

SAN JUAN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES A PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY HIGHLY ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO WEAR A FACE COVERING INDOORS IN SAN JUAN COUNTY AND WITHIN THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Silverton, CO: Due to community cooperation with the Public Health Order the transmission rate has dropped to low in San Juan County but remains high in surrounding areas. SJCPH urges permanent residents, seasonal residents and visitors to take measures to protect themselves from this novel virus. It is best practice to wear a face covering when in indoor public spaces locally and when traveling to other communities. This step will dramatically reduce your risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19.

SJCPH advises all residents and visitors that the risk of contracting COVID-19 when participating in indoor activities with mixed households who are unvaccinated or have mixed or unknown vaccination status against COVID-19 remains high.

- **In September, three cases of COVID-19 were identified in the SJC community in the past 3 weeks. San Juan County had 47 confirmed cases May 2019-July 2021. In August alone, over 40 new COVID cases were identified, putting SJC in Level Red which resulted in a Mask Mandate for 30 days. The Mask Mandate was allowed to expire on Sept 10th by the Board of Health.**
- **A Public Health Advisory has been issued today, promoting continued use of face masks and other community mitigation strategies to continue to control the spread of COVID-19.**
- **Booster doses are on hold until further notice from the FDA and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. However, a 3rd dose for those who are immunocompromised is available, please call 387-0242.**
- **Pfizer, Moderna and J&J are available if you need a COVID vaccine, it's not too late!**
- **COVID-19 testing is available Monday through Friday 10-12pm, call for an appointment.**

“The best way to protect yourself, your community, your family, friends and neighbors is to get vaccinated. The time is now if we want to move out of this Pandemic.” says Becky Joyce, Director.

A Public Health Advisory vs a Public Health Order

A Public Health Advisory means all of the pieces are in place for COVID-19 to spread. A Public Health Order means that the disease is spreading and you should take action and follow the disease control and mitigation measures described in the Public Health Order to protect yourself and our community.

The risk of COVID-19 varies depending on where you travel so it is very important to pay attention to the COVID-19 situation just as you pay attention to the weather.

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY: REDUCING COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

September 14, 2021

Severe and highly transmissible variants of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) remain a regional concern for San Juan County, Colorado. San Juan County Public Health (SJCPH) urges permanent residents, seasonal residents and visitors to take measures to protect themselves from this novel virus.

SJCPH advises all residents and visitors that the risk of contracting COVID-19 when participating in indoor activities with mixed households who are unvaccinated or have mixed or unknown vaccination status against COVID-19 remains high.

I. INTRODUCTION

As of September 14, 2021, the two-week case incidence rate of COVID-19 in San Juan County has dropped to fewer than 8 cases. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) classifies the level of community transmission in San Juan County, Colorado as Low. The best protection against COVID-19 is to continue to apply community mitigation strategies to reduce exposure.

These strategies include vaccination, wearing a face covering, physical distancing, holding social gatherings and conducting business outdoors instead of indoors, maximizing indoor ventilation, symptom screening, and hand hygiene.

Safe and highly effective vaccines against COVID-19 are now widely available in San Juan County for those 12 years of age and older. SJCPH urges eligible unvaccinated individuals to get vaccinated as soon as possible and urges partially vaccinated people to complete their vaccination series to maximize their level of protection.

For the purposes of this Advisory, “Public Indoor Space” means any enclosed indoor area that is publicly or privately owned, managed, or operated to which individuals have access by right or by invitation, expressed or implied, and that is accessible to the public, serves as a place of employment, or is an entity providing services. Public Indoor Space does not mean a person’s residence, including a room in a motel or hotel or a residential room for students at an educational facility

II. VACCINATION

SJCPH urges all eligible persons to get vaccinated against the COVID-19 disease. Vaccination is the best defense against the disease.

