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Cook County Reaches “High” Level of COVID-19 Transmission

Public Health Officials Highly Recommend Wearing Masks in Public, Get Vaccinated

Forest Park, IL—Due to an increase in the number of positive cases of COVID-19 and new hospitalizations per 100,000, Cook County is now at the “High” level of transmission, based on metrics calculated by the CDC. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s COVID-19 Community Levels Framework defines “High” transmission as higher than 200 COVID cases reported over the last 7 days per 100,000 residents and more than 10% of new hospital admissions and/or more than 10% of staffed hospital beds occupied by COVID-19 patients.

Based on current CDC guidance, CCDPH highly recommends:

- Wearing a mask in indoor public spaces regardless of vaccine status;
- Wearing a respirator-type mask such as an N95 or KN95 when indoors to protect those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection including adults over the age of 50, those with underlying medical conditions, and the immunocompromised;
- Avoiding large gatherings if you are at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection;
- Wearing a mask when with individuals at high-risk and limiting indoor activities and congregate events with individuals other than family;
- Getting vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 for all those 5 years old and older;
- Improving the air quality of indoor venues with HEPA filter air purifiers and opening windows whenever possible;
- Socializing outdoors if possible and avoiding poorly ventilated indoor settings and large gatherings;
- Getting tested for COVID-19 a few days before and the day of attending a family or public event – home tests are ideal for this purpose and widely available; and
- Contacting your doctor or using a Test to Treat site as soon as you test positive to get treatment for COVID-19. Visit <https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/default.aspx> to find a Test to Treat site.

“By taking these measures seriously now, we can slow COVID-19 spread in order to protect our most vulnerable and prevent our healthcare system from being overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients,” said Dr. Rachel Rubin, Senior Medical Officer and CCDPH Co-Lead.

In suburban Cook County, almost 2 million residents (86.8% of the population) have received at least one dose of the vaccine and more than 1.5 million (66.1%) are fully vaccinated. Children 5-11 years old lag behind at only 46.5% having received at least one dose of the vaccine and 36.7% have completed a vaccine series, despite a large increase in pediatric hospitalizations during surges in Omicron.

If you haven't yet, get vaccinated to protect yourself, your family and community against COVID-19. To find a vaccination location near you, visit [cookcountypublichealth.org](https://www.cookcountypublichealth.org).

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