Mask Mandate Purpose and Solution

What is the mask mandate? The mask mandate is the mandating of wearing a mask out in public to avoid the spreading of Covid-19. People all around the world have been wearing face masks for a while now, the US is one of the only countries that just recently started doing the same to prevent the spread of diseases such as the one we are facing today. However, many still argue about the effectiveness of wearing a facemask in general, while others support it wholeheartedly. Whichever side you may be on we can’t run away from the fact that if there was a mandate, and we would need to follow it whether we like it or not. This would include wearing it out in public and at restaurants, or pretty much anywhere where you may have to interact with others. However, there are exceptions to these rules, according to Wikipedia children that are under 2 years old don’t have to wear a mask and neither do people with any kind of respiratory problem, and or someone who is unable to remove a facemask from their face.

Now while the mask mandate isn’t in effect anymore here in Indiana there are still some states that require it. According to Usnews.com these are the list of the states mandating mask regulation regardless of vaccination as of October 2021, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington. These states only require you to wear a mask if you’re not vaccinated and they are California, New York and Connecticut. So, from what we can gather here out of the 50 states in America not including our other territories, only 11 out of the 50 require a mask mandate and out of those 11 only 3 are exempt to those who already have their set of covid vaccine shots.

According to Jama Network mask mandates are enforced not just to defend the wearers of the mask themselves but also the people around them. The website also states that when we all have facemasks on, we’re safe and run a lower risk of anyone getting sick. They, later, go on to state on a optimistic note that no matter what may come out of this, one way or another this will help us further control any future pandemics and learn about the mistakes from the past and current situations and the importance of mask mandates. Many however don’t agree and believe that people who are vaccinated against covid won’t get sick again shouldn’t have to wear a mask and those who don’t want to take the vaccine in general shouldn’t be forced to wear a mask at all.

Let’s take a dive into three articles all speaking their minds on the mask mandate and their point of views on this to further understand what sides we have and further educational purposes. The first was from ajc.com where a mother was practically begging the school district to make it mandatory to wear a mask. She argued that we run a greater risk to catch the delta variant than the regular common cold, flu, seasonal allergies, all those commonly spread illnesses. She made a strong point speaking out on the fact that there are a lot of people who are more susceptible to getting sick that could greatly be affected from Covid due to their children or even faculty staff members bringing it home and not even knowing it. She ends it with her realistic assessment on the situation and that being “Not everyone will be happy, I know; but temporary happiness pales in comparison to a life spread”. This article stands firmly on the mask mandate point of view, the author of this article want to touch heart strings and used an emotional appeal to win over support for a mask mandate.

The second source I researched was foxnews.com. At fox news where Tucker Carlson starts off with a strong opposing argument, “So the vaccines work, the only people getting sick are the unvaccinated, but the vaccinated still have to wear masks. Why is that?”. He states that basically why do people who are vaccinated must wear masks if they are “supposedly” immune to Covid-19? And if the people who don’t want to take the vaccine don’t want to wear the face mask that is their problem and theirs only. He goes off topic from making a decent emotional appeal case, to blaming the democrats for all of this, he says they’re using the mask mandate to seize control of the country and how this is all a political movement to earn favor in the public’s eye. The author of this article the being Tucker Carlson also uses emotional appeal to support his views on the mask mandate policy. The article makes a good apposing point to the previous one however, when it mentions how it is redundant to wear a mask if you’re already vaccinated. He is arguing strongly the fact that it doesn’t matter, they’re making it seem like a big deal just to show us the public that they’re doing a “good job”.

The last source comes from nature.com, where Anne Hoen, an epidemiologist states that she believes that the mask mandates were removed too briefly and prematurely. And this mind you is with Vermont being one of the lower rates of hospitalizations when it comes to Covid-19. The author of the website being Lynne Peeples a science journalist, believes that we are on the opposite side when it comes to mask mandate in our country, other countries such as Germany have strengthened their mask mandate whereas we are trending in the opposite direction.

