

RECOMMENDATION TO THE IATF ON THE USE OF FACE MASKS BY MINORS



According to the IATF Guidelines on Alert Level 2, specifically in Sec. 5(3), it allows fully vaccinated individuals and minors in all indoor and outdoor areas of the establishments and activities allowed to operate at this time.

Minors are now given uninhibited mobility, with permission to enter various establishments, attend social gatherings, and engage in various activities. While this is a welcome development, we have to place more controls to ensure their well-being, and help them change their behavior moving forward in the new normal.

Based on the studies and recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we respectfully recommend to the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) the following in relation to the **use of face masks by minors**:

- 1 Children aged 2 years and under should not be required to wear masks.** This is based on the safety and overall interest of the child and the capacity to appropriately use a mask with minimal assistance.
- 2 Children aged 3 to 11 are highly encouraged to wear a mask** when the following factors are present:
 - The child has the ability to safely and appropriately use a mask;
 - There is widespread transmission in the area where the child resides;
 - In specific settings wherein the child has interactions with other people who are at high risk of developing serious illness, such as the elderly and those with other underlying health conditions;
 - The child has adequate adult supervision and instructions on how to put on, take off and safely wear masks;
- 3 Children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults.**

Furthermore, **all establishments that accept minors must:**

- 1** Ensure that all their **employees are fully-vaccinated**. The City Government can immediately schedule the vaccination of any unvaccinated employee.;
- 2** Strictly **enforce the wearing of face masks among adult workers and guests**;
- 3** Ensure that there are **social distancing measures, proper ventilation, and installation of other engineering controls** such as installation of barriers in crucial areas of the establishment;
- 4** Post at all entrances the **maximum number of guests their establishment can accommodate at a time** in order to avoid overcrowding.

All parents and guardians should be still be advised to avoid unnecessary visits to known crowded areas with their children or minor wards for their own health and safety.

As the IATF finalizes the guidelines on this matter, the City of Taguig asks all of its law enforcement agencies and offices to exercise a fair amount of leniency towards minors, and for all citizens to exercise personal responsibility in ensuring the health and safety of our children.

