

# Board packet February 15, 2022: Library Operations and Mask Requirements

Friday, February 11, 2022 11:38 AM

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Board packet February 15, 2022: Library Operations and Mask Requirements</b>
<b>From</b>	Ryan Livergood
<b>To</b>	libraryboard
<b>Cc</b>	Noreen Reese; Gina Ornelas; Amy Blanchard; Sandy Beda
<b>Sent</b>	Friday, February 11, 2022 11:05 AM

Good morning,

As you are no doubt aware, Governor Pritzker has indicated that if the COVID numbers continue to trend downward, the indoor mask mandate for Illinois will be dropped (with a few exceptions) on February 28. Thus, we are faced with the choice of dropping our mask requirement on February 28 or continuing to ask patrons to wear masks when they visit the library. The Board did agree previously that we were going to follow the CDC community transition rate as the metric we would use to guide us when we would drop our mask requirement. Right now, the community transition rate is still in the high category. That said, many things have changed since the Board agreed to follow this metric. First of all, COVID fatigue is at an all-time high and more and more people daily are deciding it is time to “return to normal” and/or “learn to live with COVID” despite the high COVID transmission rates. Secondly, 75.5% of Lake County is “fully vaccinated” per the CDC (two doses of the COVID vaccine), with 47.7% of Lake County having received a third booster shot as well. Finally, the Omicron surge has resulted in many more people in our community getting COVID, and, [while it certainly varies case-by-case](#), many people in our community now have the benefit of some level of natural immunity as well.

Here is the current COVID data for Gurnee and neighboring zip codes. I will provide updated data on Tuesday evening:

**Data for 2/10/2022 (7-Day)**

Rolling Average Number Tested per Day	1977.7
Rolling Average Number of Positive COVID Tests per Day	121.3
Rolling Average COVID Positivity Rate	6.13 %
Number of new cases (7-day) per 100,000 population	343.2

**Data for 2/10/2022 (14-Day)**

Rolling Average COVID Positivity Rate	6.94 %
Number of new cases (14-day) per 100,000 population*	868.0

\*Number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 14 days is calculated by adding the number of new cases in the zip code in the last 14 days divided by the population in the zip code and multiplying by 100,000. (Aligned with CDC threshold guidelines)

**Over the Last Week:**

	2/3/2022	2/4/2022	2/5/2022	2/6/2022	2/7/2022	2/8/2022	2/9/2022
Tests per Day*	2441.0	2347.7	2338.9	2150.7	2021.0	1991.0	1926.4
Cases per Day*	185.4	174.4	166.4	155.9	149.6	149.3	130.7
Positivity Rate*	7.60 %	7.43 %	7.12 %	7.25 %	7.40 %	7.50 %	6.79 %
Number of new cases (7-day) per 100,000 population	524.8	493.6	471.0	441.1	423.3	422.5	369.9

\* Calculated as 7-day rolling averages

While this is a difficult recommendation and may not be a popular one with some of the public and staff, I am recommending to the Board that WNPL drops our mask mandate on February 28, assuming the COVID number continues to trend downward. That said, since the COVID transmission rate remains high, I would recommend continuing to ask staff to wear masks for now. I think if we decided to continue the mask requirement for patrons, it would become very difficult for staff to enforce and likely result in some very difficult interactions with the public, if not an outright protest by some in the community. Either direction we go, both options certainly have pros and cons.

Thanks,  
Ryan

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