

## STAFFORD LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY, DR. JOE ANZALDUA COVID-19 UPDATE

### FDA Approves Boosters for 16- & 17-Year-Old

The FDA amended the EUA for the Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine, authorizing the use of a single booster dose for administration to individuals 16 and 17 years of age at least six months after completion of primary vaccination with the Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine. The EUA for a single booster dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for individuals 16 and 17 years of age is based on the FDA's previous analysis of immune response data that supported use of a booster dose in individuals 18 years of age and older.

**Comments: We really need to encourage all eligible folks to get their boosters.**

Joe A.

### OMICRON VARIANT UPDATE

#### Omicron Variant

The [Omicron variant](#) has been detected in the United States. CDC and its public health partners are closely monitoring the emergence of this variant of concern. Updates in the [CDC Newsroom](#).

So far, this is what we have (which may dramatically change in the weeks to come. Yes, just in time for the holidays!)

1. Omicron is now in over 30 states and will eventually hit all 50. It is now here in Fort Bend County and Harris County (Houston). 8 out of the 39 wastewater plants have identified Omicron. Not good – indicates very high transmissibility.
2. Current vaccines appear to be protective, but 3 doses better than two. So, need to make a push for getting the boosters!
3. Transmission rate is very high and is expected to supplant Delta (currently dominant) in the next few weeks.
4. Although cases in south Africa are increasing, hospitalizations and deaths remain low. And that's from a country with low vaccination rates! So increased cases is probably a reflection of their low vaccination rates and high transmissibility of Omicron.
5. Re-infection rates are expected to increase. This is cause for some concern.
6. In the past we followed testing rates as a metric, but now that we have vaccines, hospitalizations and deaths is what we really should be focusing on (in my opinion). The problem is that with respect to hospitalization and deaths, there is always about a 2-4 lag before we start seeing real data.
7. I don't know why stuff like this always seems to come up right before the holidays, but it does. Go figure.
8. Omicron is alive and well in Fort Bend County, and cases are expected to significantly increase.
9. So we all need to be cautiously optimistic but remain vigilant. Still many unknowns.
10. Although I am not recommending changes in our current policies with respect to the pandemic, but we must all need to have a "proactive", rather than a

“reactive” response to Omicron. Now is the time to start thinking about the 3 W’s (again):

-WASH your hands

-WEAR a mask, preferable a high quality one (no scarfs)

-WATCH your distance

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