III. FACE COVERING

SJCPH urges all individuals in San Juan County to wear a face covering while in a Public Indoor Space, unless the individual is two years of age or younger, or cannot medically tolerate a face covering, except in the situations below:

- Individuals who are hearing impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication;
- Individuals who are seated at a food service establishment;
- Individuals who are exercising alone or with others from the individual’s household and a face covering would interfere with the activity;
- Individuals who are receiving a personal service where the temporary removal of the face covering is necessary to perform the service;
- Individuals who enter a business or receive services and are asked to temporarily remove a face

covering for identification purposes;

- Individuals who are actively engaged in a public safety role such as law enforcement, firefighters, or emergency medical personnel;
- Individuals who are officiating at a religious service; or
- Individuals who are giving a speech for broadcast or an audience.

SJCPH advises that owners, operators, or managers of a public indoor space should deny service or entry to individuals unless the individual is wearing a face covering as recommended above, in order to protect workers, customers, and the community.

IV. PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SJCPH further advises that all owners, operators or managers of public indoor spaces maintain physical distancing requirements (where all persons can maintain at least a six-foot distance from other individuals who are not a member of their household or party) within their Public Indoor Space to the extent possible. Owners, operators and managers of Public Indoor Spaces should limit capacity such that six feet of distance is maintained between households or parties, excluding staff.

In addition, SJCPH recommends that employers and business and event operators implement the following transmission control measures in Public Indoor Spaces:

- Monitoring symptoms in employees at the worksite or through employee self-assessment at home prior to coming to the worksite. If an employee reports any symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19, take all of the following steps:
 - Send employee home immediately,
 - Exclude employees until they are no longer contagious per public health guidance.
 - If five or more employees have symptoms of COVID-19, consult outbreak guidance from CDPHE available at [this link](#), contact SJCPH, and cooperate with outbreak investigators.
- Provide work accommodations for individuals at risk of severe illness from COVID-19, such as telecommuting, until such individuals are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Encourage and enable remote work whenever possible.
- Schedule and stagger shifts and breaks, whenever possible, to reduce employee density at the worksite and in common areas.
- Improve ventilation of indoor spaces to the extent possible, according to CDC guidance available at [this link](#).
- Provide hand sanitizer and/or sinks with soap and hot water for customers and employees.
- Post signage for employees and customers on good hand hygiene and the requirement to wear Face Coverings. Example signage can be provided from SJCPH.

V. ESTABLISHMENTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

SJCPH advises residents and visitors to only patronize indoor establishments and special events that adhere to the face covering and physical distancing recommendations in this Public Health Advisory; these places pose a greater risk to your health than places that require face coverings and limit capacity as advised in sections II and III above.

To promote compliance with this Public Health Advisory, SJCPH makes signage available that can be displayed at establishments and events that comply with face covering, physical distancing and ventilation recommendations. SJCPH advises owners, operators and managers of public indoor spaces and events to demonstrate their commitment to community safety by complying with this advisory and publicly displaying this signage. The signage is attached to this document.

VI. SCHOOL DISTRICT



Press Release: 9/14/21

SJCPH advises the Silverton School District to require face coverings for all persons in indoor school settings, in alignment with CDC guidance found at [this link](#) with the exceptions listed in section III. The Silverton School District should adopt the following mitigation measures: frequent testing, improve ventilation of indoor spaces, conduct operations outdoors, emphasize hand hygiene, and physically space and cohort students when indoors to the highest extent possible.

VII. QUARANTINE

SJCPH advises the public that unvaccinated or partially vaccinated individuals meeting the CDC's definition of a close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case are still subject to quarantine requirements, regardless of whether that contact takes place inside or outside of a school setting, in accordance with CDC exposure definitions and quarantine recommendations found at [this link](#).

SJCPH will continue to evaluate the prevalence and risks of COVID-19 in San Juan County and adjust this Advisory and, if necessary, issue Public Health Orders accordingly.

Issued at 5:00 P.M. on September 14, 2021