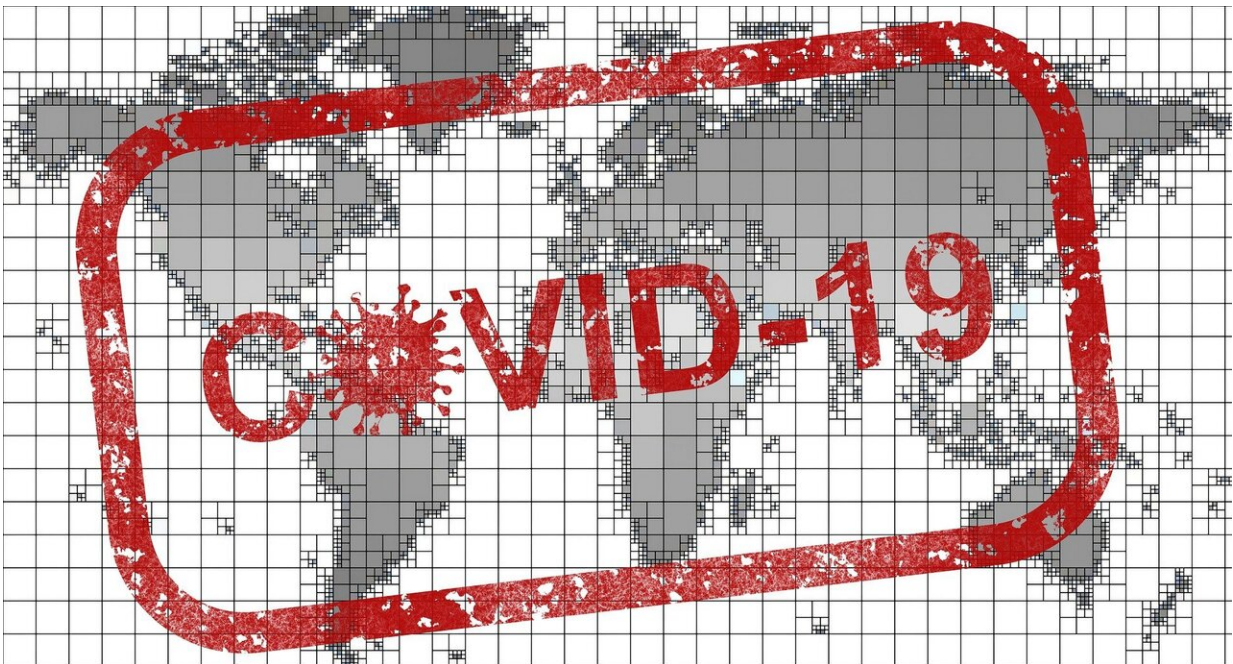


# Mask up in indoor public settings, NYC health chief urges

May 16 2022

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Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

New York City health officials [issued an advisory](#) Monday urging New Yorkers to wear masks in all indoor public settings as the city approaches "high risk" COVID-19 alert status.

Health Commissioner Ashwin Vasan said everyone "regardless of vaccination status or past COVID-19 infection" should wear face

coverings at all times in settings such as [grocery stores](#), offices and building lobbies. People at high risk of severe illness from the virus such as those over 65 years old should avoid crowded settings and nonessential gatherings, he said.

Vasan said he was issuing the guidance as the city approaches the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "high" level of COVID-19 alert, representing high community spread and increasing pressure on the [health care system](#).

New York City has been averaging around 3,600 reported new cases of COVID-19 per day over the past week, a number that is likely an undercount because it doesn't include positive tests done at home.

The daily case counts have been rising slowly since March but have leveled off somewhat recently.

The CDC risk level for Queens, Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island is currently "medium," while the Bronx is still "low." But much of the surrounding [metropolitan area](#) has already moved into the CDC's "high risk" category, the level at which masks are recommended in all indoor public places.

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