

Gottlieb: US should be 'aggressive' in lifting COVID-19 measures as conditions improve

[Sarakshi Rai](#) 01/28/22 01:04 PM EST

Former FDA Commissioner [Scott Gottlieb](#) said in an interview on Friday that there should be very clear goalposts for how the U.S. removes current mitigation measures and when to lift vaccine mandates.

During an appearance on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," [Gottlieb told co-anchor Willie Geist](#) that he thinks COVID-19 infection levels are "going to continue to come down as we get into the spring and the summer" and the U.S. needs to think about removing some of the restrictions currently in place.

He added that people will resume their normal lives "hopefully this spring" and said that "we don't see anything on the horizon that's going to dramatically alter that trajectory."

However Gottlieb added the caveat that the delta variant "surprised us last year."

He noted that there was "much more immunity in the population" this year owing to the existing immunity from infections caused by the delta and omicron variants and high vaccination rates against COVID-19.

"I think we need to prescribe very clear goalposts for how we take these mitigation measures off. When do we lift the vaccine mandates? When do we stop using masks in schools?" he said.

He added that the U.S. should be "willing to relax some of these provisions

that have created a lot of acrimony," particularly mask requirements and other provisions in schools.

Gottlieb added that "we want our kids to try to get back to some kind of semblance of normalcy."

He said the U.S. should be "as aggressive" in lifting precautionary measures as conditions improve as "we were about putting them in place."

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According to Gottlieb, removing the existing measures will help "preserve the authority among public health officials to re-implement some measures in the future," if COVID does return next winter.

Between Jan. 15 and Jan. 19 the the U.S. seven-day average of new cases fell from about 798,000 to about 744,000, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data. This downtick, the first since mid-December, has [sparked widespread optimism](#) that the omicron wave in the country has peaked.

"Overall nationally the case numbers are coming down, which I consider an optimistic trend," CDC Director [Rochelle Walensky](#) said in a press briefing last Friday.