SANTA BARBARA COUNTY EXTENDS HEALTH OFFICER ORDER REQUIRING
USE OF FACE COVERINGS INDOORS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Indoor Masking Mandate Will Continue

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department has extended the Health Officer Order which requires the use of masks in indoor public settings. This order requires all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings when indoors in public settings, with limited exceptions. This Order 2021-10.7 is effective at 5 p.m., on December 3, 2021 and continuing until 5 p.m., on January 2, 2022 or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended.

As of December 1, 2021, the COVID-19 community transmission level is categorized as “Substantial” in California and Santa Barbara County by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). As of November 26, 2021, the County has a case rate of 7.0 per 100,000 and a test positivity of 4.0%. The CDC continues to recommend fully vaccinated individuals wear a face covering in public indoor settings in areas with Substantial or High community transmission rates.

An update to the previous framework has been outlined by local health officials to consider rescinding the indoor mask mandate. The county case rate should be 7.0 cases per 100,000 people or lower for three consecutive weeks. In addition to this, hospitalizations should be low and stable for at least 3 days. Local health officials will consider these metrics, along with any other relevant factors, including the spread of new variants.

“As we head into the winter season once again, we are in a very different place than we were last year,” shared Dr. Henning Ansorg, County Health Officer. “We have vaccines available for everyone 5+ years of age and boosters for those who were vaccinated earlier this year. We know very well that wearing a face covering while indoors is an effective strategy to reduce transmission in the community. We have yet to see the full role the Omicron variant will play in this pandemic, but we have well established surveillance and prevention strategies in place.”

Additionally, this Health Officer Order aligns with State guidance for students in grades K-12 actively participating in school-based extracurricular activities, such as sports and band. Students may participate in indoor activities without a face covering, if regular testing is conducted. Details are outlined in the full Health Officer Order.

-MORE-

This Health Officer Order is consistent with the guidance from the CDC as well as the California Department of Public Health, which recommend that fully vaccinated people wear masks while in indoor public settings. The full Health Officer Order can be read here: https://publichealthsbc.org/health-officer-orders/.
Visit https://publichealthsbc.org/vaccine to learn where you can find a vaccination site near you or call 2-1-1.

-30-

Stay Connected:
County Public Health: www.PublicHealthSBC.org, Twitter and Facebook
County of Santa Barbara: www.CountyofSB.org, Twitter, Facebook
2-1-1 Call Center: Dial 211 if calling from within the county; or call (800) 400-1572 if calling from outside the area.