



PRESS RELEASE **August 4, 2021**

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

Indoor Masking Mandate Will Take Effect on Friday, August 6 at 5 P.M.

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department has issued a 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, starting at 5 p.m. on Friday, August 6, 2021

The Delta variant has been present in Santa Barbara County since April and is highly transmissible. While the risk for COVID-19 infection is highest among unvaccinated people, the incidence of infection among fully vaccinated people is increasing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed in preliminary data that fully vaccinated people who do become infected with the Delta variant can be infectious and can spread the virus to others.

“Hospitalizations have increased, primarily among unvaccinated people. The County of Santa Barbara is also seeing a concerning increase in cases among staff and residents in long-term care facilities and in other congregate living settings,” said Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso. “Over the past two weeks, the County’s active COVID-19 cases have increased significantly with a case rate of 12.4 per 100,000 and a test positive of 6.8% which would have placed Santa Barbara County in the Purple Tier if the tier system were still active,” says Do-Reynoso.

“Requiring indoor masking is the least disruptive strategy and can make an immediate impact on limiting the spread of COVID-19, specifically the Delta variant,” said Public Health Officer, Dr. Henning Ansorg. “This Health Officer Order is intended to protect everyone to the greatest extent possible, from the substantial spread of the virus being seen now in our community. In addition, the order is intended to support the continued operations of local businesses, activities and schools,” says Ansorg.

The current Health Officer Order is consistent with the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and 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://publichealthsb.org/health-officer-orders/>.

Visit <https://publichealthsb.org/vaccine> to learn where you can find a vaccination site near you or call 2-1-1. If you missed your second dose, please find a vaccination clinic near you.

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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.

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