



Ian P. Hoffman, MD, MPH
Humboldt County Health Officer
529 I Street, Eureka, CA 95501
phone: (707) 445-6200 | fax: (707) 445-6097

ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT RESCINDING LOCAL FACE COVERING ORDERS

DATE OF ORDER: February 14, 2022

Please read this Order carefully. Violation of or failure to comply with this Order is a misdemeanor punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. (California Health and Safety Code, § 120295.)

SUMMARY & RATIONALE FOR THE ORDER

Two years into the COVID-19 pandemic all aspects of life in California and in Humboldt County continue to be affected by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It is for this reason that Humboldt County Public Health has continued a multi-prong approach that focuses on reducing and slowing the spread of COVID-19 through a combination of requirements and recommendations. Our focus continues to be on the interventions for Humboldt County that have proven to reduce deaths and hospitalizations in our community, and proven to keep important institutions operating such as hospitals, schools, businesses, and government, all while protecting vulnerable populations.

These interventions continue to be vaccinating, masking, testing, improving ventilation, educating, contact tracing, and using isolation and quarantine guidance. Over time these interventions have been used in different ways, and as we gain more community immunity and the virus changes, the use of these interventions has and will change according to what we know. We also continue to work closely with our healthcare partners to increase access to prevention and treatments for COVID-19 as ways to reduce impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of our community and the most vulnerable.

On December 15, 2021, the [California Department Of Public Health \(CDPH\) instituted a statewide masking order in all public places regardless of vaccination status that is set to expire on February 15th, 2022](#). This statewide mask order was to protect the public during the rapid spread of the Omicron variant. With case numbers, hospitalizations and deaths all trending down statewide, the CDPH has announced it will revert the statewide masking order back to what it was before December 15th, 2021. [Unvaccinated and partially vaccinated individuals are required to wear a facial covering in all indoor public spaces in California by CDPH requirements](#) as of February 16th, 2022.

Humboldt County has had a local universal public indoor face covering order in place since the Delta surge of hospitalizations locally, implemented on [August 7th, 2021](#), and updated on [November 8th, 2021](#). [Humboldt County's recent experience with Omicron not resulting in a large surge in hospitalizations and deaths despite the largest surge in cases of the pandemic](#) suggests our county has made significant progress on community immunity. We now have over 70% of the community with at least one shot of the vaccine, and 55% of all those eligible have received a booster. [Humboldt County has achieved overall vaccination rates that are on par with the rest of California](#), and on some important metrics such as boosters or vaccination rates in more vulnerable populations, we are above the state median. Due to the combination of



DHHS Administration
phone: (707) 441-5400
fax: (707) 441-5412

Behavioral Health
phone: (707) 268-2990
fax: (707) 476-4049

Social Services
phone: (707) 476-4700
fax: (707) 441-2096

improving case rates, normalizing hospital operations, and improved community immunity, Humboldt County will remove our local facial covering order to align with all [federal](#) and [state regulations](#) on facial covering that take effect statewide on February 16th, 2022.

Humboldt County Public Health continues to strongly recommend [well-fitted, high quality facial coverings](#) for all individuals in public spaces, regardless of vaccination status, [in accordance with CDPH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) recommendations](#). This includes CDC recommendations for everyone to wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of [substantial or high transmission](#). Masks are one of the best tools we have to slow the spread of this highly infectious disease and reduce impact on our community. [An effective mask has both a good fit and good filtration](#) and is known to [protect both the wearer and those around you](#).

Some settings still require facial coverings of all individuals regardless of vaccination status by [federal](#) or [state requirements](#). These settings include, but are not limited to, more vulnerable settings such as K-12 schools, childcare and healthcare settings, public transportation and transit hubs, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and long-term, adult and senior care settings. Other institutions and individuals may continue the use of facial coverings in public for safety of their family, their community, or their workplace. Businesses and workplaces may continue to require universal masking of everyone, regardless of vaccination status as is recommended by [federal](#) or [state recommendations](#) in areas of [substantial or high transmission](#). Humboldt County continues to strongly encourage [all business and public places to post signage as to their masking requirements](#) at all entrances to their facility which can be downloaded from the [Humboldt Health Alert website](#). The [CDC data tracker website](#) carries the latest masking recommendations for our county based on current COVID-19 transmission rates.

