



**Louisiana Association of  
Substance Abuse Counselors and Trainers, Inc. (LASACT)**

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July 30, 2021

Dear Governor Edwards,

As of yesterday, Louisiana has the third lowest vaccination rate in the United States and six times as many cases per day than at the beginning of this month. Regrettably, a large number of our citizens have elected to remain unvaccinated. Thus, putting our vulnerable populations in a dangerous situation and the ability to return to any sense of normalcy in jeopardy.

Over the past year and a half, we have seen addiction professionals along with other frontline workers work tirelessly to help those affected and yet, still losing too many Louisianians.

The Delta variant appears highly transmissible and causing more severe infections among all age groups, not just those most vulnerable. It is driving case counts through the roof and sending citizens to the hospital in large numbers. We have been in this place before—daily rising cases counts.

Addiction professionals put themselves in harm's way daily only to help those battling addiction. They are around our great state exposing themselves daily to new people with varying backgrounds. They do not know the environment in which their patients are returning to after they leave their facility. Our professionals have vulnerable family members. Our professionals have people at home that they love and must protect.

**From a public health standpoint, it is the suggestion of the Louisiana Association of Substance Abuse Counselors and Trainers (LASACT) that a mask mandate be reimplemented immediately across the state of Louisiana for indoor contacts where one is less than six feet of others. In order to protect our addiction professionals and their families, we believe this policy would work to limit the spread of this dangerous variant. For K-12, we suggest you follow the data and work with educators and healthcare professionals. We will support your decision. We feel our subject matter expertise is in behavioral health and others can better guide you in our education systems.**

We appreciate your continued leadership in the midst of crisis and stand ready to support in whatever capacity possible.

Thank you,

LASACT Executive Committee