

ADVISORY

FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2020, the New York City Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene (the “Department”) declared the existence of a public health emergency within the City to address the continuing threat posed by COVID-19 to the health and welfare of City residents, and such declaration and public health emergency continue to be in effect; and

WHEREAS, on November 26, 2021, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) declared the new COVID B.1.1.529 variant, named Omicron, a variant of concern because it has a large number of mutations and preliminary evidence suggests an increased risk of reinfection and spread across the world, including to the United States; and

WHEREAS, on November 26, 2021, New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, pursuant to Section 28 of Article 2-B of the Executive Law, found that New York is experiencing COVID-19 transmission at rates the State has not seen since April 2020 and that the rate of new COVID-19 hospital admissions has been increasing over the past month to over 300 new admissions a day due to the Delta variant, and therefore declared a State disaster emergency for the entire State of New York through January 15, 2022; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 infection is transmitted predominately by inhalation of respiratory droplets and studies show that masks and face coverings block the release of respiratory droplets into the environment and can also reduce the wearer’s exposure to droplets from others because COVID-19 viral particles spread between people more readily indoors and when people are closer together for longer periods of time indoors; and

WHEREAS, the WHO and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have advised all individuals to take measures to reduce their risk of COVID-19, especially the Delta and Omicron variants, including proven public health and social measures such as wearing well-fitting masks, hand hygiene, physical distancing, improving ventilation of indoor spaces, avoiding crowded spaces, and getting vaccinated; and

THEREFORE, YOU ARE HEREBY PROVIDED NOTICE THAT:

1. All individuals, regardless of vaccination status or past COVID-19 infection, should wear a mask at all times when indoors and in a public setting, including at groceries, building lobbies, offices, stores, and other common or shared spaces where individuals may interact such as restrooms, hallways, elevators, and meeting rooms.
2. All 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 KN95s or KF94s, can offer an additional layer of protection.
3. This advisory applies to all individuals in New York City over the age of two years who are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask.
4. This advisory does not apply in cases where an individual is actively performing an activity that cannot be done while wearing a face covering such as sleeping; actively eating or drinking; is practicing or playing a competitive sport in the New York City Public School Athletic League or on a professional level; or is performing, including but not limited to playing music, delivering a speech to an audience seated at least six feet away, and acting in a theater.