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With Case Rate and Testing Positivity Reaching Twice State Average, Board of Supervisors Strongly Urges Masking in Indoor Settings

Current State Public Health Order Requires Unvaccinated Individuals Wear Face Coverings in “Indoor Public Settings and Businesses” – Board Resolution is “Not a New mandate,” but “An Encouraging Measure”

Lake County, CA (July 21, 2021) – Monday, the County of Lake’s Health Services Department announced our daily Case Rate (newly documented cases of COVID-19, confirmed by Polymerase Chain Reaction, PCR, testing) had reached 10.4 per 100,000. Our 7-day testing positivity average was 6.2%. While these numbers were already concerning, unfortunately, both metrics continued to rapidly rise. By Tuesday’s Board of Supervisors Meeting, Lake County’s Case Rate had reached 17 per 100,000, the highest in the State of California, 1.7 times the state average. Testing positivity had climbed to 11.8%, the highest in California and more than double the state average.

Our present situation, relative to other jurisdictions, is concerning. Rapid worsening has occurred in recent days. On Tuesday, District 5 Supervisor, Jessica Pyska, carried forth a Resolution encouraging Lake County residents (vaccinated and unvaccinated, alike) to wear masks in indoor public settings.

Under the current State Public Health Order, effective June 15, and the California Department of Public Health’s, “Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings” (updated June 24), masks *are still required* for individuals that are not fully vaccinated in essentially all indoor public settings and businesses. Additionally, all individuals must wear masks in certain high-risk settings, such as public transit, K-12 schools, childcare and other youth settings, healthcare settings (including long-term care), and other congregate environments, such as correctional facilities, homeless and emergency shelters and formal cooling centers:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Order-of-the-State-Public-Health-Officer-Beyond-Blueprint.aspx>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx>

“Tuesday’s Resolution is *not* a new mandate,” emphasizes Pyska. “We are not taking this conversation any further. This *is* a time when we need to have our guard up. This is an encouraging measure; nothing more, nothing less.”

“Lake County residents have proven again and again during times of wildfire disasters,” continues Pyska, “we have the capacity to draw together and overcome very severe and dire circumstances.”

“Wearing a mask is a simple step we can all take to reduce the likelihood friends, family and neighbors, and particularly those that are unvaccinated, may face severe illness, or even death,” notes Pyska. “The

pandemic is not over. We lost a resident to COVID-19 this week, and we collectively mourn that loss. Let's all rise together, be Lake County Strong once again, and fight back against COVID-19."

The Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 in support of Tuesday's Resolution.

"Over the course of the pandemic, we have learned a lot about how to protect ourselves," states Bruno Sabatier, Chair of the Lake County Board of Supervisors. "Masking helps. Vaccination helps. Social distancing and hand washing help. Let's respect our neighbors, and do what we can to protect our communities."

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