



Written by [Jessica Marie Baumgartner](#) on May 13, 2021

## DeSantis to Pardon Floridians Charged With Breaking Mask Mandates

Floridians who had been arrested for refusing to wear a mask in areas of the state that imposed mask mandates will be [pardoned](#). Florida Governor Ron DeSantis appeared on Fox News Wednesday with a couple who were arrested multiple times for refusing to wear a mask.

The couple in [question](#), Mike and Jillian Carnevale, refused to enforce a local mask mandate at their gym, Fitness 1440. Because of this they were arrested three times between August and September of last year. A trial was set to determine their punishment on May 18, but Mike Carnevale stated, “Now they’re looking to take it a step further. They want to put us in jail and we’re not backing down to this,” he said. “We have an attorney that’s going to fight this until the very end. I’ll be fighting this until the very end. I won’t be backing down, that’s where we stand.”



AP Images

Governor DeSantis stepped in to sign a reprieve on Thursday that will delay the case for 60 days. He wishes to address “outstanding infractions for things like masks and social distancing,” and also noted that health orders “should be advisory, they should not be punitive.”

A leader in the fight against COVID tyranny, Governor DeSantis has clemency power for granting pardons and remitting fines when approved by two members of his Cabinet. In March, he signed an executive order to wave fines for individuals and/or businesses who violated local COVID-19 restrictions. This came after blocking state [fines](#) for people who break pandemic rules.

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On May 3, DeSantis signed an executive order that invalidates local COVID-19 emergency orders, such as mask mandates, but private businesses are still allowed to require them if they choose to do so. This offers individuals future freedoms, but does not cover past cases.

On May 13, DeSantis took to Twitter to reiterate his decision, tweeting, “Floridians should not be penalized for rejecting the overreach of local authorities through unnecessary mask mandates.”

He went on to tweet about the Carnevales’ case and his duty to “shield them from this local government overreach.”



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How many more such cases exist is unknown, but with this news, more may people may come forward. Florida is fully re-opened and its economy is growing. [April state revenue](#) was more than \$750 million above what was expected.

“None of that would’ve been possible had we done lockdown policies, had we blocked kids out of school, had we done a lot of the things a lot of these other states have done,” DeSantis noted at a press conference in Fort Meyers earlier this month. “There’s a reason why our unemployment rate is lower than the national average by a pretty significant amount.”

Ending mask mandates and other restrictions has proven to offer a promising recovery.



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