

CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

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Week of September 6

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Update

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Overall, the summer COVID surge is improving. Our daily case rate is down from one month ago and case rates are now improving in all age groups. Test positivity is declining and hospitalizations have improved. More importantly, we have not observed substantial numbers of hospitalizations in children. This comes at a time when testing rates have reached an all time peak of nearly 14,000 per day although it saddens us to note that most new Alameda County cases are among unvaccinated residents. Vaccination remains a critical protection against COVID and we now have more than one million County residents who are fully vaccinated, accounting for nearly 76% of our eligible population over the age of 12.

As we move through the summer surge, we're working with education partners to support the return to in-person education for our County's children. Our Schools Team is supporting school districts with implementing State guidance for safety protocols, and we're working with the County Office of Education to support engagement with school communities and to plan vaccine clinics. Questions about specific protocols should be directed to individual school districts since they know their school community's characteristics best. Until vaccines are available for children under the age of 12, our best defense is a multi-layered prevention strategy including universal indoor masking at schools, appropriate testing, keeping sick children and staff at home, and maximizing ventilation.

Our local resources remain prioritized for neighborhoods with disproportionately high case rates and low vaccination rates. We are grateful for the providers and partners engaged in pandemic response noting together, we make a difference.

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Immunocompromised Residents Can Schedule a Third Dose

Immunocompromised residents can begin scheduling a third vaccine dose. Third doses are authorized for moderately to severely immunocompromised people who have received 2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer



(mRNA vaccines). Immunocompromised individuals are encouraged to speak with their health care provider before getting the third dose, and they must sign a self-attestation indicating that they qualify. The attestation form can be signed electronically when making an appointment. Individuals must wait 28 days or more after their second dose

and must register for the same vaccine (e.g., two doses of Moderna must be followed by a third dose of Moderna).

The FDA and CDC have not yet authorized or recommended boosters or additional doses for anyone other than those who have immunocompromising conditions. We will follow the science and await federal and state public health guidance before we administer boosters. In the meantime, Alameda County-supported vaccination clinics will continue focusing on eligible residents who are not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated. If boosters are authorized and recommended for the general public, Alameda County will prioritize people at highest risk for severe illness or exposure.

Continue Masking Indoors Until Alameda County Mandate is Lifted



In order to lift the current Alameda County indoor mask mandate, case rates will need to reach moderate or lower levels of community transmission. While hospitalizations have stabilized and may be declining, case rates would need to continue to decrease, especially given the start of the school year. Individually, hospitalizations and reported case rates are imperfect measures of the impact of COVID on our communities but together they provide a

good indication of the current situation. It's important to note, State mask rules and recommendations would remain in place after a local mandate is lifted. That would include school mask rules set by the State.

Vaccine Verification at Bars and Restaurants

Alameda County is evaluating policies requiring vaccine verification at bars and restaurants. We will monitor how these policies roll out in the City of Berkeley, San Francisco, and New York City. While vaccination continues to be the best protection against severe illness, vaccinated people may also spread the virus that causes COVID-19. Businesses can choose to implement vaccination verification systems to better protect their workers and patrons. Employers must also continue to comply with



other state requirements like Cal/OSHA's Emergency Temporary Standards and the State's recent Orders requiring vaccination, or vaccination verification or masking/regular testing for certain settings. Information for [workplace guidance](#).

Department of Public Health to improve birth outcomes and reduce mortality for Black infants in California. PEI supports Black mothers and their families through strategic interventions designed to reduce racial disparities in birth outcomes due to chronic stress caused by racism. Alameda County's PEI strategies

include: BElovedBIRTH Black Centering Pregnancy, a partnership with [Alameda Health System](#), offering group prenatal care by an all-Black dream team of health care providers including Black midwives, family support advocates, doulas, breastfeeding specialists, doctors, nutritionists, psychologists, and more.

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