

From: Marnie Saskin
To: [Kolar, Loren](#)
Subject: Re: Mandatory mask vote this Friday
Date: September 14, 2020 11:13:55 AM

Dear Hamilton Board of Health,

While many (hopefully most) Hamiltonians were relieved when the mandatory masks for indoors by-law was passed, there was an exemption that worried some of us.

I'm writing to you on behalf of Odeon Fitness, a small independent gym in Hamilton.

Odeon Fitness is committed to the health of all its members, and has made the following changes to operations:

1. Greatly reduced class size (from 14-20 people to 9) to accommodate physical distancing
- 2. Masks mandatory for any indoor activity in the gym, including classes**
3. Mostly outdoor parking lot classes in a cordoned off area (generously physically distant, masks optional)
4. Coaches wear their masks at all times indoors and out
5. Vigorous cleaning schedule after every class
6. One-way flow of people in and out of the gym
7. Washrooms are for emergency use only
8. No use of rowers or bikes inside

We do intense, functional fitness/crossfit style workouts including cardio and weightlifting, and have found that all the members who take the masked indoor classes have been able to do the workouts, regardless of age, ability, or fitness level, with their masks on.

They have found the masks a discomfort rather than a hindrance, and say that it makes them feel more at ease since everyone is masked.

We ask that the Board of Health amend the by-law to remove the exemption for gyms for mask wearing.

We also propose that if Hamilton is required to go back to Phase 2, or is required to put more restrictions on activity, that gyms be allowed to remain open as a business as long as and only if they can offer outdoor classes safely (cleaning equipment, etc) and the outdoor classes meet other provincial guidelines such as gathering size, physical distancing, etc.

Our business understandably was decimated during lock down. We tried to adapt with lending equipment to members for the duration and by having a full schedule of Zoom classes, but we lost many members, as did many other gyms.

Happily we are slowly rebuilding our membership, but like many small businesses, we are looking to the city to implement measures that will cushion the possibility of being shut down again.

If all gyms are required to mask indoors, this will lessen overall transmission rates.

Please amend the by-law to include mask wearing at all times in gyms, or we fear we will not survive the winter as a business.

Thank you,

Marnie Saskin
on behalf of
Odeon Fitness
816 King St West
Hamilton, Ont L8S1K1