



Dear CSUSM community,

With recent updates to public health mandates and shifting COVID-19 conditions, we write to share an update, effective immediately, regarding campus masking guidelines.

Local data indicates that COVID-19 case rates are continuing to trend downward in our region. San Diego, Riverside and Orange counties are now considered areas of “low” transmission. Based on these local metrics and in consideration of the [California Department of Public Health’s \(CDPH\) recent announcement about indoor masking](#), the following adjustments are effective immediately at CSUSM and CSUSM at Temecula, starting today, Monday, March 14:

- **Masking will continue to be required in indoor instructional spaces** (classrooms, teaching laboratories and the Kellogg Library)
- Masking will also continue to be **required** in the Student Health and Counseling Services Building in alignment with CDPH’s requirements for healthcare settings
- Masking will be *encouraged* in all other indoor spaces (such as offices, conference rooms and indoor event spaces) and *strongly recommended* when participating in indoor gatherings and events lasting at least one hour, with 10 or more individuals. Masks are not required for gatherings and events held outdoors.

While masking will no longer be required in non-instructional indoor spaces, we expect that many members of our community will choose to continue masking, which is fully supported and encouraged. Public health leaders have emphasized the increased protection that face coverings provide as well as the value of masking, particularly for those who are immunocompromised or otherwise medically vulnerable.

As a reminder, free KN95 masks are available for any campus community member who wants one. These provide a high level of protection for those concerned about their personal risk or the risk to those around them. Employees may also request an N95 respirator, which requires training. Please visit the [Covered Cougar Distribution Center \(CCDC\) website](#) for more information on obtaining a KN95 mask or N95 respirator.

In addition, [on-campus testing remains free and available to all students, faculty and staff](#). Weekly mandatory testing remains in place for those who are vaccinated but have not yet received their booster vaccine, and for those who are unvaccinated with an approved exemption.

We will continue to monitor case rates following CSUSM’s spring break (March 21-26) and provide another update in early April should health and safety conditions evolve. Please note that, in the future, there may be times when masking indoors is required of everyone again, depending on factors like regional positivity rates and potential stresses on our local hospitals and related infrastructure.

Today’s change to our masking protocols is a significant milestone during the COVID-19 pandemic. While this announcement will be welcome news for some, we also recognize that it may trigger anxieties for others. Thank you for extending kindness and care to one another as we begin another transition.

We are working to update the CSUSM as One website FAQs and campus signage as quickly as possible. If you have questions, please email CSUSMasOne@csusm.edu.

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