

Contra Costa Issues Update to Indoor Masking Order

With the highly contagious COVID-19 omicron variant circulating in Contra Costa County, Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) announced a health order today requiring masks in all public indoor places without exceptions for certain indoor settings.

Previously, fully vaccinated public speakers and performers, and fully vaccinated groups of 100 or fewer people were allowed to remove their face coverings under controlled conditions.

The order, which goes into effect on Dec. 29, 2021, now requires all people in Contra Costa, regardless of vaccination status, to mask in public indoor settings.

Many other Bay Area counties already require everyone to mask in all indoor public settings.

“The omicron variant is very contagious, and we now know that anyone, regardless of vaccination status, can spread this variant to other people,” said Dr. Ori Tzvieli, Contra Costa County deputy health officer. “We anticipate the case rate and hospitalization numbers to increase over the coming weeks. To reduce spread, cases and hospitalizations, we all need to wear masks anytime we are in an indoor public setting.”

The first case of the omicron variant was first identified in the county on Dec. 18, and since then case rates and hospitalizations have significantly increased. The average number of daily new COVID-19 cases has increased 149% over the last week and hospitalizations have risen 31%.

Because cases and hospitalizations involve both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated people, CCHS strongly urges everyone to get vaccinated and boosted as soon as they are able.

COVID-19 vaccines, including booster doses, continue to offer the most effective protection against hospitalization and death from all variants of COVID-19 circulating in the county.

Visit coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-vaccinated for information on healthcare providers, pharmacies and clinics offering COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots. No-cost vaccinations and boosters are also available through CCHS' public clinics by calling 1-833-829-2626.

The requirements for lifting the indoor masking order will remain the same and progress can be tracked on our [Indoor Mask Dashboard](#).

The text of the order is available at cchealth.org/coronavirus.