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Mono County Health Department

www.monohealth.com/Coronavirus

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CDPH UPDATES COVID-19 MASKING GUIDANCE FOR INDOOR PUBLIC SPACES AND K-12 SCHOOLS AND CHILDCARE FACILITIES

Masking Strongly Recommended Regardless of Vaccination Status

March 1, 2022 – Yesterday, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) updated its statewide COVID-19 (Coronavirus) masking guidance to align with recent data trends which show dramatic decreases in the level of COVID-19 virus and virus transmission throughout the state. The two main updates impact general indoor public spaces, and K-12 schools and childcare.

- **General Indoor Public Spaces:** Effective March 1, 2022, the statewide mask mandate for unvaccinated individuals within indoor public spaces will be lifted, and replaced with a strong recommendation for masking within indoor public spaces, regardless of vaccination status.
- **K-12 Schools and Childcare Facilities:** Effective March 12, 2022, the statewide mandate requiring universal masking in K-12 schools and childcare facilities will be lifted, and replaced with a strong recommendation.

Masks will still be required in the following select settings, regardless of vaccination status:

- Public Transit
- Hospitals and Healthcare Settings (including skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and long-term care facilities)
- Emergency Shelters
- Correctional Facilities

Since February 14, 2022, statewide COVID-19 cases have dropped 66%, hospitalizations have dropped 48%, pediatric hospitalizations have dropped 47%, and test positivity has dropped 53%.

The updated masking guidance announced today is in line with the recently introduced California SMARTER – the next phase of California's COVID-19 response.

California SMARTER is anchored in the State's focus on equity and addressing disparities. Details on SMARTER can be accessed here: <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/smarterplan.pdf>.

The CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Masks can be accessed here: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx>.

COVID-19 TESTING

Both OptumServe and Mono County Public Health provide free COVID-19 testing clinics in Mono County (pending weather-related issues). In addition, every home in the U.S. is eligible to order four (4) free at-home COVID-19 tests from the federal government. The tests are completely free, and orders will usually ship in 7-12 days. The tests can be accessed here: www.covidtests.gov.

About the tests:

- The at-home tests are rapid antigen tests, not PCR
- Can be taken anywhere
- Results in 30 minutes (no lab drop-off required)
- The tests will work whether or not you have COVID-19 symptoms
- The tests will work whether or not you are up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines

When to test:

- If you begin having COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, sore throat, runny nose, or loss of taste or smell, or
- At least 5 days after you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, or
- When you're going to gather with a group of people, especially those who are at risk of severe disease or may not be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines

Mono County Public Health offers testing in other locations throughout the county at various times throughout the week. While both OptumServe and Mono County Public Health accept walk-ins at their COVID-19 testing clinics, pre-registration is strongly encouraged as walk-ins will only be accommodated pending resource availability.

The COVID-19 testing schedule for March can be accessed here: <https://coronavirus.monocounty.ca.gov/pages/health>.

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