

# THIS IS AN OFFICIAL NH DHHS HEALTH ALERT

Distributed by the NH Health Alert Network  
[DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov)  
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## COVID-19 Pandemic, Update # 57 *Updated Face Mask and COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance*

### Key Points and Recommendations:

- As the Omicron surge declines, population immunity increases, effective therapeutics are increasingly available, and there is decreasing risk from COVID-19, the NH Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) is no longer recommending universal face mask use, but rather recommends that decisions on face mask use be based on individual choice and informed by a person's own assessment and acceptance of COVID-19 risk (rather than universal requirements).
  - CDC is expected to update their COVID-19 [community transmission metrics](#) in the coming days which can assist with individual decision making about risk.
- Face masks remain an effective prevention measure (see [CDC science brief](#) and recent [MMWR publication](#)); therefore, people who are severely immunocompromised or who desire additional protection for themselves or another household member can choose to wear a face mask for their protection when in indoor public locations.
- Face masks continue to be required under federal regulations in certain situation, including on public transportation (including school buses), and when entering a healthcare facility. Additionally, face masks should still be worn to shorten isolation and quarantine to 5 days (see [isolation and quarantine guidance](#)).
- Vaccination remains widely available and recommended for all persons 5 years of age or older. Healthcare providers should review CDC's updated [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines](#), which include the following important updates:
  - COVID-19 vaccine [contraindications and precautions](#)
  - [Guidance for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised](#), including:
    - New guidance to shorten the interval between completion of the mRNA vaccine primary series and booster dose to at least 3 months
    - New guidance for people who received the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for their primary series to receive an additional primary series dose of an mRNA vaccine followed by a booster dose (for a total of 3 doses to be up-to-date)
  - Guidance that it is no longer necessary to delay COVID-19 vaccination after receipt of monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma
  - Considerations for an extended 8 week interval between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> mRNA vaccine primary series doses for certain persons (see [mRNA vaccine primary series guidance](#) section)
- CDC is hosting a webinar “**Updated Guidance for Clinicians on COVID-19 Vaccines**” today (2/24) from 2:00–3:00pm: [https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2022/callinfo\\_022422.asp](https://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/calls/2022/callinfo_022422.asp).

- NH DPHS conducts **Healthcare Provider and Public Health Partner** webinars the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday** of each month from 12:00 – 1:00 pm (next call will occur on Thursday 2/24):
  - Zoom link: <https://nh-dhhs.zoom.us/j/94059287404>
  - Call-in phone number: (646) 558-8656
  - Meeting ID: 940 5928 7404
  - Password: 353809
  
- NH DPHS conducts **School and Childcare Partner** webinars the **1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday** of each month from 3:30 – 4:30 pm. **Because of school vacation the 3/2 webinar is cancelled, and the next call will occur on Wednesday 3/16:**
  - Zoom link: <https://nh-dhhs.zoom.us/j/98062195081>
  - Webinar ID: 980 6219 5081
  - Telephone: 646-558-8656
  - Passcode: 197445

- For any questions regarding this notification, please call the NH DHHS, DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at (603) 271-4496 during business hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.).
- If you are calling after hours or on the weekend, please call the New Hampshire Hospital switchboard at (603) 271-5300 and request the Public Health Professional on-call.
- To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, please send an email to [DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:DHHS.Health.Alert@dhhs.nh.gov).

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From: Benjamin P. Chan, MD, MPH; State Epidemiologist  
Originating Agency: NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services