

Hello HFA family & Friends,

1. It's been quite a year! Whew! We are glad to see that places and businesses around us are re-opening and getting back to normal rhythm of life.
2. I'm sure you have all heard that starting July 1st Governor Hogan has lifted the mask wearing restrictions and cancelled the State of Emergency in Maryland. What does that mean for your visit to Hot Fired Arts?
3. I have given this a lot of thought: On one hand, 73% of the people in Frederick County have been vaccinated. The CDC is saying vaccinated adults don't need to wear masks anymore; recommends that non-vaccinated people continue to wear them.
4. On the other hand, we have the very young and the very old visit our studio. These are still the two most vulnerable populations to contract Covid. Understanding that the recovery rate is high amongst children doesn't make my heart feel any better. I find myself thinking, if I had littles would I be ok with this? I have staff who have family at home. We do not want our loved ones sick. Their ability to shrug off this type of an illness is very low and the long-term effects are yet unknown.
5. Fired Arts is like a restaurant in that you come in a sit for a spell while exploring your creative side. However, we do not serve food! So sitting without a mask doesn't make sense. Running an errand to the grocery, pharmacy, or boutique has you moving about, not staying stationary, you are not there in one place for hours at a time.
6. So I find myself between a rock and a hard place. Mask or not to mask? Which serves the greater good and protects those in my employ, those who create here, and those who are our beloved family?

I want you to understand that this decision is not easy or one that has been arbitrarily come upon. My heart could not withstand the pain should a customer, employee or family become ill because I moved too fast, let the pressure of business sway my gut. I just couldn't take it.

~Michelle