



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 27, 2022

CNMI moves to COVID-19 Community Level Medium

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) announce that the CNMI is in COVID-19 Community Level Medium.

Overview

The safety and health of the people of the CNMI remain the top priorities of the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the CHCC.

With the CNMI transitioning from CDC Community Level High to Medium, there is a change in indoor masking recommendations. It is no longer recommended for all people to wear a mask indoors in public. In Community Level Medium, people who are considered immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness should talk to their healthcare provider about whether they need to wear a mask and take other precautions. Also, people who live with or have social contact with immunocompromised individuals should wear a mask when indoors with them.

The CHCC will continue to require visitors and clinic patients to wear masks in patient-serving areas.

Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, as they remain the best protection against severe illness.

Effective March 26, 2022, all travelers entering the CNMI by air or sea will no longer be tested on arrival or on their 5th-day after arrival.

All travelers are required to complete a mandatory health declaration form. Travelers are encouraged to fill out their health declaration form prior to arrival at www.staysafecnmi.com.

Ensuring access to vaccines, treatments, and testing remains in the CNMI's plan with living COVID-19 safe.

Community Level Medium

With the new U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) metric, the CNMI is currently in Community Level **Medium**.

A combination of three factors determines the COVID-19 Community Level:

1. New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days
2. The percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients
3. Total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days

The COVID-19 Community Level is determined by the higher of the new admissions and inpatient beds metrics, based on the current level of new cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days.

To date, cases are continuously detected via Community-Based Testing or CHCC testing, as well as at-home testing. As of March 24, 2022, a total of 11,022 cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the CNMI, with 1 in 5 CNMI citizens estimated to have contracted the disease.

Due to the high vaccination rate against COVID-19 in the CNMI and availability of treatments such as monoclonal antibodies, rates of severe COVID-19 have been low. A total of 223 people have been hospitalized for COVID-19 (2.1% of cases) and 33 people have died due to COVID-19 for an overall case fatality rate of 0.3%, lower than almost every other U.S. jurisdiction and most countries.

Recommendations for individual persons and households based on COVID-19 Community Levels:

I. HIGH

- a. Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status (including in K-12 schools and other indoor community settings)
- b. If you are immunocompromised or have a high risk for severe disease:
 - i. Wear a mask or respirator that provides you with greater protection
 - ii. Consider avoiding non-essential indoor activities in public where you could be exposed
 - iii. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing)
 - iv. Have a plan for rapid testing if needed (e.g., having home tests or know access to testing)
 - v. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you are a candidate for treatments like oral antivirals, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and monoclonal antibodies
- c. If you have household or social contact with someone at high risk for severe disease:
 - i. Consider self-testing to detect infection before contact
 - ii. Consider wearing a mask when indoors with them
- d. Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters
- e. Maintain improved ventilation throughout indoor spaces whenever possible
- f. Follow CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine, including getting tested if you are exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19.

II. MEDIUM (Current level as of March 26, 2022)

- a. Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk
- b. If you are immunocompromised or have a high risk for severe disease:
 - i. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions (e.g., testing)
 - ii. Have a plan for rapid testing if needed (e.g., having home tests or know access to testing)
 - iii. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you are a candidate for treatments like oral antivirals, PrEP, and monoclonal antibodies
- c. If you have household or social contact with someone at high risk for severe disease:

- i. Consider self-testing to detect infection before contact
- ii. Consider wearing a mask when indoors with them
- d. Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters
- e. Maintain improved ventilation throughout indoor spaces whenever possible
- f. Follow CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine, including getting tested if you are exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19.

III. LOW

- a. Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk
- b. If you are immunocompromised or have a high risk for severe disease
 - i. Have a plan for rapid testing, if needed (e.g., having home tests or access to testing)
 - ii. Talk to your healthcare provider about whether you are a candidate for treatments like oral antivirals, PrEP, and monoclonal antibodies
- c. Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters
- d. Maintain improved ventilation throughout indoor spaces whenever possible
- e. Follow CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine, including getting tested if you are exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Community Levels prevention strategies for the CNMI

Throughout all Community Levels, the CHCC and the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force will continue to ensure access and equity to COVID-19 vaccination, testing, treatment, community outreach, and support services.

Some community settings such as schools and some high-risk congregate settings such as correctional facilities may include additional layers of prevention (e.g., physical distancing) based on information and data about the characteristics of the setting. High-risk congregate settings may implement added prevention as needed in the event of a facility outbreak even if COVID-19 Community Levels in the surrounding community are low.

- **Mask-wearing**

While the CNMI did not have an official mask mandate, guidance from the CDC, the CHCC, and the Governor’s COVID-19 Task Force emphasized the importance of the 3 W’s including wearing a mask, washing your hands, and watching your distance to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

In general, residents do not need to wear masks when outdoors.

If you are sick and need to be around others or are caring for someone who has COVID-19, wear a mask.

