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February 22, 2022

Cook County Department of Public Health Plans to Lift Mitigation Order 2021-11 on February 28, 2022

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) plans to lift Mitigation Order 2021-11 on February 28, 2022.

CCDPH will act in alignment with the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago as improvements are continuing throughout the region in key COVID-19 metrics. The COVID-19 positivity rate in CCDPH's suburban Cook County is 3%, and the 7-day rolling average for confirmed cases as of 2/18/22 is 285. The region's ICU and Non-ICU admissions numbers, and the positivity rate are both in the 'lower transmission' risk category, and confirmed cases continue to decrease and are approaching the lower transmission category.

Lifting Mitigation Order 2021-11 would mean:

- Masks will no longer be required in all indoor public places for the general public.
 - **Masks will continue to be required in those settings as required by federal or State Order or CDC guidelines (healthcare settings, public transportation and transportation hubs, congregated care settings)**
- In the settings covered by Order 2021-11 (those where food or drink are served for on-premises consumption and health and fitness centers):
 - Proof of vaccination for patrons in businesses that are covered by the order will no longer be required.
 - Proof of vaccination or weekly testing for employees covered by the Order will no longer be required.

"We are glad to be able to move with the rest of the state to lift these measures," said Dr. Rachel Rubin, CCDPH Co-lead and Senior Medical Officer. "We thank the residents for their cooperation, and the suburban Cook County business community for their support and compliance of the mask mandate and vaccination requirements. We urge those who have not been vaccinated to do so."

Although masks will not be required, many residents will choose to continue to wear a mask – especially those who are immunocompromised and children under the age of 5 who are not eligible to be vaccinated.

“We ask for continued understanding and kindness to those who choose to wear a mask,” added Dr. Kiran Joshi, CCDPH Co-lead and Senior Medical Officer.

Additionally, CCDPH strongly recommends wearing a face mask in schools. Only 48% of suburban Cook County residents younger than 20 have received one dose of COVID vaccine.

In addition to schools, CCDPH continues to recommend masking in any crowded indoor public setting where physical distancing cannot be maintained such as at large indoor events. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 metrics in our suburban jurisdiction and may recommend additional mitigation measures in the future if the healthcare system is overwhelmed or if transmission rate increases warrant such action.

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