



# News Release

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## **Statement From Public Health Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD, Regarding Masking All Athletes Regardless Of Vaccination Status**

HARTFORD, Conn.— Due to the rapid emergence of the new highly transmissible Omicron variant, the Connecticut Department of Public Health is halting guidance that would have allowed fully vaccinated athletes, coaches, and officials to participate in athletic competitions without masks as of Dec. 23.

Although a previous assessment was made by DPH that would have allowed the choice for fully vaccinated participants to unmask during sports competitions, the rapid rise in COVID-19 community case rates and the emergence of this more contagious variant has forced us to reconsider that assessment. Guidance that has been in place for winter sports throughout this season will remain in place.

In line with our neighboring states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, DPH is advising that all participants continuously wear a mask over the nose and mouth during all indoor athletic activities to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our state and region.