

## Santa Barbara County Indoor Masking Guidance

### Frequently Asked Questions

Updated July 20, 2021

- 1. Is it now mandated to wear masks indoors in Santa Barbara County?** Not a mandate, but as of July 19, it is recommended that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks indoors in public places as an extra precautionary measure for those who are fully vaccinated, and to ensure easy verification that all unvaccinated people are masked in those settings.
- 2. What is responsibility of businesses to enforce this recommendation?** Businesses are urged to adopt a universal masking requirement for customers entering indoor areas of their business to provide better protection for employees and customers.
- 3. What is the Cal/OSHA requirements for masking in workplaces?** Workplaces must comply with Cal/OSHA requirements and fully vaccinated employees are encouraged to wear masks indoors if their employer has not confirmed the vaccination status of those around them.
- 4. What if an employer does not have a practice of reviewing vaccination status?** Employers have the prerogative to request that all employees and customers be masked at their facility"
- 5. Why is there a change in recommendation of mask wearing?** As of July 16, the daily case rate of positive COVID-19 cases in Santa Barbara County is 3.6 per 100,000 and continuing to rise. Active cases are up 90% from two weeks ago. Also, Santa Barbara County testing positivity has increased by 200% from four weeks ago and the California testing positivity has increased by 275% for the same time period.
- 6. What is the difference in daily case rate for people who are unvaccinated vs vaccinated?** On July 15<sup>th</sup>, data showed that positive cases were nearly 15 times more likely to be unvaccinated than vaccinated.
- 7. What percentage of positive cases are identified as the Delta variant?** At this time, over 50% of all positive cases in Santa Barbara County are confirmed as the Delta variant, and this percentage is continuing to rise. Variants data can be found on the community data dashboard [here](#).
- 8. Are fully vaccinated people protected from the Delta variant?** Yes. Vaccination continues to be the best defense against severe COVID-19 infection and the spread of the virus throughout our community. The Delta variant is the cause of more than 80% of new U.S. COVID-19 cases, but the authorized vaccines remain more than 90% effective in preventing hospitalizations and deaths
- 9. How long will the recommendations of wearing masks indoors, last?** The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department will revisit the recommendations in the coming weeks as they continue to monitor transmission rates, hospitalizations, deaths, and increasing vaccination rates throughout the region.

**10. Where can the local data on COVID-19 be found?** Data can be found [here](#). At this time, Santa Barbara County has 163 active cases, 11 residents hospitalized and 3 in the ICU.