



**THE
CENTER**
AT BELVEDERE

540 Belvedere Blvd.
Charlottesville, VA 22901
434.974.7756
thecentercville.org

Dear Center Family,

Over the course of the pandemic, I've written many times to share news that has been by turns positive and positively disappointing. I fervently hope that today's update—it's good news!—marks the start of an unchecked upward trajectory in the life of The Center.

As you no doubt know, Governor Northam ordered that Virginia follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) new guidance, which removes the mask mandate in most settings for people who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. His action was in response to the decrease in infections and the increase in vaccinations.

After considering the same health metrics in our area—and with feedback from members via Council's executive committee—we are happy to announce that our policies will align with those of the Commonwealth and Albemarle County. Effective Thursday, May 20, fully-vaccinated individuals will no longer be required to wear a mask at The Center.

People who are not yet fully vaccinated (two weeks out from the last dose of the vaccine regime) will still be required to wear a mask and must continue to adhere to physical distancing indoors and out.

We will discontinue the health screenings in the lobby and will operate on an honor system regarding vaccinations. While we trust that everyone will act responsibly, the CDC Director also offers reassurance: "The science demonstrates that if you are fully vaccinated, you are protected. It is the people not vaccinated who are not protected."

The shift in policy has engendered a mix of emotions and not everyone will feel comfortable with the change right away. Even fully-vaccinated people may choose to continue wearing a mask in certain settings, and we encourage those of you who are vaccinated to keep a face covering with you so that you can put it on if you feel you need it, or for other people's comfort.

The fact that this moment has arrived is a testament to the effectiveness of the vaccine and the benefits of getting vaccinated. If you have not yet been vaccinated, I urge you—in the interest of healthy aging for all—to make an appointment or visit a walk-in clinic as soon as possible.

One thing that will not change is the availability of our online programs. We are committed to providing access to Center resources in whatever way is most comfortable for you now and as we move forward.

Thank you for your continued patience and dedication to keeping our community safe. As always, we are grateful for the many ways you support The Center and each other.

Sincerely,

Peter Thompson
Executive Director