

# Yes, Even Vaccinated Employees Must Continue Wearing Masks

## Labor & Employment Law Update

By Peter Hansen on March 3, 2021



Now that COVID-19 vaccines are starting to roll out, employees who have been vaccinated are beginning to question whether they are still required to wear face masks, practice social distancing, etc. In short, yes they are – according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, along with numerous state

agencies, “it is important to wear a face covering and remain physically distant from co-workers and customers even if you have been vaccinated because it is not known at this time how vaccination affects transmissibility.”

So, the same workplace protocols apply to vaccinated and unvaccinated employees, with one very limited exception: the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued guidance providing that vaccinated employees who were exposed to someone with COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- The employee is fully vaccinated (*i.e.*, 2 or more weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine);
- The exposure occurred within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series; and
- The employee has remained asymptomatic since the COVID-19 exposure

Accordingly, employers should continue enforcing their existing workplace COVID-19 protocols – and reiterate to their entire workforce that all employees are still required to wear masks, practice social distancing, and report exposure to COVID-19 regardless of whether they have been vaccinated.

Of course, and as with everything else surrounding COVID-19, vaccine-related information available and protocols regarding vaccinated employees is subject to change, so stay tuned.

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