Major Grocery Chains Begin to Drop Mask Requirements for Shoppers

Trader Joe’s, Walmart and Publix are among major stores allowing fully vaccinated customers to shop without masks.

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Major grocery chains are returning to pre-pandemic environments as mask restrictions are being lifted for shoppers.

Trader Joe’s, Walmart and Publix are among major stores allowing fully vaccinated customers to shop without masks, the companies announced in separate statements.

Trader Joe’s led the way by announcing an end to its in-store mask requirement.

“We encourage customers to follow the guidance of health officials, including, as appropriate, CDC guidelines that advise customers who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear masks while shopping,” the company said in a statement.

The decision follows new guidance from the CDC Thursday that fully vaccinated people can stop wearing masks outdoors and in most indoor settings.

Walmart quickly followed suit by telling employees that vaccinated customers are able to shop without masks while acknowledging that some state ordinances will still require

all customers shopping indoors to be masked.

Fully vaccinated employees of the chain will be allowed to work maskless starting May 18.

Florida-centric chain Publix also dropped mask requirements for vaccinated shoppers and workers alike, which went into effect on May 15.

The CDC said last week that fully vaccinated citizens “can resume activities without wearing a mask or staying 6 feet apart, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.”

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