



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2021

### **Ventura County Public Health Issues Health Advisory Urging Vaccinations and Masking Indoors**

Ventura, CA – Due to the current surge, Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) is urging all Ventura County residents that are eligible but have not yet been fully vaccinated to get vaccinated as soon as possible. In alignment with state and federal health authorities, VCPH officials also continue to strongly recommend mask wearing indoors in public places regardless of vaccination status. While Ventura County continues to be aligned with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on masking, which recommends that everyone regardless of vaccination status wear masks indoors, and that requires those that are not fully vaccinated to mask indoors, officials are closely monitoring the current surge in case additional mitigation measures are needed.

COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are rising due to the increased circulation of the highly transmissible Delta variant. The latest local case rate has reached 15.5 cases per 100,000 residents and a positivity rate of 6%. With these metrics, Ventura County would be in the purple tier in the now retired color tiered framework.

“We are seeing an increase in cases at this stage in the pandemic as the Delta variant spreads but this time it is different. The vaccines have been effective in keeping our hospitalizations and deaths far lower than previous surges,” said County of Ventura Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin. “We call on all individuals and businesses to follow this health advisory to mask indoors, while we also continue to focus on increasing our vaccination rates to reach herd immunity levels.”

Vaccines remain the most powerful tool against COVID-19 and its variants, including the Delta variant. Nonetheless, the Delta variant is infecting a small percentage of vaccinated people in Ventura County but such vaccinated people remain strongly protected against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. State data reported on August 4, 2021 shows that there have been 688 total cases among fully vaccinated people, a “breakthrough” or infection rate of 0.14%. The demographics of those contracting the virus and getting hospitalized has shifted. Cases in the past month have trended younger with persons 18-29 years of age making up the majority of cases. It is important for all eligible people to get vaccinated especially as school resumes in person and youth under 12 years of age are not eligible to receive the vaccines.



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“The end of this pandemic is in sight. The more immunity we can get in the population, the more we can keep down the levels of the disease that once led to closures. It is important for people who are eligible to get vaccinated as soon as possible to get ahead of the variants and reduce the transmission of the virus,” said Public Health Director Rigoberto Vargas. “More than 475,000 residents that have taken action to protect themselves and their loved ones by getting fully vaccinated. We urge the approximate 250,000 eligible persons in Ventura County who remain unvaccinated to get vaccinated now. It is strongly recommended that until we get past the current surge by increasing our vaccination rates, both vaccinated and unvaccinated people wear masks indoors in public places to help protect yourself, others, and those who are not able to get vaccinated yet.”

Mask wearing prevents transmission of the virus especially to those most at risk and people who cannot get vaccinated yet for eligibility and other health reasons. 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 to expect 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 even though no longer required for fully vaccinated employees by the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards. 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.

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. 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.

Public Health continues to monitor transmission rates, hospitalizations, deaths and increasing vaccination rates throughout the County and will reevaluate the recommendation as needed in the coming weeks. COVID-19 data can be monitored at [www.vcrecovers.org](http://www.vcrecovers.org).

COVID-19 vaccines are free for all community members 12 or older.

- Vaccination locations can be found at [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov) or by calling 800-232-0233.
- Appointments can be made at [MyTurn.CA.gov](http://MyTurn.CA.gov) or by calling 833-422-4255.

Visit [www.vcrecovers.org](http://www.vcrecovers.org) for more information.