



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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INDOOR MASK RECOMMENDATION WITH INCREASE IN COVID-19 AND DELTA VARIANT CASES IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Stockton, CA (July 20, 2021)—COVID-19 cases and the highly infectious Delta variant are on the rise in San Joaquin County. San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS) first reported cases of the Delta variant in May 2021, and the current number of confirmed cases has more than doubled since last week. Additionally, the County has reported its first Delta-Plus variant called AY.2; much is still unknown about this specific variant.

The number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in the County has more than doubled from 25 on July 1, 2021, to 56 as of July 20, 2021. Case rates are also steeply rising from 4.9 on July 1, 2021 to 8.0 per 100,000 currently. Only 48% of eligible San Joaquin County residents aged 12 years and older are fully vaccinated, leaving many adults and youth unprotected and at risk for COVID-19.

The current California Department of Public Health (CDPH) masking mandate requires individuals that are not vaccinated to wear face coverings in indoor settings. In addition, face coverings are required for everyone in healthcare settings, jails, public transportation, and schools. With this highly transmissible Delta variant spreading quickly, fully vaccinated people are strongly encouraged to take the extra precaution of wearing a mask indoors.

San Joaquin County Public Health Officer Dr. Maggie Park advises, “The best protection we have against COVID-19 is vaccination. Masking provides an additional layer of protection for both the wearer and those around them. We know fully vaccinated people are well protected even from the Delta variant and are unlikely to experience severe disease, but they can still get and transmit COVID. Out of an abundance of caution, we are recommending the wearing of masks indoors for everyone in settings like grocery stores, retail shops, and theaters.”

Unvaccinated residents are urged to get the vaccine as soon as possible. Anyone who has not received their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine should do so to optimize protection.

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Vaccines are free to all individuals ages 12 and over regardless of immigration status. Visit [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or call 1-833-422-4255 to schedule an appointment.

For more information on COVID-19, visit the San Joaquin County Public Health Services website at www.sjcphs.org.

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