

**New City of Austin/Travis County COVID-19 Authorizations and Signage Requirements**  
*Analysis of Orders by TSSA Legal Counsel*

On January 13, 2022, the City of Austin and the Travis County Judge issued Orders identifying additional rights and obligations for businesses with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the new Order (effective January 17, 2022), properties within the City of Austin/Travis County that provide goods and services to the public ***are permitted (but not required)*** to impose one or more of the following requirements at the property:

1. Requiring employees and customers to wear face coverings;
2. Requiring employees and customers to show a negative COVID-19 test result to enter the site;
3. Requiring employees to provide proof that the employee is vaccinated and, when appropriate, boosted; or
4. Allowing employees or customers to choose to provide proof that the employee or customer is vaccinated in lieu of showing a negative test result.

Importantly, however, this Order ***does require*** that persons in control of sites post a notice at the entry of the property identifying which of the aforementioned items are required within the property. Additionally, persons in control of sites ***must*** post a sign in a conspicuous location recommending face coverings and getting vaccinated and boosted.

If a property does not comply with the Orders, such violation will be considered a criminal offense punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.

To emphasize, the signage requirements are most likely to affect TSSA Members' storage unit facilities based in the City of Austin/Travis County, since the Orders apply to properties providing goods and services to the public.

As of now, the Orders have not been challenged in court. However, a spokesman with the Texas Governor's office has released a statement saying that the Governor's previous executive orders "preempt" the City's/County's Orders, and a business "would be within its legal rights to ignore this municipal order." As a result, these Orders are currently in a legal limbo.

Members are encouraged to keep up to date on local orders and court cases regarding such requirements, since orders vary and have been updated frequently over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Remember, TSSA continues to update our Coronavirus Resources page as needed on an ongoing basis.