If you live with or will gather with someone at risk for severe illness, wear a mask when indoors with them.

Businesses that employ individuals who are considered immunocompromised or at high risk of severe illnesses have the option to enforce masking in their establishments.

The CHCC will continue to require visitors and clinic patients to wear masks in patient-serving areas.

CHCC advises following the CDC Community Level recommendations on masking:

I. HIGH

- a. Wear a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status (including in K-12 schools and other indoor community settings)

II. MEDIUM

- a. Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk

III. LOW

- a. Wear a mask based on your personal preference, informed by your personal level of risk

• **Indoor/Outdoor Gatherings**

Attending a gathering or event increases your chance of being in close contact with people outside your household and being exposed to COVID-19.

Individuals who are considered immunocompromised or at high risk of severe illnesses should avoid crowded places where they cannot stay 6 feet away from others.

Businesses that serve the public should continue to assist in the CNMI's effort to stop the spread of COVID-19 by promoting healthy hygiene practices, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces frequently, ensuring proper ventilation throughout its spaces, and monitoring for sickness.

Businesses may implement a capacity limit for the safety of customers or staff who expressed they have underlying medical conditions. A guidebook for controlling the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace is available at www.staysafecnmi.com/livecovidsafe.

Consider using a self-test before joining gatherings with others who do not live in your household.

If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19:

- Get tested 5 days after your last close contact
- Monitor your symptoms
- Tell your close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 so they can quarantine, get tested, and wear a well-fitting mask

Stay home and do not attend gatherings if you test positive, even if you do not have symptoms.

Stay home and do not attend gatherings if you are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

If you want to spend time with people who do not live with you, outdoors is the safer choice. You are less likely to be exposed to COVID-19 during outdoor activities, even without the use of masks. Good ventilation can help prevent you from getting and spreading COVID-19.

Testing positive, Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center new hours

If you test positive on any COVID-19 test (Community-Based Testing, Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center (KC3) antigen testing, or at home), stay home for at least five (5) days and isolate from others.

After 5 days, do a self-check on how you are feeling. If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are improving, you can end isolation and should wear a well-fitted mask around others for an additional 5 days. If your symptoms are not improving or you still have a fever, continue to stay home until 24 hours after your fever stops without using fever-reducing medication and your symptoms have improved. After you feel completely better, keep wearing a mask around other people at home and in public through day 10.

Visit www.staysafecnmi.com/self-reporting within 6 days of your test result to obtain your quarantine completion certificate. You will need to upload a photo of your test result or test result documentation. Employers may use this as documentation of their employee's positive test result. If employers or employees require additional documentation, they must seek documentation from their healthcare provider.

The Koblerville COVID-19 Community Center will operate during the following hours:

- Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., 1 – 4 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

For PCR test results, the CNMI Test Team may be reached at (670) 785-9968, 785-9969, 785-9970, 785-9972, 785-9973, or 287-7571. For Travel Testing, call (670) 287-7571 or 785-9966.

Travel testing clearance will operate during the following hours at KC3:

- Monday – Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Vaccination, Multi-Purpose Center vaccination operations new hours

The CHCC and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force highly encourage unvaccinated individuals to get vaccinated or get a booster shot against COVID-19 to help prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

The Multi-Purpose Center COVID-19 vaccination operation will run during the follow hours:

- Tuesday – Saturday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Sunday and Monday: Closed

Data from small clinical trials show that vaccine effectiveness against COVID-19 infection is waning after the primary series, but protection remains high against severe disease and

hospitalization. Get a booster shot when you are eligible to help prevent more serious symptoms and giving COVID-19 to your friends or family.

Register for COVID-19 vaccination at www.vaccinatecnmi.com, or call (670) 682-7468.

Entry protocol update

Effective March 26, 2022, all travelers entering the CNMI by air or sea will no longer be tested on arrival or on their 5th-day after arrival.

All travelers are required to complete a mandatory health declaration form. Travelers are encouraged to fill out their health declaration form prior to arrival at www.staysafecnmi.com.

All travelers should continue to wear a well-fitted mask if they must be around others; and if they develop symptoms, they should get tested. Travelers who are not up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines should get tested five (5) days after arrival.

All travelers wishing to avail of 5th-day testing must register at a Community-Based Testing site at <https://covidtesting.chcc.health>.

All travelers and residents are reminded to [live COVID-19 safe](#): follow the 3 W's (wear your mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance); avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces; cover coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect high touch surfaces daily; be alert for symptoms daily; and get tested for COVID-19.

Contact information

To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, call the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Infoline at (670) 488-0211, available every day, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., or visit www.staysafecnmi.com.

Call CHCC contact tracers to get assessed for monoclonal antibody treatments at (670) 286-1710, 286-1711, 285- 1942, 287-1652, and 287-1683.

For mental health support and coping skills, call (670) 284-0843 or 284-0847, every day, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

The CNMI is reminded to watch out for misinformation and to follow updates directly from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the CHCC.

