

CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

Get the latest news from our Public Health Department

Week of February 7

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Update

Please share with your networks

We began February with our Black History Month [series](#) honoring the contributions of African Americans and recognizing our Black communities for their central role in our country's [history](#). Our series features many notable figures including [Amanda Gorman](#), the first-ever National Youth Poet Laureate of the United States. Our work to alleviate the disproportionate burden of the pandemic on Black Americans continues, along with action to improve Black maternal health, expand behavioral health services, and achieve more affordable and accessible health care. We also acknowledge that this work is not finished and so, as Ms. Gorman states "... we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us."



We recently joined Bay Area Health Officers to [announce](#) lifting indoor mask mandates on February 16 in alignment with the State. We are well below our peak of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, and overall risk is much lower than at any point in the past six weeks. If current trends hold, risk to community members should be even lower when the mandate ends next week. COVID will still be with us but it is appropriate to loosen masking restrictions when risk is low and keep them in reserve for times when severe disease rates are higher. While we think it is important to set and follow clear criteria for COVID-19 restrictions, it is also important to strive for consistent rules and guidance across the region and the state.

Please continue to make choices that may impact the health of those around you. This could mean continuing to wear a mask in all indoor public settings, social distancing, staying home more or only gathering with your group of friends and family who have been vaccinated and boosted. Everyone should feel comfortable continuing to wear a mask when an additional layer of safety is needed, and confident they are making the safest choice for their health and their loved ones. View our [COVID safety tips](#) to stay healthy in a new video message from our County Health Officer Dr. Nicholas Moss.

Thank you for taking time to review our updates on COVID-19. We appreciate your partnership and ask that you share this newsletter with others.

Boosters for Residents Ages 12+ and Testing Demands

Eligible Alameda County residents, ages 12 and over, can now [make vaccine booster appointments](#) at County supported vaccination clinics. Drop-in appointments will continue to be prioritized for residents living in highly impacted zip codes to ensure equitable access.

Alameda County averaged over 26,000 tests per day during the recent surge. While more than 75% of testing in Alameda County occurs through health care providers, our community supported sites remain focused on [free, low-barrier testing](#) in priority neighborhoods. If you have medical insurance, please contact your doctor or health care provider for testing. If you know someone who can't access a test for any reason and they are symptomatic, please remind them to stay home regardless of their vaccination status. If they are exposed and unvaccinated, they should also stay home.

LESS is More When Seeking COVID-19 Testing

When choosing a COVID-19 testing site


LESS is More

Make sure the site you choose is:

✓	L egal	Test kits have received FDA emergency use authorization. Testing sites do not need your social security number or immigration status.
✓	E thical	Your test should be free, affordable or billable to insurance. Any additional cost should be clearly explained.
✓	S afe	Staff wear medical grade protective equipment. Gloves are worn and changed in-between clients. Testing staff implements COVID-19 safety protocols including distancing.
✓	S ecure	Testing site and lab information are available and you should know how your personal information will be used.

Questions or concerns? Please send to: ncov@aagov.org

Alameda County Health Care Service Agency



BE Well

The Alameda County District Attorney recently [issued a warning](#) for fraudulent COVID-19 testing sites that are popping up around the Bay Area. Please be alert and look out for questionable practices including unsafe conditions, no masks, or failure to return test results in a

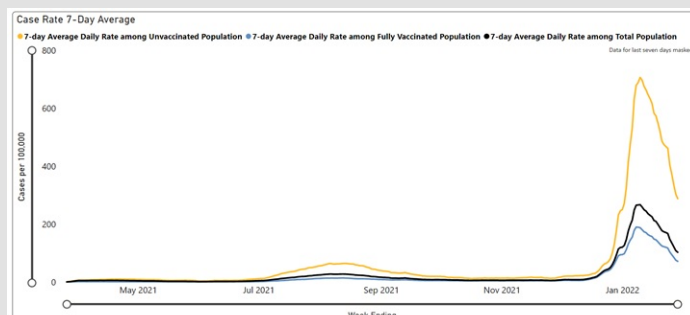
timely manner. In most cases, antigen test results should be available in a matter of hours, and PCR tests in two to three days.

Alameda County Observes Decline in Reported COVID-19 Cases

Alameda County case rates rose above previous surges, likely due to the highly transmissible Omicron variant that was detected in our county. While cases are trending downward, we predict that the risk for COVID-19 will continue post-Omicron, likely with

intermittent waves that will drive public health priorities:

- Preventing and addressing COVID-19 disparities including supporting vaccination, testing, and treatment.
- Shifting Universal Case Investigation and Contact Tracing to focus on high-risk



settings.

- Continuing resource and care navigation for our vulnerable communities.
- Continuing selective care and prevention efforts as emergency requirements continue to ease.
- Returning to masking and/or other restrictions, once lifted, if needed again for a severe variant.
- Educating individuals, families, and institutions to understand and manage ongoing COVID-19 risk.

Epidemic Data Points (7-day lag)

- 278.3 per 100,000 positive cases among unvaccinated
- 70.4 per 100,000 positive cases among vaccinated
- 87.6% of residents vaccinated with at least one dose
- 81.8% of residents are fully vaccinated
- 60.8% ages 5-11 with at least one dose
- 13.8% test positivity overall
- 18.7% in Healthy Place Index (HPI) low-income areas
- 417 hospitalized
- 79 in ICU

Please visit our [dashboard](#) for more data on COVID-19.

Alameda County-Supported Vaccine Sites

Vaccines are available throughout the week and some locations offer Saturday hours for people unable to get away during the week:

- [Allen Temple Baptist Church](#) East Oakland: Saturdays, 10:00am - 2:00pm
- [The Center](#) OUSD Central Kitchen, West Oakland: Saturdays, 10:00am - 3:00pm
- [Weekes Community Center](#) South Hayward: Saturdays, 10:00am - 3:00pm
- [Coyote Hills Elementary School](#) Newark: Sundays, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
- [San Lorenzo High School](#) Wednesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 pm-7:30 pm



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

Alameda County Behavioral Health Older Adult Training



Our Behavioral Health Department held the first in a series of Older Adult Training and Certification, in partnership with community experts in the field of older adult mental health and social services. The session addressed the specific needs of older adults receiving mental health and substance use care to enrich the understanding of the major mental health conditions and substance use concerns facing older adults. The training also focused on the importance of promoting mental wellness, resilience, screening, assessments, and evidence-based interventions while emphasizing

integrated care. Visit the Age Friendly Alameda County [website](#) to get help and learn about efforts to improve our County's livability for people of all ages, including ways to address [social isolation](#) and older adults.

Afghanistan and Afghan Education and Training

Alameda County is holding a series of trainings, starting February 10, to provide education on Afghanistan and Afghan culture in support of Afghan refugees who are settling in the county. This training will provide a brief history of Afghanistan, demographics and Afghan common traditions and culture including family dynamics. This training is the first in a series of four led by Dr. Masoud Ghafoer, Psy.D., AMFT. Please [register](#) in advance to participate in the training.

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[COVID-19 Update PDF Version](#)

