

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

1215 O Street, MS 9-60
Sacramento, CA 95814
TTY: 711
(833) 421-0061



December 9, 2021

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: OMICRON VARIANT OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and remain prevalent. Recently, a new variant of COVID-19 was identified and labeled by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a “variant of concern” named Omicron. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued a press statement which can be found online [here](#). A fact sheet on current information about the Omicron variant can be found online [here](#).

Actions which can be taken by everyone to help slow the spread of COVID-19, including the Omicron variant, include:

1. **Get Vaccinated:** All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in California are safe and effective at preventing serious illness from COVID-19. Vaccination will protect you, caregivers, facility staff, persons in care and loved ones. Everyone age five and older is eligible for vaccination. Additionally, adults over the age of 18 who are at least six months after their last doses of Pfizer or Moderna, or at least two months since their single-dose of Janssen (Johnson and Johnson), are eligible for a booster shot. Booster shots are critical, as they significantly restore the antibody levels (protection) that have declined since the original vaccination.
2. **Wear Masks:** Per the latest [Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#) from CDPH, universal masking indoors is **recommended** statewide. However, certain counties have modified their current public health officer orders and **require** everyone to wear masks indoors regardless of vaccination status. You can access the latest COVID-19 guidance and masking requirements for all counties at [COVID19.ca.gov](#). People must follow the specific masking guidance for their local area and workplace.
3. **Get Tested:** Everyone should get tested immediately for COVID-19 if they are feeling any symptoms, regardless of their vaccination status. COVID-19 symptoms can feel like a common cold, seasonal allergies, or flu. [COVID-19 testing](#) in California is free to anyone who needs it.
4. **Stay Home if Sick:** Everyone should [stay home](#) if they are feeling sick.

“Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices”

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We will continue to keep you updated as additional information becomes available about COVID-19 variants and vaccines.

Additionally, it is flu season. The [incidence](#) of the flu is higher than last year. The CDPH [urges](#), and the CDC recommends, that people ages six months and older obtain the annual flu shot unless they have a history of adverse reactions. Following the COVID-19 measures described above also protects against spreading the flu.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

PETE CERVINKA
Chief, Data Analytics and Strategy

cc: Regional Center Board Presidents
Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies