



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Caution urged as new surge hits Hawai'i

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) is urging everyone to please exercise caution and celebrate the holidays safely as COVID-19 is surging.

The 797 new COVID-19 cases reported today represent the highest case count in more than three months.

The 7-day new case average increased from 101 ten days ago to 297 today. The positivity rate jumped from 1.4% ten days ago to 4.2% today.

"These numbers reflect a disturbing trend. The Delta variant, the Omicron variant, large gatherings, increased travel and holiday get-togethers appear to be fueling the surge," said Health Director Dr. Elizabeth Char, FACEP.

To date, 31 confirmed cases involving the Omicron variant have been identified in Hawai'i. While all 31 cases of Omicron detected thus far are on O'ahu, it is reasonable to believe Omicron has also reached the neighbor islands.

"We are continuing the research to understand what we're dealing with, and our best researchers and medical experts are working on this. The mayors and I are discussing what type of protocols might be required going forward. The bottom line is this: Your life matters. Our mission is to stop the spread. It will take all of us to do that," said Governor David Ige.

"The presence of the Omicron variant makes getting vaccinated just as important today as ever. Booster shots are increasingly important. If you are eligible for a booster, please get boosted now. Please wear your mask when indoors and avoid large crowds. These are proven ways to stay safe," Char said.

People at least 18 years old who completed their initial series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at least six months ago should a booster now.

People ages 16 and 17 who completed their initial series of Pfizer vaccine at least six months ago can get a booster.

Those who received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at least two months ago should get a booster now.

Information on where vaccines are available can be found at <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/vaccine>.

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