

Charles County Hearing Comments  
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It is unfortunate that public health has become a politically divisive issue. Controlling the spread of disease during a pandemic, and protecting our neighbors should be universal goals. Our neighbors at higher risk are not less important. Having "comorbidities" simply means that someone has multiple health conditions at the same time. Most of us will fit that description several times in our lives.

Our elected leaders must focus on the facts, and consider what policies are in the public interest.

1. COVID-19 is airborne. It is transmitted person-to-person through the air.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>
2. COVID-19 is spread most often by people without symptoms.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/science-of-masking-full.pdf>
3. Masks filter air both when people breathe in and when they breathe out. Both inhalational and exhalational filtering are important for reducing spread of COVID-19.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/science-of-masking-full.pdf>
4. Masking is a critical public health tool for preventing spread of COVID-19, and it is important to remember that any mask is better than no mask.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>
5. COVID-19 is deadly. Worldwide over 5.5 million people have died of COVID. Over 850,000 have died within the US, and over 12,000 have died in Maryland.  
<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker>  
<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>  
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu>
6. More than half of the people who are diagnosed with COVID-19 will experience 'long COVID' up to six months after recovering. Some COVID survivors have experienced long COVID indefinitely. Long COVID symptoms include fatigue, psychiatric and cognitive disorders, decreased mobility, lung damage, kidney damage, and heart damage.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/>  
<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-providers/civil-rights-covid19/guidance-long-covid-disability/index.html>  
[https://jamanetwork.com/ama/content\\_public/journal/jamanetworkopen/938778/groff\\_2021\\_oi\\_210832\\_1633112280.05388.pdf](https://jamanetwork.com/ama/content_public/journal/jamanetworkopen/938778/groff_2021_oi_210832_1633112280.05388.pdf)
7. Community transmission within Charles County is currently rated "High Transmission" by the CDC. This rating means that "**everyone should wear a mask in public indoor settings.**"  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/aboutcovidcountycheck/>

8. The Community transmission rating is determined by two metrics. Over the past 7 days our quantity of new cases per 100,000 residents is over 100 (CC is 1414), or the percentage of positive COVID tests exceeds 10% (CC is 32%.)

<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/>

**Other important CDC Messages:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html>

People, including children older than 2, should wear a mask in indoor public places if they are:

- Not fully vaccinated,
- in an area with substantial or high transmission; or
- have weakened immune systems.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/types-of-masks.html>

- Masking is a critical public health tool for preventing spread of COVID-19, and it is important to remember that any mask is better than no mask.
- To protect yourself and others from COVID-19, CDC continues to recommend that you wear the most protective mask you can that fits well and that you will wear consistently.
- Masks and respirators are effective at reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, when worn consistently and correctly.