

## Carol DeSoto

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**From:** applications@charlescountymd.gov on behalf of Charles County Government  
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**Sent:** Tuesday, December 21, 2021 1:17 PM  
**To:** Public Record  
**Subject:** \*NEW SUBMISSION\* Required Face Coverings to Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

### Required Face Coverings to Reduce the Spread of COVID-19

**Submission #:** 1363332  
**IP Address:** 73.128.66.9  
**Submission Date:** 12/21/2021 1:16  
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You have a new online form submission.

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### Public Hearing Comment Form

#### Questions or More Information (301) 645-0555

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#### Are you:

Against Topic

#### Comment

People act like there is no harm to putting on a mask. I think this is incredibly shortsighted and does a disservice to our community and, more specifically, our youth. It is our responsibility to assure that our children grow up in a way where they can interact socially with their colleagues, superiors, and others. It is imperative for children to learn how to read body language and social queues as their brains are developing. This includes facial expressions. We have set our children back years in development and many have struggled with speech development (1). As someone with hearing loss who wears hearing aids, not being able to read lips means that I can't hear you. I wonder how many children with hearing loss have lost a year and a half of learning how to communicate. It isn't just academic and verbal development that suffers, though. On December 7, the US Surgeon General warned that "young people are facing devastating mental health effects" and that the increase in ER visits for suicide attempts by adolescent girls in the US is up 51% compared to 2019 (2). A record number of prescriptions for antidepressants were also issued to children in the past year (3). While the MD state and Charles County school boards bear the brunt of this, overbearing lockdowns and mandates throughout the county also share a role. Now is the time to make this right. We now have significant data showing us that the omicron variant is less severe than the previous variants (4). This is excellent news as the hospitals should not be overwhelmed as

the virus spreads. We also have over a years' worth of real-life data that shows us that regions with mask mandates don't do any better in slowing the spread than neighboring or similar regions without mask mandates (5). On Dec. 20, Dr. Wen went on CNN and called cloth masks "facial decorations." With the new data, now is the time to start a return to normalcy! Do not bring back harmful and ineffective mandates!

**Upload File(s)**

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Thank you,  
**Charles County, MD**

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