

Current Corona Rules in North Rhine-Westphalia

Until when does the current Corona Protection Ordinance apply?

The Corona Protection Ordinance, which has been in force since 20 August 2021, is initially valid until 17 September 2021 inclusive.

Are there still multiple incidence levels?

No. In accordance with the joint decisions of the federal and state consultations of 10 August 2021, the Corona Protection Ordinance valid in North Rhine-Westphalia from 20 August 2021 no longer contains several incidence levels, but only one authoritative incidence value: 35.

If the 7-day incidence of 35 is exceeded, stricter protective measures apply through the introduction of the 3G rule. Since the national average incidence is now above 35, this applies nationwide when the ordinance comes into force - i.e. also in the districts and independent cities where the incidence is below 35.

What are the principles of the Corona Protection Ordinance since 20 August 2021?

The principle of the Corona Protection Ordinance is that vaccinated and recovered persons are in principle allowed to use all facilities and services again. Of the previous protective measures, only a mandatory mask requirement in certain indoor spaces and other infection-critical locations remains, as well as a mandatory testing requirement for certain services and events for unvaccinated or recovered persons above an incidence of 35.

Contact restrictions no longer apply to meeting other persons, nor is it necessary to record data on the traceability of individuals.

The approved codes of conduct (AHA) remain recommended for private individuals. Certain ventilation and cleaning specifications are set out in a [short appendix](#) and complement the infection control requirements for business owners.

Does a mask obligation still apply?

Yes. There is still a duty to wear a medical mask in the following areas - regardless of incidence values:

- on local public transport,
- in indoor areas with public traffic, e.g. in shopping centres,
- in queues and at stalls
- for large outdoor events with more than 2,500 visitors.

What are the exemptions from the mask requirement?

The ordinance provides for various exemptions from the mask requirement. For example, wearing the mask can be dispensed with in exceptional cases

- in private rooms in the case of exclusively private meetings,
- when carrying out a profession indoors, if the minimum distance can be safely maintained,
- in operational situations of security authorities, fire brigade, etc,
- when communicating with a deaf or hard of hearing person,
- by persons who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons (certificate required).

The ordinance contains numerous other exemptions from the mask requirement. Children up to the age of school entry are exempt from the obligation to wear a mask. Where children from school entry to 13 years of age cannot wear a medical mask due to the fit, an everyday mask shall be worn as a substitute.

What does the 3G rule mean from an incidence of 35?

Fully vaccinated and recovered people can use all facilities and services again. In view of rising infection figures, all persons who are neither fully vaccinated nor recovered must test negative for certain events/services from a 7-day incidence of 35.

What is a negative rapid antigen test needed for from an incidence of 35?

Persons who have not been fully vaccinated or have not recovered require a negative rapid antigen test (maximum 48 hours old) for:

- indoor events, especially in educational, cultural, sports and leisure facilities
- indoor trade fairs and congresses
- sports and wellness services or comparable amenities indoors
- indoor gastronomy
- body-related services such as hairdressing, cosmetics, body care, etc.
- accommodation establishments, whereby non-immunised persons must present a test on arrival and again after every four additional days.
- large outdoor events (from 2,500 people)
- tourist bus trips as well as children's, youth and family recreational trips

What is a negative PCR test required for from an incidence of 35?

Persons who have not been fully vaccinated or have not recovered require a negative PCR test (maximum 48 hours old) for events and services with a particularly high risk of multiple infections. This applies to

- clubs,
- discos,
- dance events,
- private parties with dancing
- and sexual services.

What is a negative rapid antigen test needed for, regardless of incidence?

Vulnerable groups of people in certain institutions will continue to be specially protected.

Visitors must either be fully vaccinated or have recovered or tested negative.

Persons who have not been fully vaccinated or have not recovered generally, i.e. not only from a 7-day incidence of 35 or more, require a rapid antigen test (maximum 48 hours old) to visit the following facilities:

- hospitals,
- old people's and nursing homes,
- special forms of housing for integration assistance and similar facilities
- inpatient social welfare facilities
- collective accommodation for refugees.

What hygiene rules apply to services and facilities with visitor/public traffic?

[The Annex "Hygiene and Infection Protection Rules"](#) to the Corona Protection Ordinance sets out, under point II, binding hygiene rules for the operation of services and facilities that are open to customer or visitor traffic.

What rules apply to educational and cultural institutions and at events?

In educational and cultural institutions, as well as at events and meetings, conventions, trade fairs and congresses, the wearing of masks may be dispensed with at fixed seating or standing places if either the seats have a minimum distance of 1.5 metres or all persons are immunised or tested.

Data on the traceability of persons is no longer to be collected.

What applies to private celebrations such as weddings or birthdays?

Private parties are permitted without contact restrictions and contact data collection.

Attention: at private parties with dancing, non-vaccinated or recovered persons may only participate without a mask if they present a negative PCR test. From an incidence of 35, a PCR test must be submitted. Exception: children up to the age of school entry as well as schoolchildren may participate in private parties with dancing even without a PCR test.

What applies to rehearsals and performances by music groups and choirs?

Rehearsals and performances by music groups (including with wind instruments) are possible. For indoor singing together, e.g. in choirs, persons who are not fully vaccinated or recovered need a negative PCR test (maximum 48 hours old).