

# Slowing Spread Through the Holidays

**To slow COVID-19 spread, California updates statewide masking and mega events guidance, and adds new travel recommendations.**

*With case rates increasing 47% since Thanksgiving, the California Department of Public Health will require universal masking beginning December 15 to increase protection to individuals, families, and communities during the holidays.*



## Key takeaways

- CDPH continues to monitor COVID-19 data in order to protect the health and well-being of all Californians, keep schools open for in-person instruction, and allow California's economy to remain open and thrive.
- Since Thanksgiving, the statewide seven-day average case rate has increased by almost half (47%) and hospitalizations have increased by 14%. While the percentage of Californians fully vaccinated and boosted continues to increase, we continue to have areas of the state where vaccine coverage is low putting individuals and communities at greater risk for COVID-19.
- It is critical to ensure that Californians have access to the care they need in our hospitals. Too many California hospitals are at a tipping point with overall capacity. Their ability to provide high quality care to COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients could be in jeopardy if faced with a winter surge in patients. The temporary measures announced today are intended to reinforce the State's general public health measures and critical efforts to support California's hospitals on a local, regional, and statewide level.
- To ensure that friends and families can spend the holidays together safely, CDPH will require **universal masking for all indoor public spaces as an additional mitigation measure through the holiday season. This requirement applies to all counties and all businesses in California and is irrespective of vaccination status.**
- California continues to outpace national trends when it comes to preventing school closures due to COVID-19. California's mask requirements and higher vaccination rates play a significant role in keeping pediatric hospitalization rates low and keeping schools open for in-person instruction. Nationally during the Delta surge in July and August 2021, jurisdictions without mask requirements in schools experienced larger increases in pediatric case rates, and school outbreaks were 3.5 times more likely than in areas without school mask requirements.
- We are strongly urging unvaccinated Californians to get vaccinated and those who are now eligible to get a booster. Getting your vaccination is the most important action you can take to end the pandemic and to protect yourself from the virus and the circulating variants, including the Omicron and Delta variant. The COVID-19 vaccines remain effective in preventing serious disease, hospitalization, and death from the SARS-



# Slowing Spread Through the Holidays



**To slow COVID-19 spread, California updates statewide masking and mega events guidance, and adds new travel recommendations.**

CoV-2 virus. Unvaccinated persons are more likely to get infected and spread the virus which is transmitted through the air and concentrates indoors.

