



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ventura County's Indoor Mask Order Will be Lifted February 16, in Alignment with the State

*Masks required indoors for unvaccinated; strongly recommended for all;
vaccines and boosters urged to strengthen defenses*

Ventura, CA – Ventura County Public Health announced today that the local Health Officer Order requiring masking in all indoor public places will be lifted Wednesday, February 16, 2022 in alignment with State's masking policy. "The mask order is being lifted because the COVID-19 situation has changed thanks to effective vaccines, effective treatments and a variant that causes less severe disease. I still highly recommend that all community members wear masks indoors because there is strong evidence that masks, especially high-quality masks, protect both the wearer and those around them," said Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin.

The [State order](#) continues to require masking in indoor public places for those who are not vaccinated and for everyone, regardless of vaccination status, in healthcare facilities, schools, childcare settings, homeless shelters, emergency shelters, corrections, long-term care facilities and public transit. Workplaces will continue to follow the [COVID-19 prevention standards](#) set by CalOSHA.

The California Department of Public Health continues to require masking in K-12 school settings in California but has indicated adjustments to the State's policies will be shared in the coming weeks. For early education programs, such as preschool and childcare settings, the State continues to require masking for children older than age two. Vaccinations for children under 5 are currently undergoing federal review.

Public Health, in alignment with the California Department of Public Health, continues to strongly recommend masks to be used as an effective tool to prevent the spread of the virus especially when case rates are high, or when additional personal protection is needed. Continuing to mask in indoor public settings, especially crowded or poorly ventilated spaces, remains the safest choice for an individual and protects those who are medically vulnerable or are not able to get vaccinated, like young children. As evidence continues to show, vaccinations and boosters remain the best defense against the virus.

"As the mandate is lifted it is still incumbent on all of us to continue to take appropriate precautions to protect further spread of the virus. COVID continues to cause serious disease and death," added Doctor Levin. "If you are not vaccinated or have not received a booster, getting the shot right away is the best thing you can do to protect yourself, your family and community from COVID."

Community members are encouraged to follow prevention strategies, such as wearing well-fitted masks; staying home and testing when symptomatic; testing before gatherings; and improving indoor ventilation in situations where these strategies can add protection for themselves or others. Staying up to date on vaccinations, meaning primary series and boosters when eligible, remains the most important way to prevent severe illness, hospitalization and death. COVID-19 information is available at www.vcrecovers.org