[Vaccination continues to offer the best protection against COVID-19, including against the Omicron variant](#). All individuals who are eligible are encouraged to get vaccinated or boosted with an approved COVID-19 vaccine. [Being fully vaccinated protects against hospitalization and death and being boosted reduces that risk even more](#). Boosters also reduce the risk of getting COVID-19 infection, the length of time infected with the virus, and risk to those around you that you will spread COVID-19. Boosters help to reduce spread and keep businesses and schools open by reducing need for longer isolation and quarantine, therefore reducing impacts on the community.

[Individuals who are at high risk for more severe illness](#) including those who are [unvaccinated](#), overdue for booster shots, are older age, or with immunocompromising conditions are recommended to avoid crowded public places if possible [or wear a well-fitted, high quality facial covering](#) when in public. High risk individuals who test positive for COVID-19 are strongly urged to speak to their physician about whether [monoclonal antibodies or oral antiviral treatments](#) would lower their risk of progressing to severe disease.

The tools we've become accustomed to throughout the pandemic that have helped us successfully get through each surge of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and have reduced impacts locally on hospitalizations and deaths will likely continue to be the same with future variants. Humboldt County Public Health will continue to evaluate the changing virus and our policy recommendations and requirements around these interventions. vaccines, masking, testing, improving ventilation, encouraging activities outdoors, and avoiding crowded, poorly ventilated

spaces are current and possible future interventions that help to support minimal disruption to the community and reduce adverse health effects on individuals at highest risk.

UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SECTIONS 101040 AND 120175 OF THE CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, THE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT ("HEALTH OFFICER") ORDERS:

1. While transmission rates of COVID-19 may remain high and the risk of future COVID-19 variants are still unknown, guidance on facial coverings from federal and state partners becomes more relevant locally as all aspects of travel and work are more open and variants spread much more quickly than in the past. Accordingly, Humboldt County Public Health advises that individuals and institutions should continue to follow appropriate sector guidance on facial coverings released by the United States Department of Health & Human Services ("HHS") including their sub-agency United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA"), the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health ("DOSH" or "Cal/OSHA"), California Department of Public Health ("CDPH"), and California Department of Social Services ("CDSS"). The prior local face covering order is rescinded in order to align with the above-mentioned authorities' requirements and recommendations and to allow for clearer and faster updates from these regulating bodies to the institutions they oversee.
2. In addition to all [federal](#) or [state requirements](#) noted above, Humboldt County Public Health encourages everyone to mask in public indoor settings while our county is in the CDC [substantial or high transmission](#) level.
3. Humboldt County Public Health encourages all public places to post signage at all entrances as to their masking policy in a way that is clearly visible to the public. [Signage signaling masking requirements](#) can be downloaded from the [Humboldt Health Alert website](#).
4. This Order shall become effective on February 16th, 2022, and will continue to be in effect until it is: rescinded, superseded, or amended by the Health Officer. This Order shall replace the Facial Covering Orders previously issued on November 8th, 2021, and August 7th, 2021.
5. Copies of this Order shall promptly be: (1) made available at the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services Public Health Branch, 529 I Street, Eureka, CA 95501; (2) posted on the Humboldt County website humboldtgov.org/blanketorders; and (3) provided to any member of the public requesting a copy.
6. If any provision of this Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, then the remainder of the Order, including the application of such part or provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue in full force and effect. To this end, the provisions of this Order are severable.

7. Humboldt County COVID Information Line is available during normal business hours, weekdays 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at **707-441-5000** or email us at CovidInfo@co.humboldt.ca.us.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

Ian Hoffman, MD, MPH
Health Officer of the County of Humboldt

Dated: _____