



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2021

County of Ventura Public Health Advisory: Public Health Strongly Recommends All Community Members Wear Masks Indoors to Prevent Further Spread of COVID-19

Ventura, CA - With cases of COVID-19 rising locally and increased circulation of the highly transmissible Delta variant, the County of Ventura Public Health Department strongly recommends that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks indoors in public places. This serves as an extra precautionary measure for those who are fully vaccinated and will further limit spread of the Delta variant in the community at large.

"The Delta variant is spreading quickly in our State. All community members should take action to protect themselves and others against this potentially deadly virus," said County of Ventura Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin. "While vaccines remain our best tool against COVID-19, masking in indoor and crowded outdoor settings will help us curb the spread of this latest wave of infection. Ventura County data have recently shown that unvaccinated people are 22 times more likely to become infected and hospitalized than vaccinated residents. Several of our hospitalized people have been vaccinated and that is several too many."

In June, the Delta variants comprised [43 percent of all specimens sequenced in California](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) noted that Delta variants are now responsible for [58 percent of new infections across the country](#). Fully vaccinated people are well-protected from infections and serious illness due to known COVID-19 variants including Delta variants, and vaccinating as many people as possible, as soon as possible, continues to be our best defense against severe COVID-19 infection, and the harm it can do to our region. Vaccines are safe, effective, free, and widely available to everyone 12 and older. "For the most part this is a surge of cases among our unvaccinated and it is preventable. Get vaccinated," said Doctor Levin.

"We are seeing a significant growth in Covid-19 cases and hospitalizations in our County. As of today, there are 504 new cases since July 12, 41 current hospitalizations and 9 community members in the ICU. The daily case rate per 100,000 has increased to 4.4," said Public Health Director Rigoberto Vargas. "All community members are encouraged to get vaccinated to help protect themselves and loved ones. This will also help reverse this concerning trend of increasing cases since June 15."

Out of an abundance of caution, people are strongly recommended to wear masks indoors in settings like grocery or retail stores, theaters, and family entertainment centers, even if they are fully vaccinated as an added layer of protection for both themselves and unvaccinated residents. Businesses are asked



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to expect universal masking for customers entering indoor areas of their businesses to provide better protection to their employees and customers. [Workplaces must comply with Cal/OSHA requirements](#) and fully vaccinated employees are encouraged to wear masks indoors if their employer has not confirmed the vaccination status of those around them. For masks to work properly, they need to completely cover your nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of your face and around your nose.

Public Health will continue to monitor transmission rates, hospitalizations, deaths and increasing vaccination rates throughout the County and will reevaluate the recommendation in the coming weeks. COVID-19 information can be monitored at www.vcrecovers.org.

People are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. People with only one vaccine dose of Pfizer or Moderna are not fully protected. Completion of the vaccine series is necessary to provide full protection.

COVID-19 vaccines are available at multiple locations throughout the County of Ventura for all community members 12 or older. Information about locations can be found at www.myturn.ca.gov or by calling 833-422-4255.

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