A study using reliable statistics like this was done in the USA where it was alarmingly discovered that a mask mandate could’ve prevented up to almost 50% of deaths. But you must also consider this strong assessment made by John Brownstein, an epidemiologist states that, “There’s a difference between government policy and community buy-in.” It would all depend on how the public handle this and just how strictly a mask mandate would be followed if there were to be one, that would be the difference on it making an impact or not according to John. If we analyze what Tucker stated, that vaccinations should be the answer to mask mandate, and we look at what Germany did you can argue that there’s two strong opposing viewpoints. One who doesn’t want to wear masks and believes that either you’re vaccinated and are protected against it, or you run your own risk if you’re not. Or the other viewpoint where regardless of vaccination status to further prevent the spread of it a mask mandate should be enforced for the safety of others and the less fortunate who can’t get a vaccination just yet.

For starters let’s weigh our options here, on the first hand you have the first article that states emotional heart strings which involve the endangerment of children and other faculty members. While it does have some truth to it doesn’t it seem a little bit of a stretch? Why don’t we just wear a mask if we don’t want to get sick and not wear one if that isn’t something that we are concerned about? The Wikipedia article mentioned about the mask mandate protocol and rules state that children under 2 don’t have to wear it, neither do people with health complications, but what about people who just don’t want to wear a mask on their face? Well after a little bit of research and information from <https://www.statista.com> we can see that Louisiana having a face mask mandate has a higher death rate per capita than Indiana by 67, Indiana having 240 and Louisiana having 307. Indiana also has a bigger population sitting at 6,805,663, and Louisiana having 4,627,002. Normally a state with more people should have more deaths than a state with less people, especially if this mask mandate is supposed to “work”.

This would make the article by Jama Network where she states that, wearing a mask protects not only just the user but also the people around them, inaccurate. How is it then that Louisiana being smaller than Indiana and having a mask mandate has more deaths than Indiana does? This doesn’t mean that wearing a mask has anything to do with Covid at all, according to the second article, Tucker stated that it was all just the democrats seize of power from the public eye. If this is the case, then isn’t the nation already divided as it is? They can’t surely expect to please one side and win the favor of the whole nation, that’s not how it works nor how it’ll ever work. For example, look at last year, just last year there was division in the USA the greatest we’ve seen in a while, there isn’t any way that this mask mandate will make us all see the same and agree on the same thing. We’re humans, it’s just something we can’t do is all agree on one thing. Could we perhaps come in the middle here and not take everyone’s freedom of choice and expression away? I don’t doubt in the importance of wearing a mask out in public, the last article where it states that mask’s being better worn alone could’ve prevented up to 50% of deaths in the USA alone.

Those are alarming numbers, and I could potentially see how the masks could’ve helped which leads to an even bigger question. Was it the lack of masks, or was it the quality of masks? Those hospital masks weren’t very effective, and a lot of people don’t even know that now which is why they’re still getting sick even with masks on. The cloth ones don’t get properly washed and hold on the bacteria collected in the air that you breath constantly once the mask is on. I personally believe in one thing and one thing only, equality. We should be able to compromise on whichever side we’re on. Let’s face the facts, there isn’t much information out yet about this pandemic and if masks are even effective this is a crisis we face today as a society, we all must embark in this part of history. But if it is one thing to keep everyone happy, we must go about this equally. We should be able to wear a mask if we want to, or not wear a mask if we don’t want to. Let whoever wants to wear a mask wear it, whether they’re vaccinated or not.

At the end of the day, it’s our health that the government is worried about, but we should also be in control of our health and what happens to our bodies. With more education, and more awareness on this situation we could just compensate on both ends and not discriminate one another for believing in one thing vs the other. At the end of the day, it should just come down to your opinion, it is your right.

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| **Project Portion** | **Ideal Criteria** | **Overall Feedback** |
| Introduction | * Engaging * Shows importance of question * Indicates major parts and content |  |
| Background | * Uses credible, neutral sources * Effectively and sufficiently explains essential information * Written objectively in own words * Well organized and focused paragraphs with transitions * Minimal error |  |
| Analysis | * Smooth transition from background * Summarizes accurately and in own words two opposing answers and one objective answer to the question * Recognizes bias * Reasonable observations about how all sources make their arguments impactful * Well-organized and focused paragraphs with transitions * Minimal error |  |
| Response | * Smooth transition from analysis * Incorporates strong points from sources * Draws a reasonable and well-supported conclusion, answering the question * Provides satisfying conclusion to the project * Good transitions between focused paragraphs * Minimal error |  |