

Template COVID-19 Resolution for Professional Associations

Please, adapt and submit this template resolution to local and national professional associations and local boards of health. This resolution was initially drafted for submission to the Massachusetts Medical Society by Lara Jirmanus, MD MPH in March 2022. References to objectives and policies are based on formatting & style from the original resolution and may be removed or adapted to your own organization.

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Whereas, An [*insert professional organization name here*] objective is to:

and this proposal will advance this objective by; and

Whereas, the [*insert professional organization name here*] has the following policy on this resolution topic; and

Whereas since Nov. 24, 2021, when Omicron was first reported, the U.S. has confirmed more than 30 million new infections and more than 155,000 deaths,¹ representing more COVID deaths per capita than other large, high-income countries;² and

Whereas, stark disparities exist in vaccination rates and access to antiviral treatment, with low-income and BIPOC communities suffering the highest rates of COVID-19, and the lowest rates of vaccination³ and treatment access⁴; and

Whereas, non-pharmaceutical interventions such as mask mandates, testing and ventilation, are critical to preventing COVID-19 spread, because vaccines reduce but do not eliminate the risk of long COVID,⁵ and vaccines offer limited efficacy against severe illness for immunocompromised individuals,⁶ the chronically ill, elderly, and children ages 5-11,⁷ and children under 5 are still ineligible for vaccines; and

¹[https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/omicron-wave-accounts-for-more-u-s-deaths-t
han-delta-surge/](https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/omicron-wave-accounts-for-more-u-s-deaths-than-delta-surge/)

²<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/02/01/science/covid-deaths-united-states.html>

³<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35062782/>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7103e1.htm>

⁵ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600\(22\)00020-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(22)00020-0/fulltext)

⁶ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35020589/>

⁷ <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2022.02.25.22271454v1.full.pdf>

Whereas, students in low-income and BIPOC communities face many challenges which put them at increased risk of COVID infection, including poor ventilation in schools,⁸ and lack of access to high-quality KF94/KN95 masks; and

Whereas even at the highest rates of transmission, the new CDC guidelines do not explicitly recommend mask mandates indoors and in schools to reduce transmission,⁹ although high quality evidence demonstrates that universal mask-wearing is more effective than individual masking,¹⁰¹¹ that mandates are more effective than public health education to reduce disparities,¹² and that mask mandates in particular are effective tools to reduce the transmission of COVID and other respiratory viruses;¹³¹⁴ and

Whereas a thorough scientific literature review by South Carolina public schools revealed no evidence that masks cause psychological trauma or impair children's learning or emotional development;¹⁵ over 200,000 US children have lost a parent or caregiver to the pandemic,¹⁶ and the American Academy of Pediatrics continues to support school mask mandates;¹⁷¹⁸ and

Whereas, emergency rooms across the country were overwhelmed during the Omicron surge,¹⁹²⁰²¹ and new CDC guidelines have removed COVID mitigation measures and increased the bar for implementing new ones;²² and

Whereas, wastewater data and adjusted, test-based case counts are reliable early predictors for the pandemic,²³ especially given the increased utilization of rapid COVID-19 tests, which drive an underestimate of infection rates because they are not tracked, and hospital capacity and numbers of new COVID admissions, lag behind infection rates;²⁴²⁵ and

⁸<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/how-deteriorating-schools-fuel-the-inequality-crisis-amid-covid-19>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.acgih.org/covid-19-fact-sheet-worker-resp/>

¹¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2768533>

¹² <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/the-equity-enhancing-power-of-mandates/ar-AASffmS>

¹³ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2776536>

¹⁴ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/mm7110e1.htm?s_cid=mm7110e1_w

¹⁵ <https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/SDaMCgJM8zhA5Gjc6eGXt?domain=scdhec.gov>

¹⁶ <https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/4oCYCwp72WTGZy4FmL12N?domain=newsweek.com>

¹⁷ <https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/F4ZOCxkL8XH1qygFD2fCD?domain=publications.aap.org>

¹⁸ <https://www.healio.com/news/primary-care/20220211/too-early-to-lift-mask-mandates-in-schools-aap-says>

¹⁹ <https://www.wbur.org/news/2022/01/14/hospitals-overwhelmed-boston-athens-pizza-owner-death>

²⁰ <https://fortune.com/2022/01/11/emergency-rooms-hospital-wait-times-covid/>

²¹ <https://www.statnews.com/2021/01/15/los-angeles-ambulances-circle-for-hours-icu-full-is-this-what-covid19-has-in-store-for-rest-of-the-country/>

²² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

²³ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/surveillance/wastewater-surveillance/wastewater-surveillance.html>

²⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34346897/>

²⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33111195/>

Whereas, the newly-revised, CDC COVID-19 Community Levels trigger public health protections only after case rates have risen dramatically,²⁶²⁷ and modeling using Omicron BA.1 data predicts the US will see >1000 deaths per day nationally prior to recommending mitigation measures;²⁸ therefore, be it

1. RESOLVED, That the *[insert professional organization name here]* affirms its support for a data-driven pandemic policy approach which centers equity; as such, the *[insert professional organization name here]* supports the creation of an early warning system to prevent the next COVID surge, considering the CDC guidelines as a floor rather than a ceiling, and using the highest quality data available, including wastewater data and model-adjusted COVID-19 positive tests, to trigger mitigation measures prior to significant community spread and minimize illness and death; and be it further

2. RESOLVED, That the *[insert professional organization name here]* affirms its support and will advocate to local, state and federal public health authorities for data-driven, indoor mask mandates and school mask mandates, increased state and federal funding for improved ventilation in schools and other public spaces, distribution of high-quality masks in communities most-impacted by COVID to prevent community spread of COVID and other respiratory illnesses, and more equitable access to COVID tests and antiviral treatments; and be it further

3. RESOLVED, That the *[insert professional organization name here]* should host a public forum, featuring the testimony of public health and medical experts and individuals affected by the COVID pandemic from disproportionately-impacted communities, in order to systematically review the root causes of the high per-capita mortality rate and disparities in pandemic impact in the United States, to which public officials should be invited, and to publish a report with recommendations for an equity-based pandemic response to be presented to the CDC, Department of Public Health, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Local Boards of Health, and the State Legislature.

²⁶Source: Tweet by [Professor Jonathan Levy](https://twitter.com/jonlevyBU/status/1497581394670886912?s=20&t=-Fzmp4Q3S6o6aRR1ksC-aQ), Boston University
<https://twitter.com/jonlevyBU/status/1497581394670886912?s=20&t=-Fzmp4Q3S6o6aRR1ksC-aQ>

²⁷<https://twitter.com/midnucas/status/1497404532212461570?s=20&t=-Fzmp4Q3S6o6aRR1ksC-aQ>

²⁸Source: Tweet from [Professor Joshua Salomon, Stanford University](https://twitter.com/SalomonJA/status/1498795776457076736?s=20&t=-Fzmp4Q3S6o6aRR1ksC-aQ)
<https://twitter.com/SalomonJA/status/1498795776457076736?s=20&t=-Fzmp4Q3S6o6aRR1ksC-aQ>