



Shawnee County Health Department

Shawnee County Health Department
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2/24/2022

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MEDIA RELEASE

Updated COVID-19 Recommendations from Local Health Officer

Topeka, Kan. – With significant improvements in all Shawnee County COVID-19 metrics over the last four weeks Shawnee County Health Officer, Dr. Erin Locke, has issued updated recommendations to continue the mitigation of COVID-19 in the Shawnee County community. Several previously recommended mitigation strategies have been removed due to the improved community situation, including the following:

- Recommendations to prepare for staffing and supply chain shortages
- Recommendation to Board of Health to institute a mask mandate
- Recommendation to reschedule or move events and meetings to virtual settings
- Recommendation to limit in-person attendance to 50%
- Recommendation to avoid crowds
- Recommendation to work from home

These updated recommendations continue to be in accordance with recommendations from both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Kansas. Recommendations continue to focus on the primary mitigation measures that have been shown to have the greatest impact on reducing the spread of COVID-19. Employers, organizations and individuals should continue the practice of conducting risk assessments to gauge necessary mitigation strategies for their particular environment and situations.

Vaccination continues to be one of our best tools at combating COVID-19, as such, the SCHD continues to strongly encourage residents to protect themselves by getting a COVID-19 vaccine and subsequent booster dose once they are eligible. At this time, individuals aged 5 and older are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination and individuals aged 12 and older are eligible for a booster dose. Currently, 60% of the population in Shawnee County has completed a primary vaccine series and 66% has received at least one vaccine dose. Many opportunities to receive a COVID-19 vaccine continue to exist in our community and can be found easily through the [CDC's Vaccine tool](#).

Testing continues to be available and free to Shawnee County residents. To find a location near you, visit www.knowbeforeyougoks.com, find locations on the SCHD testing webpage [here](#), or contact your healthcare provider.



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Questions regarding the Health Officer Recommendations can be sent to HAAdmin@sncos.org or by calling **785.251.4949**. Questions regarding COVID-19 vaccine can be sent to CovidVaccine@sncos.org.

Attachment:

COVID-19 Recommendations from the Local Health Officer (2/24/2022)

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Shawnee County Health Department is committed to working in partnership with our community to promote and protect the optimal health of all people by bridging gaps to eliminate health inequities, respecting the diversity of our community, through adaptive and innovative processes.

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER

Local health officer recommendations issued on this 24th day of February 2022 to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in Shawnee County, Kansas.

On the 31st day of January 2020, the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services declared a national public health emergency from Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). In recognition of the continued consequences of the pandemic, this national public health emergency remains in effect.

On the 19th day of August 2021, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners of Shawnee County, Kansas declared a state of local disaster emergency pursuant to K.S.A. 48-932, the same has been extended to March 31, 2022 (Resolution No. 2021-118).

COVID-19 has resulted in 47,614 reported positive cases and 560 deaths of Shawnee County residents. COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that continues to mutate into variants, including Omicron, which spread easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death.

The highly transmissible Omicron variant led to a rapid surge of new cases, hospitalizations and deaths in January 2022. Fortunately, as the local situation improves, certain mitigation measures can now be safely lifted. Following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the local health officer continues to recommend the following measures.

GENERAL PUBLIC

WHEN YOU ARE FEELING SICK

- Review if your symptoms are consistent with COVID-19 (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>).
- Stay home so you don't spread illness to others.
- Get tested as soon as possible.
- If your test is positive:
 - Do not return to work, school or other activities until isolation is complete (see below).
 - Notify your close contacts that they have been exposed.
 - Contact your healthcare provider if you are high risk for severe disease (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>).

TEST FREQUENTLY

- Monitor for symptoms and test immediately if symptoms develop.
- If you have been exposed, test 5 days after exposure, regardless of symptoms.
- Find a test on [knowbeforeyougo.com](https://www.knowbeforeyougo.com)

WEAR YOUR MASK

- When indoors in public spaces
- When outdoor settings are crowded and distancing is difficult to maintain
- When using public transportation, taxis or ride-sharing services
- Upgrade your mask to a well-fitting medical procedure mask or KN95.
- Certain individuals should not wear a mask. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/pre-vent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html> for more information.

GET YOUR VACCINE

- All eligible individuals who are not yet vaccinated should receive a COVID-19 vaccine.
- All individuals should receive a vaccine booster if:
 - 5 months or longer since completion of a Pfizer or Moderna primary series
 - 2 months or longer since completion of the Janssen (J&J) primary series
- Find your vaccine on [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)

ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

- Remember 5 + 5 = 10
- 5 days at home + 5 days wearing a well-fitting mask
- If unable to wear a mask, stay home for 10 days
- More detailed information available at <https://www.snco.us/hd/>

HYGIENE

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Clean high-touch surfaces regularly.

BUSINESSES

STRENGTHEN INFECTION CONTROL

- Send employees home when sick.
- Utilize sick time policies.
- Follow isolation and quarantine timelines.
- Require patron-facing employees to wear masks.

- Certain individuals should not be required to wear a mask. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html> for more information.
- Optimize physical distancing for employees and patrons.
- Continue cleaning and disinfection, particularly “high-touch” surfaces.
- Review further guidance at <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus>

OPTIMIZE VENTILATION

- Ensure the HVAC system is maintained, regularly change filters and circulate air with fans.

MASS GATHERINGS AND OTHER EVENTS

LIMIT CROWD SIZE

- Ensure physical distancing of at least 6 feet between households

OPTIMIZE VENTILATION

- Ensure the HVAC system is maintained, regularly change filters and circulate air with fans.
- Hold outdoors, weather permitting.

REQUIRE MASKS

- In all indoor spaces
- When outdoor settings are crowded and distancing is difficult to maintain
- Certain individuals should not be required to wear a mask. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html> for more information.



Erin Locke, MD, MPH
Shawnee County Health Officer