

CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

Get the latest news from our Public Health Department

Week of November 29

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Update

Please share with your networks

With the arrival of the holiday season, news of surges across the country, and the new omicron variant detected in the Bay Area, we urge Alameda County residents - now more than ever - to follow the State's guidance to prevent and stop the spread of COVID-19. The preventive measures that helped reduce this deadly disease and contributed to a nearly zero flu season last year continue to be effective. *(See omicron and travel articles below.)*

Vaccine continues to be our best protection against hospitalization and death. Please remember that boosters are a key component of our efforts to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19. We urge residents to contact their health care provider or local pharmacy to get a booster. We continue to prioritize neighborhoods with low vaccination rates and most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to ensure vaccine and booster equity. *(See CDC booster recommendations below.)*

Finally, with flu season upon us, we must be mindful of what a combined COVID and flu surge could do to our hospitals, and within schools where most younger students await their first COVID vaccine appointments. Please note that the flu and COVID vaccines can be safely administered at the same time. Unlike last winter, when we were staying home and observed very few flu cases, this year we are expecting more flu and encourage residents to vaccinate against both.

We hope you enjoyed a restful Thanksgiving holiday. We appreciate your readership, encourage your feedback, and ask that you share this newsletter with others.

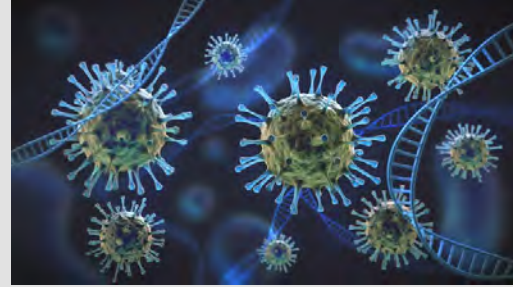
[Alameda County Dashboard](#)

[Public Health Department Website](#)

Omicron Variant Monitored

The first California Omicron case was reported in San Francisco this week. The infected person is between the ages of 18-49, has mild symptoms, and was fully vaccinated but not yet eligible for a

booster. Omicron has been associated with a recent rapid increase in cases in one province of South Africa, and cases have been identified [30 countries around the world](#). Despite the mutations, it is likely that vaccines will continue to have an effect and may continue to protect against severe disease, especially after boosters. Until we know more, residents can limit the impact of variants by:



- Getting vaccinated and, if due, getting a booster,
- Wearing masks,
- Staying home when sick,
- Washing hands, and
- Avoiding crowded and poorly ventilated settings.

We will work to ensure any federal travel restrictions are followed by people coming to Alameda County and prioritize case investigations in which Omicron is suspected. We recommend that residents familiarize themselves with the latest [international travel restrictions and guidance](#) and share with holiday visitors.

Spread Joy This Holiday Season, Not COVID or the Flu

We urge Alameda County residents to follow the [State's guidance](#) to prevent spreading COVID-19 this holiday season. Last year we saw a significant winter surge and we must remain vigilant to keep our trend moving downward. The COVID-19 safety precautions will also protect against the flu:



- [Get vaccinated](#) including a booster shot if you're eligible.
- Stay home if you're experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms (sore throat, cough, runny nose), isolate yourself from others, and get tested.
- [Get tested](#) before and after traveling or gathering during the holidays, 1 to 3 days before leaving and 3 to 5 days after returning from traveling.
- If members of your group are unvaccinated, take precautions like keeping your gathering small, short, and outdoors, and continue to wear a mask.
- Remember, [flu shots are recommended](#) for everyone 6 months and older.

Contact your health care provider or local pharmacy for your booster and flu shot.

CDC now recommends COVID boosters[for everyone age 18 and older](#), six months after their initial Pfizer or Moderna series, or two months after their initial J&J vaccination. Vaccine continues to be the best protection against hospitalization and death. We strongly encourage all eligible and not fully vaccinated get their shot as soon as possible including recently eligible [5-11-year-olds](#).

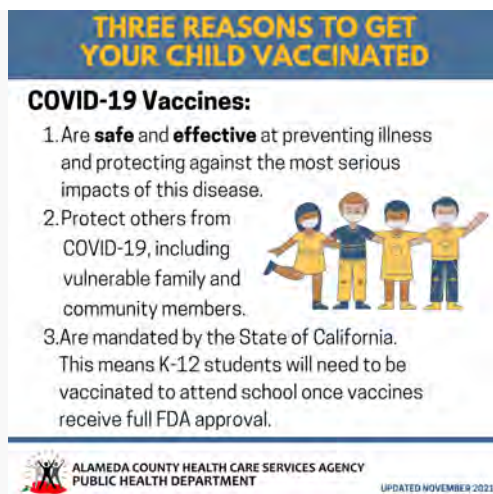
Traveling

- See [CDC Domestic Travel Guidance](#)
- There are travel recommendations by destination, See the [CDC International Travel Guidance](#).

