



## Michigan Fitness Club Association

Newsletter for April 2021

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### **Non-Covid News & The MFCA**

Informally, we are hearing rumblings about taxing gym memberships in the State of Michigan. As economics 101 teaches, a tax on gym memberships would raise costs on consumers leading at least some to cancel or reduce gym memberships. We are doing our best to monitor the situation and will work as an association and with our lobbyists to fight any attempt to add a sales tax to gym memberships. What can you do to help? If you are not an MFCA member, consider [joining](#).

### **Capacity-Still at 30%**

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services continues to limit gyms and group fitness centers to operate at 30% of capacity, provided that 1) capacity is limited to 30% of fire marshal occupancy limits, 2) masks are required to be worn at all times and 3) members and employees must be 6 feet apart. The MDHHS directive is available [HERE](#).

### **Are Michigan's Efforts Counterproductive?**

Stateside has created an open state [scorecard](#) and, after over a year of living with Covid globally, we must concede that we as citizens and even the experts at the Center for Disease Control still do not know a lot about Covid, its transmissibility, and the harm it can cause short and long term. On a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being locked down and 10 being fully open, Michigan is rated at 5, Florida at 7.5 and Texas at 8. Florida and Texas do not require facemasks, and both allow gyms to operate at full capacity, yet Florida and Texas have covid infection rates per 1,000 residents much lower than Michigan. In fact, while Michigan requires masks in all public places and has gyms operating at 30% of capacity, Michigan leads the country in the highest rate of covid infections per 1,000 residents. Measures that Michigan has taken to protect the population seems to have had little effect and for reasons we do not know, may have been counterproductive when compared to other states.

### **Gyms Are the Solution, Not the Problem**

The Journal of the American Medical Association has published a [report](#) detailing the increase in weight and BMI caused by the pandemic. And as we all know, weight gain has a negative impact on physical and mental health and is one of the key comorbidities that Covid preys upon. A New York Times [article](#) estimates the average person gained 2 lbs. a month, or over 20 lbs. so far. While the dangerous impact on the health of the population with widespread



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increase in BMI is immediate, the cost of this mass increase in BMI may be borne by all of us over the coming decades.

IHRSA, the national fitness industry association, [summarized](#) some of the key factors impacting the health and fitness of Americans caused by the pandemic.

### **MFCFA Healthcare Webinar**

On April 28 at noon, the MFCFA will host a panel discussion with medical experts discussing the negative impact on physical and mental health caused by pandemic lockdown and restrictions. Dr. Tom Rifai, Dr. Anthony Moreno and Dr. John Evans will provide their expertise in lifestyle medicine and metabolic health, human performance, and mental health. The Webinar is free and open to all. [Register here](#).

The MFCFA holds these webinars monthly. Please suggest topics or issues that you would like to have covered in our monthly roundtables by emailing us at [info@mifit.org](mailto:info@mifit.org).

### **Visit to Virus Through March 2021**

The MFCFA collects data on the number of Covid cases of our members and employees compared to gym visits and we share this information monthly with Governor Whitmer's medical advisors. As of March 31, 2021, we have tracked 11,494,933 visits and have only had 573 Covid cases reported, for a percentage infection rate of 0.005%. It is especially important to note that none of the reported cases were affiliated with an outbreak at a health and fitness center.

IHRSA also has a very useful contract tracing [graphic](#) also demonstrating that gyms are one of the safest places to be and are not spreaders of Covid-19. State and national data continue to support gyms being safe.

### **Vaccine Rollout in Michigan & Nationally**

Nationally, the US has fully vaccinated an estimated 27% of the population. At this rate, it is [projected](#) by June 21<sup>st</sup> that 70% of the population will be vaccinated. President Biden has [announced](#) that by May 1, all Americans over 12 years of age will be eligible to receive the



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vaccine. In Michigan, we have vaccinated an [estimated](#) 1/3 of the population or over 2.7 million residents. We are off to a great start helping return Michigan back to normal.

The [New York Times](#) shows Michigan right at the national average with 41% of residents having received at least the first vaccine. The MFCA board is optimistic that life may return to normal sooner than originally expected.

### **Federal Legislation Supporting Gyms and Fitness Studios**

The bipartisan sponsored bill making its way through Congress, commonly called the [GYMS Act](#), would allocate \$30 billion in grants exclusively for the American fitness industry.

Support for the Act continues to build with the bill now having 95 co-sponsors from both parties (when we started tracking this, we were at 62 co-sponsors). You can check progress of the Act [here](#). Please encourage other gym owners, employees and members to write to their Congressional representatives and support the GYMS Act. IHRSA has made it easy using its [ONE CLICK](#) campaign tool.

On behalf of every gym and fitness studio in Michigan, the MFCA board has reached out to the Michigan congressional house and senate delegations and asked them to co-sponsor and support the GYMS Act.

Share these 1-click campaigns with your club members and other fitness professionals.

- Industry Professional Grassroots Link: <https://ihrsa.quorum.us/campaign/gymsact>
- Consumer Grassroots Link: <https://ihrsa.quorum.us/campaign/saveourgyms>

### **Talking to Your Members and the Public**

FrameWorks Institute has put out two guides to help explain the vital importance of physical activity. Much of the data was generated by several researchers including Dr. Michelle Segar, Director of Sport, Health, and Activity Research and Policy Center at the University of Michigan. The reports are available [here](#) and [here](#).

### **Talk to Us**



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Gym owners, manager and employees can join our private [Facebook](#) group and ask questions, comment and share information. If you have questions, concerns or just want to talk, reach out to the MFCA by email ([info@mifit.org](mailto:info@mifit.org)) or phone (248) 938-4228 or attend one of our webinars. [Join the MFCA.](#)