

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2021

### **Ventura County Public Health Issues New Health Order Requiring Masking Indoors**

Ventura, CA – Ventura County Public Health has issued a new health order requiring all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, to wear face coverings when indoors in public settings, with limited exceptions. This order will take effect at 11:59 p.m. Friday, August 20, 2021. Businesses and other public entities have until 11:59 p.m. on Monday, August 23, 2021 to comply. The order will be in effect until 11:59 pm on September 19, 2021, or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended by the Health Officer. “As of today, we reached a rate of 28 cases per 100,000, a 40% increase. I hope that this order will increase mask usage in Ventura County. I expect that this will have a beneficial effect on the increase in COVID-19 infections we are seeing,” said Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin.

As of August 20, the unadjusted case rate per 100,000 population over 1 day is 28, overall testing positivity over the past 7 days is 7.7% and the HPI lower quartile testing positivity rate over the past 7 days is 9.9%. Public Health reports 598 new COVID-19 cases and 3,995 new tests. There have been three additional deaths including a 98-, 76- and 87-year-old females.

The order directs that face coverings must be worn over the mouth and nose – regardless of vaccination status – in all indoor public settings, venues, gatherings, and workplaces, including but not limited to offices, retail stores, restaurants and bars, theaters, family entertainment centers, conference and event centers, and government offices serving the public.

Individuals, businesses, venue operators, hosts, and others responsible for the operation of indoor public settings must:

- Require all patrons to wear face coverings for all indoor settings, regardless of their vaccination status; and
- Post clearly visible and easy-to-read signage at all entry points for indoor settings to communicate the masking requirements to all patrons. Signage is provided by Ventura County Public Health at [www.vcrecovers.org](http://www.vcrecovers.org).

This health order aims to reduce community transmission of COVID-19. Health officials are concerned by the substantial levels of increased community transmission, especially among

unvaccinated people. In part, this is due to the widespread COVID-19 Delta variant, which is substantially more transmissible than previous forms of the virus. Recent information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also indicates that even fully vaccinated individuals can in some cases spread the Delta variant to others, and so indoor use of face coverings provides an important added layer of protection.

“Masking indoors must again become a normal practice by all, regardless of vaccination status, so that we can stop the trends and level of transmission we are currently seeing,” said Public Health Officer, Doctor Robert Levin. “We continue to urge all eligible residents to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their family and friends. Becoming fully vaccinated against COVID-19 remains the best protective action that people can take. It significantly reduces the risk of infection and, for the small number of people that get infected, it reduces the risk of hospitalization and death once you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.”

More information about COVID-19 available at: [www.venturacountyrecovers.org](http://www.venturacountyrecovers.org).