

# COVID-19 HEALTH ORDER UPDATE

**Dr. Susan Philip**

Health Officer, City and County of San Francisco  
Director, Population Health Division  
San Francisco Department of Public Health

Friday, May 17, 2024

# Health Order 2023-01

- Health Order 2023-01, which required personnel working in designated healthcare facilities to wear a well-fitted mask, expired on April 30, at 11:59 p.m., following the end of the winter respiratory virus period
- Healthcare facilities will address respiratory viruses through their own infection control policies and practices
- San Francisco remains in a strong position to fight COVID- 19 due to our high vaccination rates, as well as the availability of effective treatments like Paxlovid and new preventive medicines like Pemgarda

# Masking in Healthcare Settings

- Healthcare facility operators can decide to implement their own requirements regarding masking for patients and staff
  - For instance, they may choose to continue the requirements of the prior order or may require masks in certain settings or circumstances (such as during an outbreak)
- It is not always apparent that a patient may be at higher risk
  - Therefore, to encourage essential healthcare visits, SFDPH recommends that health systems and facilities implement policies that staff will mask on patient request, if their policy does not already require staff masking

# Masking Requirements and Recommendations

- SFPDH San Francisco Health Network facilities continue to require that staff wear a mask when working with patients
- Everyone should consider wearing a well-fitting, high-quality mask, such as a KF94, KN95, or N95, in crowded or poorly ventilated indoor settings, especially if they are at higher risk for severe disease or when the prevalence of respiratory diseases such as COVID-19 or influenza is high or increasing

# Vaccine Recommendations

- Staying up to date on vaccination is the best way to protect against severe COVID-19
- Everyone aged 6 months and older should get the most recent updated COVID-19 vaccine (currently the 2023-24 vaccine) if they have not already
- Those 65 years or older should also receive one additional dose of the updated vaccine if it's been more than 4 months since their last dose
- Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find a vaccine near you

# COVID-19 Treatment and Prevention

- Effective treatments for COVID-19, including Paxlovid, continue to be available through healthcare providers and pharmacies
- For moderately to severely immunocompromised adults and adolescents at least 12 years of age, a new monoclonal antibody, pemivibart (Pemgarda), was authorized by the FDA on March 22, 2024, for the prevention of COVID-19 and can be administered every 3 months if needed

# Keeping the Community Informed

- We have maintained our COVID-19 vaccination, test positivity, and deaths dashboards: [www.sf.gov/covid](http://www.sf.gov/covid)
- Hospitalization data has been paused since the beginning of May due to the end of the federal requirement on April 30 for hospitals to report these data via the National Healthcare Safety Network
- However, because we have kept in place a health order by SFDPH, we continue to receive COVID-19 admissions data from SF hospitals via a separate local data reporting system
- For more information about the health orders, including frequently asked questions, please visit: [www.sf.gov/healthrules](http://www.sf.gov/healthrules)

THANK YOU!