



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Masking Requirement Ends February 15 to Align with State of California's Masking Guidance

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County's universal face covering requirement in public settings and workplaces that started with the surge from the Delta variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 will end on February 15, 2022, and will align with the state of California's guidance on masking. Going forward, Yolo County will rely less on requirements in favor of public health recommendations. The change comes after the recent surge of cases from the more contagious Omicron variant greatly surpassed the prior peak of a year ago, yet Yolo County hospitals experienced fewer hospitalizations.

At the start of the pandemic, we had few options to slow the spread of COVID-19 and prevent our healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed. Today's situation is very different. The virus has changed, with Omicron causing less severe disease than previous variants. Our preventive measures also have improved, with highly effective, safe vaccines for everyone ages five and older offering protection from severe disease, hospitalization, and death. We have effective antiviral medications and monoclonal antibody treatments. [Data from the state of California](#) and other regions dramatically demonstrate that hospitalizations and deaths no longer track with case rates.

“Yolo County is lifting our masking order because the COVID-19 situation has changed thanks to effective vaccines, effective treatments, and a variant that causes less severe disease,” said Yolo County Health Officer Dr. Aimee Sisson. “The Omicron wave is receding, but COVID-19 will continue to be with us. We must learn to live with COVID-19. Moving away from requiring everybody to wear masks indoors is a first step toward living with COVID-19. I still recommend that everybody wears a mask indoors in Yolo County, but it will no longer be required in most settings for fully vaccinated persons starting February 16.”

The state of California's updated [masking guidance](#) takes effect on February 16. Universal masking shall remain required in only specified settings, including public transit, K-12 schools, childcare, healthcare, correctional, shelter, and long-term care settings. Only unvaccinated persons are required to mask in all indoor public settings. Fully vaccinated individuals are recommended to continue indoor masking when the risk may be high.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a challenge for everyone over the last two years, and Yolo County residents have demonstrated their willingness to follow public health requirements,” said Board Chair, Supervisor Angel Barajas. “We will continue to support ways for residents to protect themselves and others from the disease.”

The end of a masking requirement does not signal that masks do not work. Masks work. We recommend that anyone who feels unsafe in any situation wear a mask that fits and filters well, such as an N95, KN95, or KF94 respirator or double mask with a cloth mask over a surgical mask. We also strongly recommended that everyone take the opportunity to get vaccinated and boosted. Safe, effective and free vaccines are available for persons ages five and older. Get tested if you have symptoms or exposure, and before and after gatherings or travel. Finally, stay home if you are sick.

For more on the rationale for ending the local masking order, read the [Recission Notice \(PDF\)](#). For more information on Yolo County's response to COVID-19, visit www.yolocounty.org/covid.

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