COVID-19 Update: Mask Required on Monday – Post-Holiday Mitigation Plan ...from CAPT Philip E. Old, Chief of Staff

December 9, 2021

Not so good news. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 Community Transmission Level for Monterey Peninsula has been at the ‘Substantial’ level for a sufficient period of time with a lack of downward trend to indicate that the situation is not transitory and a reversion back to the ‘Moderate’ level is unlikely in the days ahead. Per the DepSecDef Memorandum dated July, 28, 2021, “[i]n areas of substantial or high community transmission, DoD requires all Service members, Federal employees, onsite contractor employees, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask in an indoor setting in installations and other facilities owned, leased or otherwise controlled by DoD.” Accordingly, mask wearing will be required indoors starting on Monday.

Effective Monday 13 December 2021: All Personnel (Service members, Federal employees, onsite contractor employees, and visitors) regardless of vaccination status are required to wear a mask in an indoor setting onboard Naval Support Activity Monterey (NSAM) as well as the Presidio of Monterey (POM).

Obviously, the future level of COVID-19 community transmission is unknowable. That being said, with the likelihood of an increase in COVID-19 case rates following holiday travel as well as the increase in transmission of the Omicron variant, prudence dictates the proactive implementation of additional COVID-19 mitigation measures following the holidays and for the beginning of winter academic quarter. Accordingly, regardless of any reversion to a lower level of COVID-19 community transmission or relaxation of the current masking requirement in the interim, the following mitigation measures will be implemented by NPS (only):

New-student orientation (28 Dec): All persons attending will wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth, except for an individual that requires a reasonable accommodation for their disability.

For the period of 03 – 16 January 2022:

a. All personnel (civilian, military) present in indoor classrooms while classes are in session shall be fully vaccinated.

b. Use of a mask that covers the nose and mouth shall be required for all personnel whenever indoors in any Naval Postgraduate School building or space with the exceptions of when alone in an enclosed office space, for brief periods of time when eating and drinking, and when necessary to reasonably accommodate an individual with a disability.

c. With the exception of classroom or laboratory instruction, all meetings on campus of five or more persons shall be conducted by virtual means (Teams, Zoom, etc.). Additional exceptions require approval by the Chief of Staff.

After 16 January 2022: Any faculty, student, or staff member in a classroom or laboratory may require that all personnel in the specific classroom or laboratory remain masked regardless of vaccination status during the period of instruction.
As we have learned since March, 2020, the COVID-19 operating environment is a dynamic one that requires flexibility, patience and adherence to guidance. To date, our mitigations and procedures have been successful with NPS accomplishing its mission with zero cases of COVID-19 transmission occurring on campus. As you enjoy the holiday break with family and friends, please remember to wash your hands frequently, wear a mask where required, and avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces if possible. And if you have symptoms of shortness of breath, fever/chills, headache, sore throat, loss of taste etc., STAY HOME and get tested (for both COVID and Influenza).

I am COVID 19 Positive or a Close Contact Aug 21.pdf

NPS COVID 19 Positive Case Procedures_05Aug21.pdf

Let's keep the streak alive!

CAPT Philip E. Old
Chief of Staff, Naval Postgraduate School