



HEADQUARTERS
ILLINOIS WING CIVIL AIR PATROL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY
P O Box 4027
St. Charles IL 60174-9082



10 March 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Members, IL Wing

FROM: ILWG/CC

SUBJECT: CoVID Remobilization Phase III and Mask Guidance

BLUF: IL Wing will transition to CAP CoVID Remobilization Phase III effective immediately (10 Mar 22). Mask wear is now optional in certain parts of the state under specific circumstances.

1. CAP NHQ has approved our proposal to transition to Phase III effective Thursday, 10 March 2022. CoVID case numbers and related hospitalizations around the state in the previous four to eight weeks justifies the safe transition to this less restrictive phase. CAP NHQ Phase Transition Guidance can be found here: [link](#). Based on recent State of Illinois and CDC CoVID guidance changes, the wearing of masks at CAP activities in IL will now be contingent on CoVID statistics in the local area of the unit/activity. Phase III restrictions summarized:
 - a. No caps on attendees at meetings/activities/missions
 - b. Overnight activities are now allowed (with mitigation plans reviewed/approved)
 - c. No restrictions on flying activities
 - d. We are still doing wellness screenings at every meeting/activity
 - e. In most cases, masking is optional in Phase III. See paragraph 2 and 3b below.
 - f. We are still doing CoVID risk mitigations (checklists and CAPF 160S)
2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) changed their guidance on 25 February to make masking optional in lower-risk communities. This memo serves to dispel some of the confusion and perceived mixed messaging. In particular, we want to share what these changes mean for ILWG CAP members. CAP's guidance regarding masking (and other CoVID prevention best practices) has been, and remains, to follow CDC guidelines. Further, we continue the posture of following the more restrictive of public health policy based on where our units meet and our members reside. The change in CDC guidance shifts that policy baseline.
 - a. With CoVID cases and CoVID-related hospitalizations dropping significantly in the past month, several parts of the country are now considered a lower-risk of community disease transmission. Thus, the more restrictive CoVID prevention steps (like masking) may be relaxed in some communities.
 - b. The CDC classifies each county in the US as "Low, Medium, or High" risk based on the following:
 - I. How many people with COVID-19 have been admitted into local hospitals in the last week;
 - II. How many local hospital beds are filled with COVID-19 patients;
 - III. How many new COVID-19 cases the county has had in the last week

- c. Masks become optional for indoor activities in communities at the Low or Medium risk levels.
- d. Unvaccinated individuals and those with pre-existing at-risk health conditions are still required to wear masks, regardless of community risk level.
- e. Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

3. **What does this mean for Illinois?** Based on current CDC county-level ratings, approximately 90% of IL is now in LOW or MEDIUM risk status. Thus, our local unit commanders, activity directors, and Incident Commanders are granted the discretion to make a masking determination based on the CURRENT status of their community. The expectation is that commanders will check the [CDC Community Levels site](#) prior to the meeting/activity/mission and follow the appropriate guidelines. To maintain CoVID vigilance, commanders will check this community map prior to EVERY activity to guard against any future local outbreak. If a county changes to HIGH, we go back to masking in that area. Commanders and activity directors will keep a supply of masks on-hand in case community status changes on short notice and members arrive without a mask.
- a. **IMPORTANT MESSAGE:** Those members that wish to continue masking are free to do so. Those wishing to wear masks in these LOW or MEDIUM areas shall not be excluded from activities or marginalized in any manner. While CoVID cases are abating, the pandemic is not over. We will respect those electing to protect themselves, friends, and family by continuing to wear a mask.
 - b. **MASKS ONBOARD AIRCRAFT AND VEHICLES:** If all occupants are vaccinated, masks are optional and no cap on the capacity. If any of the occupants are unvaccinated, capacity will be limited to 50%. If any occupant discloses that they are unvaccinated or elects not to share that information, we are to take unvaccinated precautions (50% capacity and masks). We continue the policy of NOT requiring proof of vaccination.
4. Our Wing CoVID-19 Remobilization Committee monitors these statistics and trends on a daily basis. We are watching closely as our counties change risk status. The trends are certainly encouraging. As more of our at-risk counties meet each threshold, we will continue to consider less-restrictive policy changes. As always, unit commanders, activity directors, and Incident Commanders can field CoVID policy and procedure questions to our Committee for clarification and guidance.
5. The safety and welfare of our volunteer airmen and their families continues to be our primary concern. We all want to return to a phase of "Ops Normal." We all wish it were yesterday (or last week, last month, or last year). We need to be prudent and SAFE in all our CoVID-related policy changes. Trust that when we believe it is safe for the entire Wing to do so, we will provide further guidance lifting some of these restrictions.



ANDREW G. LOY, Colonel, CAP
Commander