



## Fact Check: “Face Mask Exempt Cards” Shared On Social Media Are Fakes (Video)

Cards and flyers saying the holder is exempt from wearing a face mask, many marked with the United States Department of Justice’s seal, are being shared widely across social media. The cards and flyers are “fraudulent”, according to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Pictures of the cards have been shared hundreds of times on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (here , here , here , here , here).

The text on the “Face Mask Exempt Card” reads: “I am exempt from any ordinance requiring face mask usage in public. Wearing a face mask poses a mental and/or physical risk to me. Under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), I am not required to disclose my condition to you.

“If found in violation of the ADA you could face steep penalties. Organizations and businesses can be fined up to \$75,000 for your first violation and \$150,000 for any subsequent violations.”

Some U.S. states and major cities have introduced rules requiring face masks to be worn to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (here). However resistance to face masks has become partisan as President Donald

Trump has not appeared in public wearing a face mask and has expressed disdain for those who do. ([here](#))

The DOJ works to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ([here](#)) . The department issued a statement entitled “COVID-19 ALERT: Fraudulent Facemask Flyers”. It says: “These postings were not issued by the Department and are not endorsed by the Department. The Department urges the public not to rely on the information contained in these postings.” ([here](#))

 Earlier versions of the card contain a spelling error (“posses” instead of “poses”). Some cards have removed the Department of Justice’s seal and corrected the spelling error, however they still misidentify the Americans with Disabilities Act as the “Americans with Disability Act”. The website link on the card for the ‘Freedom to Breathe Agency’ is not accessible.

Posts pointing out that these cards are fake have gone viral on social media with tens of thousands of retweets and shares ([here](#) , [here](#)).

## **VERDICT**

False. The “Face Mask Exempt Cards” being shared on social media are not endorsed by the United States Department of Justice, which describes them as fraudulent.

This article was produced by the Reuters Fact Check team. Read more about our work to fact-check social media posts [here](#) .