



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 13, 2021

California Issues Requirements for Universal Masking Indoors Regardless of Vaccination Status

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. – In response to an increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations throughout California, as the holiday season continues with uncertainties about the new Omicron variant, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is requiring masks to be worn in all indoor public settings, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status. This requirement will be in place December 15, 2021 through January 15, 2022.

Certain exemptions apply to the masking requirement, including children younger than two years old, anyone with respiratory issues, anyone unable to remove a mask without help and persons with certain medical conditions.

According to CDPH, since Thanksgiving, the statewide seven-day average case rate has increased by 47% and hospitalizations have increased by 14%. Universal masking has proven to decrease the rate of infection and works to slow community transmission.

While Butte County has not experienced a recent increase in cases, the CDPH masking requirements apply to all indoor public settings throughout the county. Since the beginning of the pandemic, surges experienced in the southern and central parts of the state are good indicators of how Butte County may be impacted in the coming weeks.

In addition to wearing a mask, residents can protect themselves against COVID-19, including variants, and limit the spread of illness by taking the following actions:

- **Get Vaccinated.** All vaccines are proven safe and effective at preventing severe illness. Butte County residents age 5 and older are eligible for vaccination. Find a vaccine at: MyTurn.ca.gov
- **Get a Vaccine Booster.** Boosters are available for those who are at least six months out from their primary series of Moderna (age 18+) and Pfizer (age 16+) and two months out from the J&J (18+) single dose vaccine.
- **Get Tested** if you have symptoms or have known exposure, regardless of vaccination status. It is recommended that all travelers arriving to Butte County from outside of California should get tested 3-5 days after arrival.
- **Stay Home if Sick.** COVID-19 symptoms can feel like the common cold or allergies.
- **Wash Hands Often.** Simple personal hygiene actions can prevent the spread of illness.

For more information about COVID-19 in Butte County, visit: www.buttecounty.net/COVID-19.

###