Reflecting 7-day average and 7-day lag:

- 75.4% of Alameda County residents ages 12 + fully vaccinated
- 10.7% case rate among unvaccinated population
- 3.7% case rate among fully vaccinated population
- 5.3% among total (vaccinated and unvaccinated) population
- 33.8% ages 5-11 with at least one dose (5-11 comprise 8.4% of total population)
- Daily case rate 5.4 per 100,000
- 1.2% test positivity overall
- 1.3% test positivity Healthy Places Index (HPI) first quartile
- 55 patients hospitalized, 13 intensive care unit

Tool Kit for Child Care Programs



THREE REASONS TO GET YOUR CHILD VACCINATED

COVID-19 Vaccines:

1. Are **safe** and **effective** at preventing illness and protecting against the most serious impacts of this disease.
2. Protect others from COVID-19, including vulnerable family and community members.
3. Are mandated by the State of California. This means K-12 students will need to be vaccinated to attend school once vaccines receive full FDA approval.

ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
UPDATED NOVEMBER 2021

A new [Tool Kit](#) for Childcare Programs in Alameda County is available, as a result of our partnership with the Alameda County Emergency Child Care Response Team. The toolkit includes best practices for operating child care programs during COVID-19, updated state and federal guidance, and information on what to do when you have a positive case at your child care program. Childcare providers are encouraged to review these practices to ensure a healthy holiday season.

Vaccination Availability at Health Care Partner and Alameda County Supported Sites

Vaccines are available throughout the week, and some sites offer Saturday hours to serve people who may not be able to get away during the week.

- [Castlemont High Gym](#), Fridays, December 3, 10, 17, 6-9 pm, 8601 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland
- [OUSD Central Kitchen](#), 29th Street, Oakland, corner of West St. and 29th St., 10 am-2 pm
- [Weekes Community Center](#), 27182 Patrick Ave., Hayward, 10 am-2 pm
- [Allen Temple Baptist Church](#), 8501 International Blvd., Oakland, 10 am-2 pm
- [Coyote Hills Elementary](#), Sundays, 10:30 am-3:30 pm, 3627 Cherry St., Newark

Find [more vaccine locations](#), [testing locations](#), or [make an appointment](#) by visiting our [website](#).



HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Alameda County community sites will be closed on, December 25-26, and January 1-2, to allow our staff and volunteers to spend holiday time with family and friends.

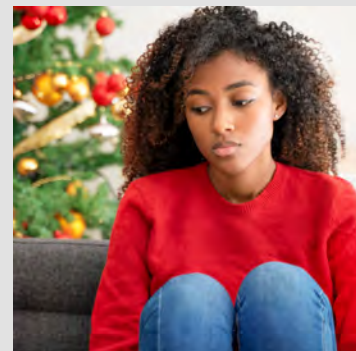


World AIDS Day 2021 gives us an opportunity to pause, reflect, and recommit to the vital work needed to address the stark inequities evident in the HIV epidemic. In Alameda County, HIV hits Black and Brown communities hardest, primarily impacting gay and bisexual men and Black and Latinx women. Alameda County has seen consistent reductions in new HIV infections in most groups in Alameda County over the past nine years, but we haven't seen similar reductions among young Latinx gay men. Black residents represent the highest proportion of people living with HIV. If we plan [to end the HIV epidemic](#), we must see improved, equitable outcomes among these communities. Achieving this vision will mean improving access and use of HIV services and addressing social determinants of health. As our fight against COVID-19 wages on, we must not forget that our fight against AIDS continues. Please see our World AIDS Day [statement](#) to learn more about our programs to serve populations hardest hit by HIV.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

The winter months and holidays often bring about a condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

- **WHAT IS SAD?** SAD can come and go around the same time each year, and most people start experiencing symptoms as early as September and feel better by April or May. Symptoms include loss of interest in usual activities, eating more and craving carbohydrates, weight gain, tiredness despite sleeping more, and trouble concentrating.
- **WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?** To diagnose SAD, your doctor will ask if you have been depressed during the same season in the past if you have symptoms like those above and hereditary factors such as a parent, brother, or sister with SAD.
- **WHAT CAN I DO?** Things to do to address SAD include regular exercise outdoors when the sun is shining and staying active during the day for more energy and less depression. Anything that raises your heart rate, including chores outside or near a sunny window, help to alleviate SAD.



Visit the [National Institute of Mental Health](#).

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COVID-19 Update PDF Version

