



DUTCHESS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH

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A. K. Vaidian, MD, MPH, Commissioner

Public Health Alert

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Dutchess County Experiencing “High” COVID-19 Transmission Rate; Vaccinations, Masks and Other Mitigations Recommended to Prevent COVID Spread

Dutchess County has seen new COVID-19 case count rise at a dramatic pace over the past several weeks, with active case counts increasing nearly 200% since the end of July. Dutchess County is currently classified as a “High Transmission” area by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

To prevent COVID-19 spread, Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH) strongly urges all community members to follow CDC Disease Prevention Guidelines including:

- **Get Vaccinated!** While more than 55% of Dutchess County’s population is fully vaccinated, and more than 71% of adults in the County have received at least one dose, there remains a significant portion of the population who are unvaccinated, providing greater opportunity for transmission of the virus. COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, free and readily available. Anyone 12 years and older is eligible to be vaccinated. For information about where to get COVID-19 vaccine, visit www.DutchessNY.gov/covidvaccine.
- **Wear a mask in indoor public spaces, even if fully vaccinated.**
- **Wash hands** regularly with soap and water; or using hand sanitizer when necessary.
- **Practice physical distancing** – particularly in congregate settings
- **Stay home when sick!** Anyone experiencing cold or COVID-19 symptoms, including coughing, sneezing, loss of taste or smell; should stay home to rest, recover, and help prevent the spread of virus and disease.

In accordance with CDC guidance, the **Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH) recommends universal masking for indoor public settings – all individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are strongly urged to wear a face covering.**

With the Delta variant, which is highly infectious, as the dominant circulating strain throughout the nation, masks protect vaccinated and unvaccinated persons from acquiring and transmitting COVID-19. Universal masking is an important mitigation step to enable for businesses and events to continue operating and for schools to reopen without disruption.

For the full CDC public health recommendations for fully vaccinated people, please see the CDC website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

For information about local vaccine availability and other COVID-19 updates, please visit
www.DutchessNY.gov/Coronavirus or call the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health at (845) 486—3555.

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