



OFFICIAL STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Maria Peinado, MPA
Public Health Information Officer
mariapeinado@co.imperial.ca.us

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IMPERIAL COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER ADJUSTS INDOOR MASKING TO ALIGN WITH STATE GUIDANCE

The new order will be effective midnight February 16th.

IMPERIAL COUNTY – County of Imperial Health officials are updating the local Health Officer order to align with the current California Department of Public Health (CDPH) masking guidance. The following changes will take effect on February 16, 2022:

- Fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear masks in most indoor public settings. However, public health officials do recommend continued indoor masking regardless of vaccination status.
- Unvaccinated persons are required to mask in all indoor public settings and businesses; and
- Universal masking, regardless of vaccination status, will remain required in certain specified settings.

The settings where masks will be required include public transit, indoors in K-12 schools and childcare, emergency shelters and cooling centers, healthcare settings, state and local correctional facilities and detention centers, homeless shelters, and long-term care settings, and adult and senior care facilities. The updated local Health Officer order is posted at www.icphd.org.

“Changes to indoor masking requirements are being made given the steady decline in cases of COVID-19 and hospitalizations locally and statewide,” stated Dr. Stephen Munday, County Health Officer. Per CDPH guidelines, people who are fully vaccinated will no longer be required to wear a mask in certain indoor public settings. Fully vaccinated means that a person has completed the primary series of a single-dose or two-dose COVID-19 vaccine. A booster dose is not required to be considered fully vaccinated.

In settings where masks are required only for unvaccinated individuals, businesses, venue operators or hosts may choose to: provide information to all patrons, guests, and attendees regarding vaccination requirements and allow vaccinated individuals to self-attest that they are in compliance prior to entry; implement vaccine verification to determine whether individuals are required to wear a mask; or require all patrons to wear masks.

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Individuals who are not vaccinated or partially vaccinated remain more vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus. Vaccinations have proven to be effective against variants of COVID-19, including the Omicron and Delta variants, by preventing severe symptoms. COVID-19 vaccines are available for individuals five years and older and are easily accessible at many provider sites throughout Imperial County, including health care offices, hospitals, community clinics, pharmacies, as well as the Imperial County Public Health Department.

Imperial County residents are urged to continue to follow COVID-19 safety precautions, including frequent handwashing, maintaining appropriate distance in public, and staying at home when sick.

To locate a vaccine site, visit VaccineFinder at <http://vaccinefinder.org>. To make an appointment through California's MyTurn system, visit <https://myturn.ca.gov> or call (833)-422-4255. For questions or information about COVID-19 and precautions currently recommended by the Imperial County Public Health Department, the community may call the Department's information line at (442) 265-6700 or access its website at www.icphd.org.

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