Updates from the COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC can be found on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts @governorcnmi and @cnmichcc, as well as through CNMI media partners.

COVID-19 Community Level in the CNMI

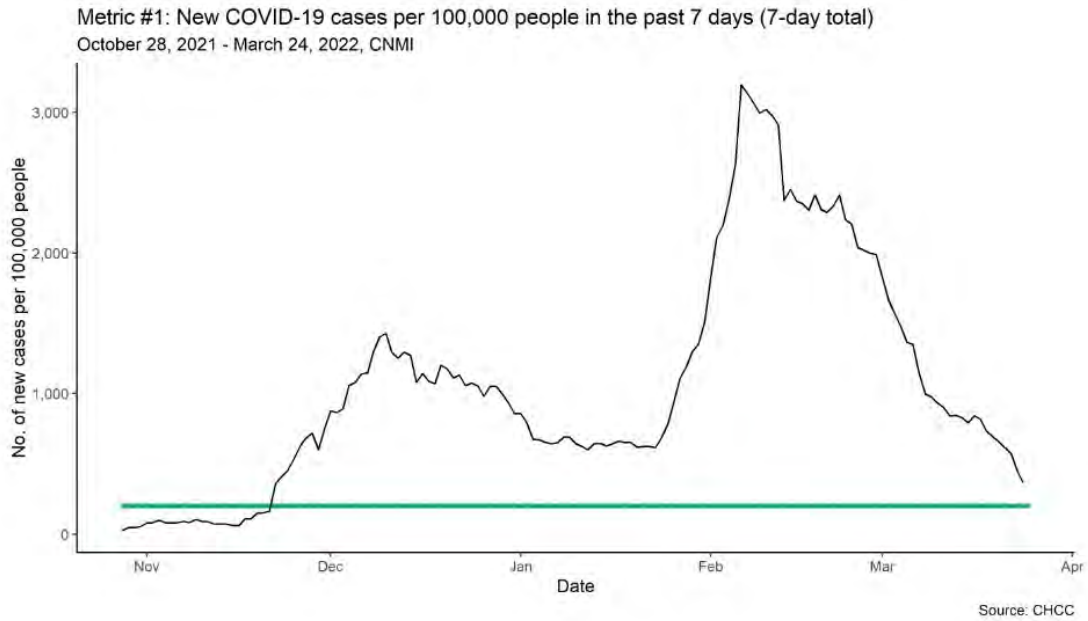
Current Status

MEDIUM

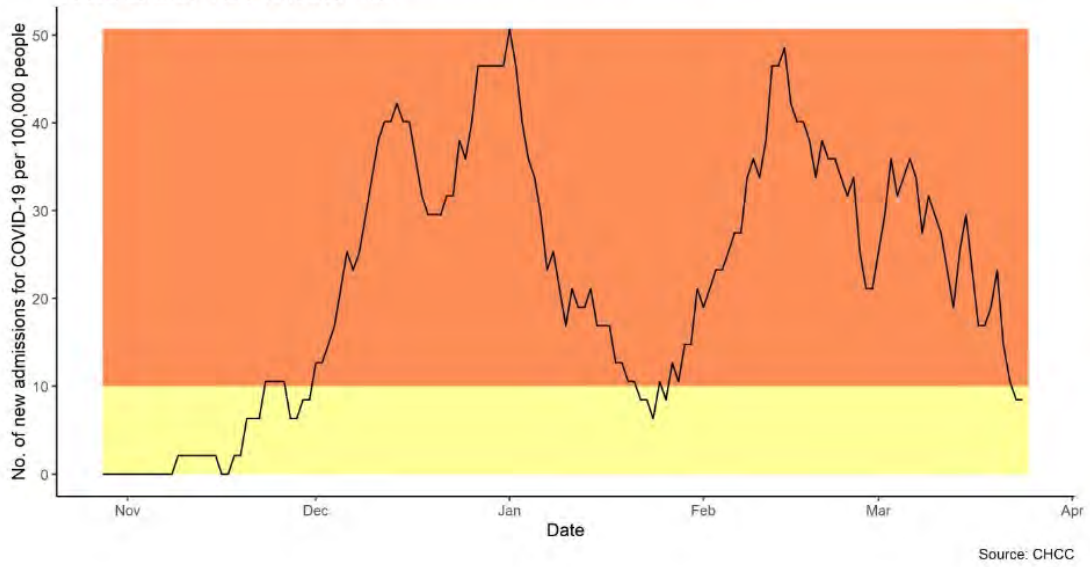
Data up to March 24, 2022

Summary: New COVID-19 case rate for the last 7 days is high.

New COVID-19 Cases per 100k (7-day total)	367
New COVID-19 Admissions per 100k (7-day total)	8.5
% of staffed beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	3.9%



Metric #2: New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)
 October 28, 2021 - March 24, 2022, CNMI



Metric #3: Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)
 October 28, 2021 - March 24, 2022, CNMI

