NYS to Adopt New CDC Guidance on Mask Use and Social Distancing for Fully Vaccinated Individuals

Plattsburgh, May 18, 2021. Yesterday, Governor Cuomo announced that beginning May 19, New York State will adopt the CDC’s "Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People" for most business and public settings. Consistent with the CDC guidance, Pre-K to 12 schools, public transit, homeless shelters, correctional facilities, nursing homes, and healthcare settings will continue to follow the State’s existing COVID-19 health guidelines until more New Yorkers are fully vaccinated.

“Taking off the masks is a well-deserved relief for the almost 50% of Clinton County residents who are fully vaccinated,” stated John Kanoza, Director of Public Health in Clinton County. “The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) continues to recommend wearing masks in indoors settings or crowded outdoor settings where the vaccination status of individuals is unknown, especially until more detailed guidance is provided by the state.”

Unvaccinated individuals will still be required to wear masks in public settings and maintain 6-feet physical distance, specifically when in close proximity to people, both indoors and outdoors. Businesses may also continue to require masks for all patrons if they choose to do so or they do not have the capacity to verify vaccination status of their customers. All residents should continue to be prepared to wear a mask when in public.

“As we await more detailed guidance from NYS, we urge residents to be patient with our local businesses,” advised Mr. Kanoza. “Continue to wear your mask out of courtesy until you have established your vaccination status with the business and what their policies are.”

Though it is unclear at this time how vaccination status will be verified, CCHD recommends residents download New York State’s Excelsior Pass. The Excelsior pass will be the easiest and most accurate way to verify your vaccination status. Visit https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/excelsior-pass to learn more.

“As Clinton County’s COVID-19 vaccination rate has increased, we have seen our active cases decrease – which is great news, added Mr. Kanoza. “If our residents continue to use common sense, avoid crowds, wash their hands frequently, and continue to wear a mask when the vaccination status of the people around them is unknown, our hope is that we can continue on to the goal of eliminating COVID-19 as a threat in our community.”

Residents who have not yet been vaccinated should visit www.clintonhealth.org/covid19vaccine or www.vaccinefinder.gov/search to learn more about vaccine locations and appointments in our area.
About the Clinton County Health Department:

The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at www.clintonhealth.org or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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