



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Residents Urged to Get Tested and Vaccinated as Cases of COVID-19 Variants Rise in Yolo County

(Woodland, CA) – As more cases of the COVID-19 variants are identified in Yolo County, residents are urged to test regularly and get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible. During the first week of April, two-thirds of Yolo County positive cases analyzed genetically were the B.1.1.7 variant, though the B.1.351 and P.1 variants have also been detected in California and locally. These variants spread more easily, may cause more severe disease, and may be resistant to available treatments. For reopening to continue safely, it is vital to prevent spread of these variants.

Testing is a critical tool in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Testing is the only way to know how much COVID-19 is actually present in any given community, since many people infected with coronavirus have no symptoms. By identifying positive individuals and asking them to isolate at home, testing stops viral spread. Testing also allows the public health department to monitor for variants and gauge the success of vaccination efforts. Unvaccinated residents are strongly encouraged to get tested on a regular basis. This includes those participating in in-person learning. Free testing is widely available in Yolo County through OptumServe, with locations in West Sacramento, Winters and Woodland, as well as through Healthy Davis Together. More information about testing options can be found at: <http://covidtesting.yolocounty.org/>.

Vaccination is another critical tool control the spread of COVID-19. Residents are recommended to get vaccinated as soon as possible, especially now that residents 16 and older are eligible in Yolo County. Current data show that the COVID-19 vaccines protect residents from circulating strains, including variants, significantly reducing the chance of getting severely ill or dying from COVID-19. All of the COVID-19 vaccines currently available have been shown to be safe and effective, with rare cases of serious side effects, and are free for all residents. The more people who are vaccinated, the harder it is for COVID-19 to spread. The best vaccine to get is the first one offered to you. For more information about vaccine options in Yolo County, visit: www.yolocounty.org/coronavirus-vaccine.

Businesses and organizations that plan to host indoor private events or indoor live events and performances, including concerts, sports competitions, wedding receptions, or proms, need to be particularly cautious in light of spreading virus variants. Organizers of these events are encouraged to require all attendees of such events to show proof of full vaccination or a recent negative test. Rapid antigen tests at the door of such events are an option to ensure guests are not infected with coronavirus.

“Total new cases of COVID-19 in Yolo County are holding steady, but this is falsely reassuring,” said Yolo County Health Officer Dr. Aimee Sisson. “The steady total masks a concerning increase in cases caused by more infectious variants. These same variants have caused tremendous surges in other counties and other states. To avoid a surge that could overwhelm the health care system and cause more COVID deaths, we need to be

extra careful right now. Getting vaccinated and getting tested regularly until you are vaccinated are the best defenses, along with wearing masks, staying 6 feet away from people you don't live with, and choosing an outdoor activity whenever possible.”

With the State's announcements that larger gatherings and indoor private events can start April 15 and the Blueprint tiers may potentially cease June 15, it is now more important than ever that residents stay vigilant to prevent a surge in cases. Residents should continue following these health and safety measures:

- Wearing a face covering when in public
- Practicing physical distancing with others not in your household
- Avoiding large gatherings
- Opting for outdoor activities versus indoor activities

For more information about Yolo County's COVID-19 vaccine distribution process, visit www.yolocounty.org/coronavirus-vaccine. Residents can also call Yolo 2-1-1 for resource information. For additional updates follow Yolo County on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/YoloCounty/> or Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/YoloCountyCA>.

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