



**DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY  
TO ALL CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRINCETON**

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 cases have reached record levels as the highly transmissible Omicron variant has surged, cold weather has driven people indoors, and demand for testing has spiked in the wake of holiday gatherings; and

**WHEREAS**, hospitalizations have also increased; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. App. A:9-45 and N.J.S.A. App. A:9-40.5 authorize and empower local Offices of Emergency Management to promulgate rules and to waive, suspend, or modify any existing rule where its enforcement would be detrimental to the public welfare, and specifically authorize the local OEM to take appropriate steps to address public health hazards such as the hazards of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that a state of emergency must be declared in Princeton, and further that certain measures must be taken to mitigate and combat the spread of COVID-19 and its variants; and

**WHEREAS**, wearing masks, especially in indoor settings, is known to be an effective way of combating the spread of COVID-19 and its variants; and

**WHEREAS**, New Jersey has not reinstated a statewide mask mandate, leaving municipalities to adopt their own; and

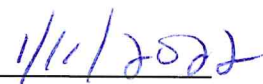
**WHEREAS**, Princeton's Health Officer has advised that in order to protect the health and welfare of Princeton's residents, employees and visitors, reduce the number of new cases and thus, reduce the impact of COVID-19 on area hospitals and testing sites, Princeton should require that masks be worn in all areas of indoor public places until the current surge has abated, subject to certain exceptions;

**NOW THEREFORE**, pursuant to the powers vested in the Office of Emergency Management by N.J.S.A. App. A:9-45 and N.J.S.A. App. A:9-40.5, and in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Princeton, we hereby declare that a state of emergency exists in Princeton due the rapid spread of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, and we hereby order the following:

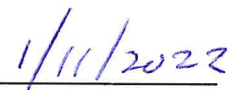
1. Effective as of 5 a.m. on Thursday January 13, 2022, the wearing of masks (face coverings) shall be required in all areas of indoor public accommodation, including, but not limited to, restaurants, bars, gymnasiums, dance studios, recreation facilities, retail stores, cafes, supermarkets, convenience stores, places of worship, commercial establishments, salons, barbershops, banks, healthcare facilities, hotels, and government buildings and facilities.
2. All aforesaid areas of indoor public accommodation shall be required to post signage notifying patrons of the requirement to wear face coverings.
3. Residents, visitors, employees and patrons of the above public facilities must wear a facemask at all times except:
  - a) when actively eating or drinking; or
  - b) when socially distanced at least six feet apart from all others for an extended period of time, such as when seated at a desk or table; when performing for an audience; or when conducting worship services.
4. Individuals with a medical condition that precludes the wearing of face coverings and children under the age of three shall be exempt from the above requirements.

This Order shall go into effect at 5 a.m. on Thursday January 13, 2022 and is subject to amendment or supplementation as needed to properly safeguard the public health, safety and welfare. It shall remain in effect until midnight on January 31, 2022, unless extended by further order.

  
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Michael Yeh, Emergency Management Coordinator

  
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Date

  
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Hon. Mark Freda, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date