



## HHS Report Says Face Masks & Social Distancing Should Be Encouraged Or Mandated

### Description

**A new report from the Department of Health and Human Services says that policymakers should “encourage or mandate policies and protocols regarding masking and social distancing in public spaces.”**

Here we go again!

The HHS report, which is supported by Assistant Health Secretary Rachel Levin, says the measures should be put in place to protect people from Covid and from the possibility of suffering from “Long COVID”.

Fox News reports: The report, commissioned by HHS and produced by research agency Coforma, calls for a broad range of government policies to help people who continue to deal with the lingering effects of COVID. Those policies include an awareness campaign, funding for long COVID support groups, financial support for students and workers, and new health benefits for COVID victims.

Reinstating a mask mandate may be the most controversial recommendation in the report, which says ending that mandate in late 2021 and 2022 is making it harder for people with long COVID.

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Assistant Health Secretary Rachel Levine supports a new HHS report that says mask mandates would help people avoid long COVID. (Tom Brenner-Pool/Getty Images)

“The lifting of mask mandates and indifferent attitude toward masking and social distancing typical in many public and private places further isolates people with Long COVID,” the report said. As a result, policymakers should “encourage or mandate policies and protocols regarding masking and social distancing in public spaces,” it said.

After this story ran, an HHS spokesperson stressed to Fox News Digital that language on possible new mask mandates came from participants involved in Coforma’s research, and not from HHS. But the spokesperson declined to answer questions about whether HHS supports the recommendation in the study that HHS paid for, supported and publicized on its website.

President Biden said in September that the “pandemic is over,” but his administration has not let up on the need for funding and policies to keep fighting the virus. Last week, the White House asked Congress for another \$10 billion to fight COVID, and a top HHS official said assisting people with long COVID is a long-term priority for the government.

“Listening to and learning from the experiences of long COVID patients is essential to accelerating understanding and breakthroughs,” said Rachel Levine, assistant secretary for health. Levine said the new HHS report is “evidence of our commitment to engaging communities to provide patient-led solutions.”

by Niamh Harris

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