

## MEDPAGE TODAY®

# Florida Doc Booted From Hospital After Offering \$50 Mask Exemptions

— Physician posted the offer to an anti-mask website after school district issued stronger mandate

by [Kristina Fiore](#), Director of Enterprise & Investigative Reporting, MedPage Today

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A Florida physician was removed from his job at a hospital following concerns that he was selling mask exemptions to parents for \$50 each, according to news reports.

Brian Warden, MD, was let go from Capital Regional Medical Center in Tallahassee, a spokesperson for the hospital confirmed to *MedPage Today*.

"We act with absolute integrity in all that we do, and it is our expectation that providers behave in a way that is consistent with those values," spokesperson Rachel Stiles wrote in an email. "Immediately upon learning of this physician's actions, we began the process of removing him from providing services to our hospital patients."

After a stricter school mask mandate for Leon County schools (where Tallahassee is located) was announced on Sunday night, Warden posted to an anti-masking website, saying that parents could contact him if they wanted an opt-out letter for \$50, [according to the Tallahassee Democrat](#).

Screen shots of Warden's posts ended up on social media the following day, where commenters called for his removal from the hospital. They also demanded that he be reported to the Florida Board of Medicine.

Leon County schools' revised mask mandate said students in grades K-8 have to wear a mask to school unless they have a medical excuse, making it one of 10 school boards in the state to issue a mask mandate amid the Delta surge, the *Democrat* reported.

Warden is an employee of a Tallahassee physician group that contracts with Capital Regional Medical Center. The name of that group hasn't been released, and it's not clear if Warden is still employed by that group.

Warden graduated from Philadelphia's Temple University School of Medicine in 2018 and recently completed an emergency medicine residency at Thomas Jefferson University, also in Philadelphia. His Florida medical license was issued in February, according to board records.

This isn't the first time a doctor has allegedly sold mask exemptions. California physician Michael Huang, MD, was [reportedly selling such exemptions](#) to students in the Eureka Union School District -- including exemptions from the rule that students who don't wear masks must wear face shields.

Following that report, the Medical Board of California [issued a stern warning](#) against selling mask exemptions.

"A physician who grants a mask or other exemption without conducting an appropriate prior exam and without a finding of a legitimate medical reason supporting such an exemption within the standard of care may be subjecting their license to disciplinary action," the agency said.

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