

Dear Santa Barbara County Education Office employees,

As many of you have now heard, Governor Newsom announced changes to masking and other COVID-19 related protocols that begin on March 1 and March 12, 2022.

Please review key highlights from the California Department of Public Health and Cal-OSHA and how they impact staff at SBCEO.

NEW MASKING GUIDANCE

For SBCEO employees:

- For employees in indoor settings where **children are not present** (e.g. office settings), regardless of vaccination status: Effective March 1, 2022, masks are not required - but strongly recommended.
- For employees in indoor school settings where **children are present**, regardless of vaccination status: Effective March 12, 2022, masks are not required - but strongly recommended.

For children and youth:

- Effective March 12, 2022, masks are not required - but are strongly recommended - indoors in schools and childcare facilities, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Until** March 12, 2022, masks are required indoors, with limited exceptions for athletes during physical exertion, and while eating or drinking.

SBCEO TESTING

- Current testing protocols remain in place for those with COVID-19 symptoms, who have been identified as a close contact, and/or have had a recent positive test.
- Current weekly testing protocols of unvaccinated employees continues as a requirement for Cal/OSHA.
- Testing continues to be available for all employees at SBCEO testing locations.
- SBCEO received at-home test kits from the state for our employees to use as needed. SBCEO staff will be distributing one I-Health test kit, which includes two tests, to all SBCEO employees in the coming days.

TRANSPORTATION

- Effective March 12, 2022, masks are not required - but strongly recommended - on vans and buses transporting children, operated by public schools and private schools, as they are considered indoor spaces.

ROOM CAPACITY

SBCEO meeting rooms will remove the temporary capacity limits applied during the most recent COVID-19 surge.

A reminder that if you are experiencing COVID symptoms, please stay home. Please continue to communicate with your supervisor should you have any questions.

It is our understanding that the California Department of Public Health will be creating further guidance prior to March 12, 2022. We will continue to provide you updates as we know more.

We thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to interpret new guidance, and keep you updated with the latest information. We look forward to continued positive news as we move forward in the next stages of the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan Salcido
Superintendent

Additional Resources:

[Governor Newsom's Announcement on Masking 2/28/2022](#)

[State Executive Order: Alignment of Cal/OSHA guidance](#)