



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council **DATE:** January 10, 2022
FROM: Matthew Bronson, City Manager
PREPARED BY: Matthew Bronson, City Manager
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Response Update

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update on the countywide and City response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BACKGROUND

The City continues its work in addressing the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic following the direction of the County Public Health Department in coordination with other local agencies. The following is an update on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the county as well as the City's continued response since the last regular Council meeting on December 13.

As of January 5, San Luis Obispo County has had a total of 34,071 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 30 current hospitalizations including eight in the ICU and 2,059 active cases at home and 31,635 individuals recovered (approximately 93%). This is an 11% increase in total cases over the past month though over a 600% increase in active cases with an increase of 1,371 active cases over the past week. Hospitalizations have also increased nearly 300% over the past month and the 14-day average number of new daily cases is now 191 which is nearly the same level as the highest rate seen in January 2021.

In South County, there has been a total of 8,794 confirmed cases (approximately 25% of countywide cases) with 2,834 in Arroyo Grande, 2,694 in Nipomo, 1,522 in Grover Beach, 1,049 in Oceano, and 688 in Pismo Beach. Current case numbers in Grover Beach per 1,000 residents (117) continue to be lower than Arroyo Grande (157), Nipomo (168), and Oceano (150) though higher than Pismo Beach (86). There has been approximately a 11% increase in cases in Grover Beach over the past month which is similar to countywide trends in case numbers.

Conditions in the county and throughout the state have changed dramatically in recent weeks given the spread of the highly transmissible omicron variant. There has been a significant increase in the number of new cases along with a marked increase in hospitalizations with the omicron variant. Fortunately, data from both the U.S. and other countries has indicated that while there may be a large number of new cases, the severity of cases is lower than with the delta variant or original virus particularly for vaccinated individuals. This trend is also being seen locally as hospital capacity is still sufficient even with the recent rise in hospitalizations. The County has been under a local mask order for indoor public spaces since September 1 ([9-1-2021-Health-Order-6-Mask-Mandate.pdf \(ca.gov\)](#)) which covers all businesses, government offices, churches, and other indoor facilities with limited exemptions such as working alone in an office or room, actively eating or drinking, or specific medical reasons. The State also issued a mask order for indoor public spaces for all counties that did not have a local order with the State order recently extended to February 15.

Vaccines are now available for everyone ages 5 and up with boosters also available for those who received their vaccination six months ago. Approximately 65% of residents in San Luis Obispo County ages 5 and up have been fully vaccinated with 72% of residents at least partially vaccinated and 28% unvaccinated. Approximately 61% of residents ages 5 and up in Grover Beach are fully vaccinated for reference. The rate of vaccination in the county is increasing slowly towards the desired goal of 70%-80% of residents fully vaccinated. The City continues to work with the County on outreach and mobile clinics in addition to the Public Health clinic at 286 South 16th Street. One of the County's three testing sites is also located in Grover Beach at 1336 Ramona Avenue.

City Hall counter hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday to provide in-person public access during normal business hours in addition to access electronically through email or on the City's website or over the phone. The counter is closed on Fridays to allow additional time for staff to process applications, issue permits, and carry out other administrative tasks. Employees are working primarily in the office however remote work is being carried out by some employees particularly with caregiving needs or who work in more open workspaces. Council meetings remain virtual for now with a call-in function available for the public to make comments. Staff is continuing to plan for a return to in-person meetings in early 2022 once case numbers and other metrics improve.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

ALTERNATIVES

The Council has the following alternatives to consider:

1. Receive an update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic; or
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.