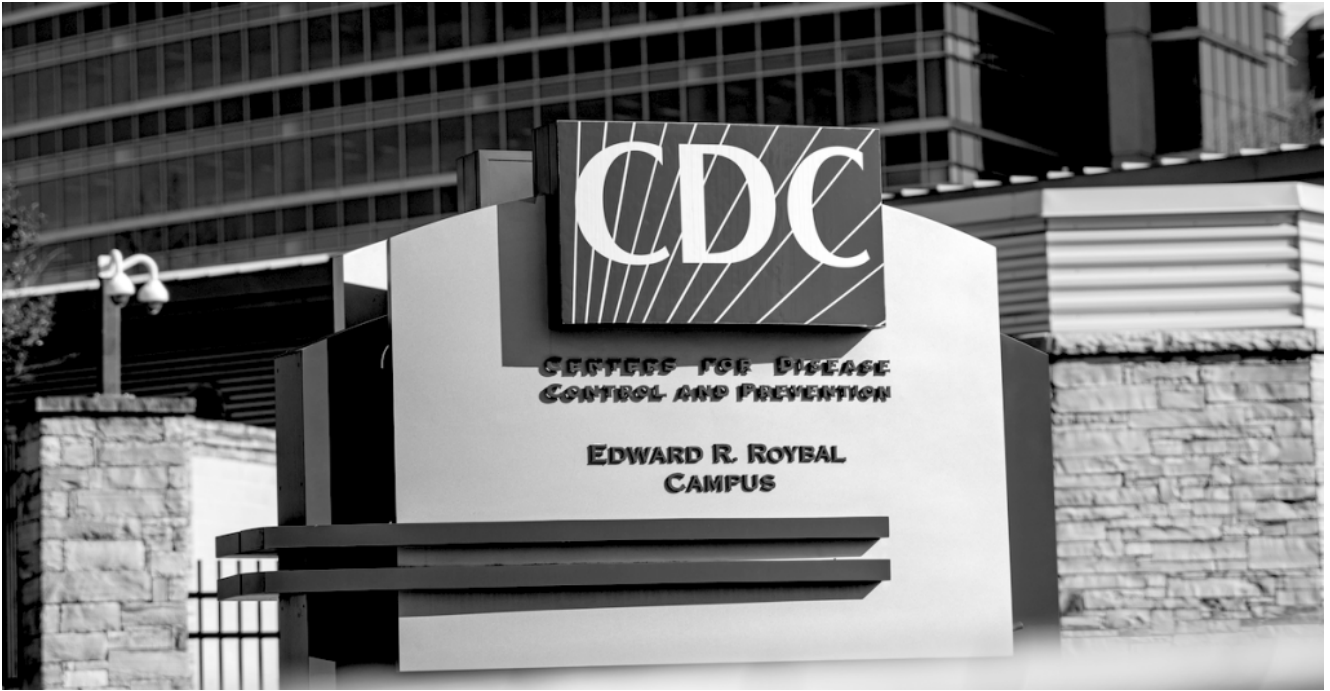


# CDC Issues New Guidance, 70 Percent of Americans Suddenly Don't Need to Wear Masks



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Feb. 25 suddenly changed their recommendations on masks and social distancing, now suggesting 70% of Americans can stop wearing masks and no longer need to social distance or avoid indoor crowded spaces.

The dramatic shift comes because the [CDC changed the criteria](#) they use to determine whether masks are needed – broadening the calculation to include COVID hospitalizations over the previous week, percentage of beds occupied by COVID patients and cases per 100,000 people over the previous week.

Based on these three factors, counties can determine whether the risk to their residents is low, medium or high, according to the CDC, and only areas of high risk should require everyone to wear a mask.

“This updated approach focuses on directing our prevention

efforts toward protecting people at high risk for severe ailments and preventing hospitals and healthcare systems from being overwhelmed,” Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC’s director, told reporters.

Walensky said the agency “came up with indicators, including new hospital admissions and hospital beds utilized” and combined “them with case incidents to really create a packet of metrics to be able to understand what’s happening at the local level.”

Unvaccinated people – with or without natural immunity – should wear masks even in low-risk areas, the agency said, still clinging to a recommendation [unsupported by science](#).

The CDC also said it will continue to count all hospitalizations, regardless of whether the patients were admitted because of COVID or tested positive for COVID after being admitted for an entirely different reason – which will inflate numbers and result in hospitalizations and deaths being attributed to COVID that should be attributed to something else.

The previous measures for transmission have been in place since March 2020 and counted a county as having a substantial risk of COVID transmission if there were as few as 50 new cases per 100,000 people over the past week, or the percentage of positive tests was at least 8% during the same time period.

High transmission risk meant a county had 100 or more new cases per 100,000 people or 10% or higher positive tests in the past 7 days.

Under the CDC’s previous criteria, [95 percent of the counties](#) in the U.S. were considered high risk. Under the new criteria, fewer than 30% of Americans are living in areas with a high level of risk, the agency said.

“We want to give people a break from things like masking when

our levels are low, and then have the ability to reach for them again should things get worse in the future," Walensky said. "We need to be prepared and we need to be ready for whatever comes next.

Under the previous criteria, over 95% of the country on Feb. 25 was labeled substantial or high risk, even with plummeting cases. Under the new criteria, about 30% of U.S. counties are deemed at high risk.

People who live in those counties, representing 28.2% of the U.S. population, are advised to wear a mask in public indoor settings such as schools.

In the rest of the counties, people are not advised to wear masks unless they test positive for COVID or have been exposed to someone with the virus.

The new change in guidance comes as polling numbers show Americans are frustrated over the "pandemic" and have grown tired of the mandates and restrictions under the current administration.