



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 10, 2021

21-178

Omicron variant spreads Close contacts urged to get tested

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health's State Laboratories Division (SLD) has detected 12 cases of the SARS-CoV-2 variant B.1.1.529, also known as the Omicron variant, on O'ahu.

"Most of the infected individuals have no known connection with one another. This indicates the Omicron variant is spreading deeper into our communities," said State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Kemble.

"People who have tested positive should isolate themselves. Close contacts and people with symptoms should get tested, regardless of vaccination status," Kemble added.

The Department of Health (DOH) is investigating four COVID-19 cases among patrons of the Scarlet Honolulu nightclub on Pauahi Street. Samples from two of these individuals exhibit a molecular clue indicating the possible presence of the Omicron variant.

All patrons who visited Scarlet Honolulu since December 3 are advised to get tested.

Scarlet Honolulu has been proactive by requiring all its patrons to be vaccinated. The nightclub is partnering with Project Vision Hawai'i to host a COVID-19 booster clinic Saturday, December 11 between 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

DOH thanks management at Scarlet Honolulu for cooperating with DOH case investigations.

The Omicron variant is exhibiting traits indicating it is even more transmissible than the Delta variant.

COVID-19 vaccines and boosters appear to slow the spread of the Omicron variant and are effective in preventing severe illness. People are advised to wear face masks and avoid large crowds.

Anyone contacted by a case investigator from DOH is asked to please cooperate in an effort to slow the transmission of COVID-19. Anyone with symptoms is asked to get tested and avoid other people.

Information on free testing and vaccines is available at <https://hawaiicovid19.com/>.

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