

ADVISORY

For the Prevention of COVID-19: From the Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene of the City of New York

WHEREAS, a general state of emergency in New York City (NYC) and public health emergency were declared in on March 12, 2020 and March 25, 2020, respectively, to address the continuing threat posed by COVID-19, these emergencies continue as the virus that causes COVID-19 becomes more contagious (most recently with the delta and omicron variants) and COVID-19 cases increase, the City of New York workers and other people get vaccinated against COVID-19 as detailed on nyc.gov/keytonyc and nyc.gov/vaxtowork.

WHEREAS, on November 26, 2021, the Governor declared a disaster emergency for New York State (NYS), and on December 13, 2021, the Commissioner of the NYS Department of Health has ordered the wearing of face masks in all indoor public areas that do not require proof of vaccination as a condition of entry; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises that every person can take four important steps to protect themselves and others from COVID-19, which are getting vaccinated, wearing a well-fitting mask, avoiding crowded indoor gatherings and getting tested regularly¹; and

WHEREAS, there is a specific reason for each of the CDC's prevention steps, vaccination (including booster shots) is the best way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and severe illness. A well-fitting mask protects the person wearing it and others from exhaled droplets containing the virus that causes COVID-19. Regular testing allows people to know whether they have COVID-19 and take steps to protect their health and the health of others by seeking medical care, isolating and alerting others who may have been exposed. Indoor gatherings where attendees are unmasked or unvaccinated, or do not physically distance pose a high risk of COVID-19 transmission. Poor ventilation increase this risk.

THEREFORE, YOU ARE HEREBY PROVIDED NOTICE THAT:

1. Everyone who is eligible should get vaccinated against COVID-19, and everyone age 16 and older who is fully vaccinated should receive a booster dose, following CDC guidelines. A booster shot is especially important for people age 65 and older and others who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.² COVID-19 vaccines are free and readily available in NYC. Information about vaccines and where to receive them is at nyc.gov/covidvaccine.

¹ For more information, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health, expand the "Prevent Getting Sick" drop-down on the left side of the page and select **Protect Yourself**.

² For more information about people who are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health, expand the "Specific Groups of People" drop-down on the left side of the page and select **Medical Conditions**.

2. As noted in the Advisory for All People to Wear Masks in Indoor Public Settings,³ everyone regardless of vaccination status should wear a mask in all indoor public setting. All face masks should cover the nose and the mouth and rest snugly above the nose, below the mouth, and on the sides of the face. Higher-quality masks, such as KN95 and KF94 masks and N95 respirators, can offer an additional layer of protection. Wearing a cloth mask over a disposable mask and knotting the ear loops to tighten masks are additional techniques to improve fit and protection. More information can be found at on.nyc.gov/face-masks, or by visiting cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health, expanding the “Prevent Getting Sick” drop-down on the left side of the page, then expanding the “Masks” drop-down and select **Your Guide to Masks**.
3. Everyone should be tested for COVID-19 immediately if they have symptoms; five days after having close contact with someone who has COVID-19; before and after attending a gathering (especially if they or any attendee is not fully vaccinated or is at risk of severe COVID-19); and three to five days after traveling. People who are not fully vaccinated and have frequent in-person contact with others should consider getting tested weekly. At-home testing is an alternative if testing by a health care provider is not possible. At-home tests may be less accurate, so follow-up testing with a provider is recommended in some circumstances. For more information, visit on.nyc.gov/home-testing.
4. People should avoid crowded settings, particularly indoor gatherings especially with people who may not be vaccinated or consistently wear masks, or where ventilation is poor. This holiday season, outdoor gatherings should be considered where possible. Older adults and people who have a health condition that increases their risk of COVID-19 should consider avoiding nonessential gatherings. When gathering, people should maintain physical distance from one another where possible.

³ To see the advisory, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and look for **Commissioner Advisory for All People to Wear Masks in Indoor Public Settings**.