



Orange County

ATTENTION

STEVEN M. NEUHAUS  
County Executive

**PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT**

Dr. Irina Gelman, DPM, MPH, PhDc  
Commissioner of Health

December 17, 2021

**PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO AND POST CONSPICUOUSLY IN PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE, PRIMARY CARE, EMERGENCY ROOM, INTERNAL MEDICINE, URGENT CARE, INFECTIOUS DISEASE, OB/GYN, AMBULATORY SERVICES, LABORATORIES, AMBULATORY CARE STAFF, HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES, ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES, SKILLED -NURSING FACILITIES, LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES, CONGREGATE LIVING SETTINGS, MUNICIPALITIES, COUNTY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, SENIOR ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES AND ALL SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, AND ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS.**

**PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT #24**  
**COVID-19 Update and Mask Recommendation in Orange County**

As our community is experiencing a rise in cases, and with the Omicron Variant present in New York State, the Orange County Department of Health is recommending the continuation of all disease prevention and mitigation strategies which allow for the safe operation of schools, businesses, and events. Mitigation strategies include but are not limited to the wearing of masks indoors when in public by all Orange County residents, frequent hand washing, timely vaccination, staying home when sick, and social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19. **Due to the increased number of cases and the presence of the Delta variant in the County, the Orange County Department of Health strongly urges and recommends ALL PERSONS, over the age of two, medically able to tolerate it, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask when indoors in public, in accordance with [CDC guidance](#).** On December 10, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that, effective December 13, masks will be required to be worn in all indoor public places unless businesses or venues implement a vaccine requirement.

Cases of COVID-19 are on the rise in Orange County. As of December 15th, 2021, Orange County's transmission rate continues to be classified as HIGH by the CDC since mid-August 2021. The average daily count of new COVID-19 cases over the last seven days has increased 51% compared to the week of the Thanksgiving holiday. Orange County's 7-day rolling average is 260 new cases per day, a level which has not been seen since late March 2021. Approximately 62% of the total population in Orange County is fully vaccinated, which leaves our community vulnerable to continued disease transmission. It is imperative that health care providers encourage, and residents adhere to the CDC Disease Prevention Guidelines including, but not limited to **wearing masks when in indoors and in public, regardless of vaccination status** and **timely vaccination among all eligible residents** to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

For more information about how you can get vaccinated, please visit the Orange County website: [www.orangecountygov.com](http://www.orangecountygov.com) or call the Orange County Department of Health at (845) 291-2330. For more information about public health recommendation for fully vaccinated people, please visit the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>.