HEALTH ALERT NETWORK
Friday, December 17, 2021

Cook County Department of Public Health
Recommends Increased Mitigation Practices for Individuals and Businesses

With winter holidays approaching amid an increase in COVID-19 cases in the region, the Cook County Department of Public Health recommends the following mitigation strategies to keep you and those you love safe and healthy:

**VACCINATION and BOOSTERS:**
- If you are fully vaccinated, get your booster once you are eligible.
- Two dose vaccines – at least 6 months post your second dose (16 years and older)
- One-dose vaccines – at least 2 months post your original dose (18 years and older)
- If you are not vaccinated, please get vaccinated. Vaccination against COVID-19 will protect against severe disease and death, even with the emergence of the omicron variant. Initial data indicates that boosters are especially important now, to provide extra protection against this new variant. Boosters are available for all adults, and for people 16 years and older with the Pfizer vaccine.

**GATHERING INDOORS:**
- If you are not fully vaccinated, please do not gather indoors with others outside your household.
- Anyone wishing to celebrate the season with others is strongly urged to get a COVID test 2-3 days before the event, and to test again the morning of the event. Stay home if you have a positive test and follow [CDC isolation guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/holiday-events.html).
- Wear masks to protect yourself and others.
- Workplaces are strongly urged to hold virtual holiday gatherings to avoid large groups of congregating employees.

**BUSINESSES:**
- Establishments are urged to require patrons to be fully vaccinated for entry, and/or provide proof of a negative COVID test within 24 hours of entry.
- This is especially important anywhere large groups congregate indoors, spaces where people can be close to one another, and places where people remove their masks.
- **Large gatherings** are defined by the CDC as those where many people from multiple households meet. Large events include conferences, trade shows, sporting events, festivals, concerts, or large weddings and parties.
- Masking requirements are still in effect for indoor spaces and activities. Wearing a mask is crucial to limiting exposure and transmission of COVID-19 in indoor environments. All people age 2 years old and older who can medically tolerate it must wear a mask in indoor public settings ([IL Executive Order 2021-20](https://www.illinois.gov/gov/news/press-releases/Pages/2021/Executive-Order-2021-20.aspx)).
Cook County Department of Public Health is monitoring COVID-19 case and vaccination data. Information about transmission and vaccination rates in its suburban jurisdiction can be found on the Surveillance Data page.