

County of Imperial
Amended Order of the Health Officer

Pursuant to sections 101040, 120175, and 120175.5(b) of the California Health and Safety Code, the Imperial County Health Officer (“Health Officer”) hereby amends the Health Officer Order dated February 11, 2022. The Health Officer hereby **ORDERS AS FOLLOWS**:

Effective March 1, 2022, the requirement for unvaccinated persons to mask in indoor public settings and businesses was replaced by a strong recommendation that all persons, regardless of vaccine status, mask in indoor public settings and businesses (examples: retail, restaurants, theaters, family entertainment centers, meetings, state and local government offices serving the public. Additionally, after March 11, 2022, the universal masking requirement for K-12 and Childcare settings terminated.

Imperial County Public Health strongly recommends that individuals in these settings continue to mask in indoor settings. Masking will continue to be an important layer of protection along with the continued recommendations around vaccinations, testing and ventilation, to keep schools a safe environment, even as case rates and hospitalizations decline.

WHEREAS, the Health Officer now issues this new Health Officer Order to ensure alignment of the County of Imperial’s local COVID-related guidelines and restrictions with those specified in all state and federal orders, regulations, and guidelines.

THEREFORE, effective 12:00 a.m. on Wednesday April 27, 2022, the following will be in effect for the County:


1. The Health Officer reaffirms that all residents and visitors of the County are subject to, and must abide by, the [Guidance for the Use of Face Masks](#) issued by CDPH, which includes any additions or revisions made thereto.
 - a. Per state guidelines, all unvaccinated and vaccinated residents and visitors of the County are strongly recommended to wear a face cover in indoor public settings and businesses except as noted in sections ‘b’ and ‘c’ below, where masks are required for everyone.
 - b. Per state guidelines, masks are required for all individuals in the following indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status: healthcare settings; state and local correctional facilities and detention centers; homeless shelters; long term care settings and adult and senior care facilities.
 - c. For those individuals in the indoor settings listed in item ‘b’, surgical masks or higher level respirators (e.g., N95s, KN95s, KF94s) with good fit are highly recommended.
 - d. Masking requirements for K-12 and childcare settings terminated on March 11, 2022. Masks are still strongly recommended after this date.

2. In settings where masks are strongly recommended, businesses, venue operators or hosts should consider:
 - a. Providing information to all patrons, guests and attendees regarding masking recommendations for all persons, regardless of vaccine status.
 - b. Providing information to all patrons, guests and attendees to consider better fit and filtration for masks [Surgical masks or higher-level respirators (e.g., N95s, KN95s, KF94s) with good fit are recommended over cloth masks].
 - c. Requiring all patrons to wear masks, especially when risk in the community may be high, or if those being served are at high-risk for severe disease or illness.
 - d. Requiring attendees who do not provide proof of vaccination to enter indoor Mega Events to continue masking during the event, especially when not actively eating or drinking.
 - e. No person can be prevented from wearing a mask as a condition of participation in an activity or entry into a business.
3. The following individuals are exempt from wearing masks at all times:
 - a. Persons younger than two years old. Very young children must not wear a mask because of the risk of suffocation.
 - b. Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that prevents wearing a mask. This includes persons with a medical condition for whom wearing a mask could obstruct breathing or who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.
 - c. Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
 - d. Persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.
4. If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order or any application of it to any person, business, structure, gathering, or circumstance is held to be invalid, preempted, or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.

5. The current orders regarding masking during isolation and quarantine remain in effect. Individuals experiencing symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 should follow the instructions for masking contained in those orders.
6. This Order is issued in accordance with, and incorporates by reference, any applicable federal, State, or local law, regulation, rule, policy, or procedure related to COVID-19, as they may be amended, updated, or supplemented.
7. To protect the public's health, the Health Officer may take additional action(s) for failure to comply with this Order. Violation of this Order is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment, fine, or both under sections 120295 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code. Further, pursuant to sections 26602 and 41601 of the California Government Code, and section 101029 of the California Health and Safety Code, the Health Officer requests that the Sheriff and the Chiefs of Police in all cities located in the County ensure compliance with and enforcement of this Order.
8. This Order shall remain in effect until rescinded.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

Date: April 26, 2022

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Stephen Munday, M.D., MPH
Health Officer